WALTER SCOTT

THE COMPLETE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITINGS

Walter Scott

The Complete Autobiographical Writings of Sir Walter Scott

Diary, Letters & Articles (including Extended Biographies, Memoirs & Essays featuring Reminiscences)

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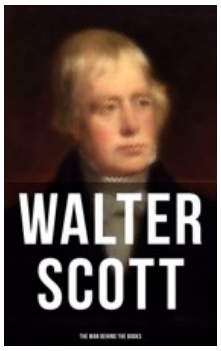

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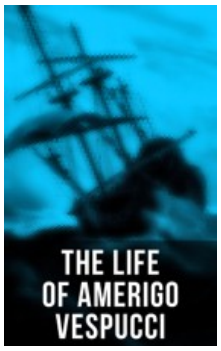

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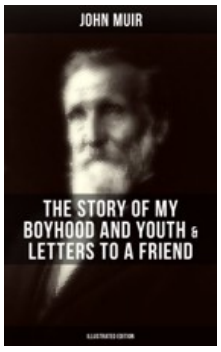

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THE JOURNAL OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

COLLECTED FROM ABBOTSFORD

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Volume I

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Preface

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On the death of Sir Walter Scott in 1832, his entire literary remains were placed at the disposal of his son-in-law, Mr. John Gibson Lockhart. Among these remains were two volumes of a Journal which had been kept by Sir Walter from 1825 to 1832. Mr. Lockhart made large use of this Journal in his admirable life of his fatherin-law. Writing, however, so short a time after Scott's death, he could not use it so freely as he might have wished, and, according to his own statement, it was "by regard for the feelings of living persons" that he both omitted and altered; and indeed he printed no chapter of the Diary in full.

There is no longer any reason why the Journal should not be published in its entirety, and by the permission of the Hon. Mrs. Maxwell-Scott it now appears exactly as Scott left it — but for the correction of obvious slips of the pen and the omission of some details chiefly of family and domestic interest.

The original Journal consists of two small 4to volumes, 9 inches by 8, bound in vellum and furnished with strong locks. The manuscript is closely written on both sides, and towards the end shows painful evidence of the physical prostration of the writer. The Journal abruptly closes towards the middle of the second volume with the following entry — probably the last words ever penned by Scott —

by one of the old Pontiffs, but which, I forget, and so paraded the streets by moonlight to discover, if possible, some appearance of the learned Sir William Gell or the pretty Mrs. Ashley. At length we found our old servant who guided us to the lodgings taken by Sir William Gell, where all was comfortable, a good fire included, which our fatigue and the chilliness of the night required. We dispersed as soon as we had taken some food, wine, and water. We slept reasonably, but on the next morning

In the annotations, it seemed most satisfactory to follow as closely as possible the method adopted by Mr. Lockhart. In the case of those parts of the Journal that have been already published, almost all Mr. Lockhart's notes have been reproduced, and these are distinguished by his initials. Extracts from the Life, from James Skene of Rubislaw's unpublished Reminiscences, and from unpublished letters of Scott himself and his

contemporaries, have been freely used wherever they seemed to illustrate particular passages in the Journal.

With regard to Scott's quotations a certain difficulty presented itself. In his Journal he evidently quoted from memory, and he not unfrequently makes considerable variations from the originals. Occasionally, indeed, it would seem that he deliberately made free with the exact words of his author, to adapt them more pertinently to his own mood or the impulse of the moment. In any case it seemed best to let Scott's quotations appear as he wrote them. His reading lay in such curious and unfrequented quarters that to verify all the sources is a nearly impossible task. It is to be remembered, also, that he himself held very free notions on the subject of quotation.

I have to thank the Hon. Mrs. Maxwell-Scott for permitting me to retain for the last three years the precious volumes in which the Journal is contained, and for granting me access to the correspondence of Sir Walter preserved at Abbotsford, and I have likewise to acknowledge the courtesy of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch for allowing me the use of the Scott letters at Dalkeith. To Mr. W.F. Skene, Historiographer Royal for Scotland, my thanks are warmly rendered for intrusting me with his precious heirloom, the volume which contains Sir Walter's letters to his father, and the Reminiscences that accompany them — one of many kind offices towards me during the last thirty years in our relations as author and publisher. I am also obliged to Mr. Archibald Constable for permitting me to use the interesting Memorandum by James Ballantyne.

Finally, I have to express my obligation to many other friends, who never failed cordially to respond to any call I made upon them.

D.D.

November

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[Edinburgh,] November 20, 1825. — I have all my life regretted that I did not keep a regular Journal. I have myself lost recollection of much that was interesting, and I have deprived my family and the public of some curious information, by not carrying this resolution into effect. I have bethought me, on seeing lately some volumes of Byron's notes, that he probably had hit upon the right way of keeping such a memorandum-book, by throwing aside all pretence to regularity and order, and marking down events just as they occurred to recollection. I will try this plan; and behold I have a handsome locked volume, such as might serve for a lady's album. Nota bene, John Lockhart, and Anne, and I are to raise a Society for the suppression of Albums. It is a most troublesome shape of mendicity. Sir, your autograph — a line of poetry — or a prose sentence! — Among all the sprawling sonnets, and blotted trumpery that dishonours these miscellanies, a man must have a good stomach that can swallow this botheration as a compliment.

I was in Ireland last summer, and had a most delightful tour. It cost me upwards of £500, including £100 left with Walter and Jane, for we travelled a large party and in style. There is much less exaggerated about the Irish than is to be expected. Their poverty is not exaggerated; it is on the extreme verge of human misery; their cottages would scarce serve for pig-styes, even in Scotland, and their rags seem the very refuse of a rag-shop, and are disposed on their bodies with such ingenious variety of wretchedness that you would think nothing but some sort of perverted taste could have assembled so many shreds together. You are constantly fearful that some knot or loop will give, and place the individual before you in all the primitive simplicity of Paradise. Then for their food, they have only potatoes, and too few of them. Yet the men look stout and healthy, the women buxom and well-coloured.

Dined with us, being Sunday, Will. Clerk and Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. W.C. is the second son of the celebrated author of Naval Tactics. I have known him intimately since our college days; and, to my thinking, never met a man of greater powers, or more complete information on all desirable subjects. In youth he had strongly the Edinburgh pruritus

disputandi; but habits of society have greatly mellowed it, and though still anxious to gain your suffrage to his views, he endeavours rather to conciliate your opinion than conquer it by force. Still there is enough of tenacity of sentiment to prevent, in London society, where all must go slack and easy, W.C. from rising to the very top of the tree as a conversation man, who must not only wind the thread of his argument gracefully, but also know when to let go. But I like the Scotch taste better; there is more matter, more information, above all, more spirit in it. Clerk will, I am afraid, leave the world little more than the report of his fame. He is too indolent to finish any considerable work. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe is another very remarkable man. He was bred a clergyman, but did not take orders, owing I believe to a peculiar effeminacy of voice which must have been unpleasant in reading prayers. Some family quarrels occasioned his being indifferently provided for by a small annuity from his elder brother, extorted by an arbitral decree. He has infinite wit and a great turn for antiquarian lore, as the publications of Kirkton, etc., bear witness. His drawings are the most fanciful and droll imaginable — a mixture between Hogarth and some of those foreign masters who painted temptations of St. Anthony, and such grotesque subjects. As a poet he has not a very strong touch. Strange that his fingerends can describe so well what he cannot bring out clearly and firmly in words. If he were to make drawing a resource, it might raise him a large income. But though a lover of antiquities, and therefore of expensive trifles, C.K.S. is too aristocratic to use his art to assist his revenue. He is a very complete genealogist, and has made many detections in Douglas and other books on pedigree, which our nobles would do well to suppress if they had an opportunity. Strange that a man should be curious after scandal of centuries old! Not but Charles loves it fresh and fresh also, for, being very much a fashionable man, he is always master of the reigning report, and he tells the anecdote with such gusto that there is no helping sympathising with him — the peculiarity of voice adding not a little to the general effect. My idea is that C.K.S., with his oddities, tastes, satire, and high aristocratic feelings, resembles Horace Walpole — perhaps in his person also, in a general way. — See Miss Hawkins' Anecdotes for a description of the author of The Castle of Otranto.

No other company at dinner except my cheerful and good-humoured friend Missie Macdonald, so called in fondness. One bottle of champagne with the ladies' assistance, two of claret. I observe that both these great

connoisseurs were very nearly, if not quite, agreed, that there are no absolutely undoubted originals of Queen Mary. But how then should we be so very distinctly informed as to her features? What has become of all the originals which suggested these innumerable copies? Surely Mary must have been as unfortunate in this as in other particulars of her life.

November 21. — I am enamoured of my journal. I wish the zeal may but last. Once more of Ireland. I said their poverty was not exaggerated; neither is their wit — nor their good-humour — nor their whimsical absurdity — nor their courage.

Wit. — I gave a fellow a shilling on some occasion when sixpence was the fee. "Remember you owe me sixpence, Pat." "May your honour live till I pay you!" There was courtesy as well as wit in this, and all the clothes on Pat's back would have been dearly bought by the sum in question.

Good-humour. — There is perpetual kindness in the Irish cabin; buttermilk, potatoes, a stool is offered, or a stone is rolled that your honour may sit down and be out of the smoke, and those who beg everywhere else seem desirous to exercise free hospitality in their own houses. Their natural disposition is turned to gaiety and happiness; while a Scotchman is thinking about the term-day, or, if easy on that subject, about hell in the next world — while an Englishman is making a little hell of his own in the present, because his muffin is not well roasted — Pat's mind is always turned to fun and ridicule. They are terribly excitable, to be sure, and will murther you on slight suspicion, and find out next day that it was all a mistake, and that it was not yourself they meant to kill at all at all.

Absurdity. — They were widening the road near Lord Claremont's seat as we passed. A number of cars were drawn up together at a particular point, where we also halted, as we understood they were blowing a rock, and the shot was expected presently to go off. After waiting two minutes or so, a fellow called out something, and our carriage as a planet, and the cars for satellites, started all forward at once, the Irishmen whooping and crying, and the horses galloping. Unable to learn the meaning of this, I was only left to suppose that they had delayed firing the intended shot till we should pass, and that we were passing quickly to make the delay as short as possible. No such thing. By dint of making great haste, we got within ten yards of the rock when the blast took place, throwing dust and gravel on our carriage, and had our postillion brought us a little nearer (it was not for

want of hallooing and flogging that he did not), we should have had a still more serious share of the explosion. The explanation I received from the drivers was, that they had been told by the overseer that as the mine had been so long in going off, he dared say we would have time to pass it — so we just waited long enough to make the danger imminent. I have only to add that two or three people got behind the carriage, just for nothing but to see how our honours got past.

Went to the Oil Gas Committee this morning, of which concern I am president, or chairman. It has amused me much by bringing me into company with a body of active, business-loving, money-making citizens of Edinburgh, chiefly Whigs by the way, whose sentiments and proceedings amuse me. The stock is rather low in the market, 35s. premium instead of £5. It must rise, however, for the advantages of the light are undeniable, and folks will soon become accustomed to idle apprehensions or misapprehensions. From £20 to £25 should light a house capitally, supposing you leave town in the vacation. The three last quarters cost me £10, 10s., and the first, £8, was greatly overcharged. We will see what this, the worst and darkest quarter, costs.

Dined with Sir Robert Dundas, where we met Lord and Lady Melville. My little nieces (ex officio) gave us some pretty music. I do not know and cannot utter a note of music; and complicated harmonies seem to me a babble of confused though pleasing sounds. Yet songs and simple melodies, especially if connected with words and ideas, have as much effect on me as on most people. But then I hate to hear a young person sing without feeling and expression suited to the song. I cannot bear a voice that has no more life in it than a pianoforte or a bugle-horn. There is something about all the fine arts, of soul and spirit, which, like the vital principle in man, defies the research of the most critical anatomist. You feel where it is not, yet you cannot describe what it is you want. Sir Joshua, or some other great painter, was looking at a picture on which much pains had been bestowed — ”Why, yes,” he said, in a hesitating manner, “it is very clever — very well done — can’t find fault; but it wants something; it wants — it wants, damn me — it wants THAT” — throwing his hand over his head and snapping his fingers. Tom Moore’s is the most exquisite warbling I ever heard. Next to him, David Macculloch for Scots songs. The last, when a boy at Dumfries, was much admired by Burns, who used to get him to try over the words which he composed to new melodies. He is brother of Macculloch of Ardwell.

November 22. — MOORE. I saw Moore (for the first time, I may say) this season. We had indeed met in public twenty years ago. There is a manly frankness, and perfect ease and good breeding about him which is delightful. Not the least touch of the poet or the pedant. A little — very little man. Less, I think, than Lewis, and somewhat like him in person; God knows, not in conversation, for Matt, though a clever fellow, was a bore of the first description. Moreover, he looked always like a schoolboy. I remember a picture of him being handed about at Dalkeith House. It was a miniature I think by Sanders, who had contrived to muffle Lewis's person in a cloak, and placed some poignard or dark lanthorn appurtenance (I think) in his hand, so as to give the picture the cast of a bravo. "That like Mat Lewis?" said Duke Henry, to whom it had passed in turn; "why, that is like a MAN!" Imagine the effect! Lewis was at his elbow. Now Moore has none of this insignificance; to be sure his person is much stouter than that of M.G.L., his countenance is decidedly plain, but the expression is so very animated, especially in speaking or singing, that it is far more interesting than the finest features could have rendered it.

I was aware that Byron had often spoken, both in private society and in his Journal, of Moore and myself in the same breath, and with the same sort of regard; so I was curious to see what there could be in common betwixt us, Moore having lived so much in the gay world, I in the country, and with people of business, and sometimes with politicians; Moore a scholar, I none; he a musician and artist, I without knowledge of a note; he a democrat, I an aristocrat — with many other points of difference; besides his being an Irishman, I a Scotchman, and both tolerably national. Yet there is a point of resemblance, and a strong one. We are both good-humoured fellows, who rather seek to enjoy what is going forward than to maintain our dignity as lions; and we have both seen the world too widely and too well not to contemn in our souls the imaginary consequence of literary people, who walk with their noses in the air, and remind me always of the fellow whom Johnson met in an alehouse, and who called himself "the great Twalmley — inventor of the floodgate iron for smoothing linen." He also enjoys the mot pour rire, and so do I.

Moore has, I think, been illtreated about Byron's Memoirs; he surrendered them to the family (Lord Byron's executors) and thus lost £2000 which he had raised upon them at a most distressing moment of his

life. It is true they offered and pressed the money on him afterwards, but they ought to have settled it with the booksellers and not put poor Tom's spirit in arms against his interest. I think at least it might have been so managed. At any rate there must be an authentic life of Byron by somebody. Why should they not give the benefit of their materials to Tom Moore, whom Byron had made the depositary of his own Memoirs? — but T.M. thinks that Cam Hobhouse has the purpose of writing Byron's life himself. He and Moore were at sharp words during the negotiation, and there was some explanation necessary before the affair ended. It was a pity that nothing save the total destruction of Byron's Memoirs would satisfy his executors. But there was a reason — Premat nox alta.

It would be a delightful addition to life, if T.M. had a cottage within two miles of one. We went to the theatre together, and the house, being luckily a good one, received T.M. with rapture. I could have hugged them, for it paid back the debt of the kind reception I met with in Ireland.

Here is a matter for a May morning, but much fitter for a November one. The general distress in the city has affected H. and R., Constable's great agents. Should they go, it is not likely that Constable can stand, and such an event would lead to great distress and perplexity on the part of J.B. and myself. Thank God, I have enough at least to pay forty shillings in the pound, taking matters at the very worst. But much distress and inconvenience must be the consequence. I had a lesson in 1814 which should have done good upon me, but success and abundance erased it from my mind. But this is no time for journalising or moralising either. Necessity is like a sour-faced cookmaid, and I a turnspit whom she has flogged ere now, till he mounted his wheel. If W-st-k can be out by 25th January it will do much, and it is possible.

—'s son has saved his comrade on shipboard by throwing himself overboard and keeping the other afloat — a very gallant thing. But the Gran giag' Asso asks me to write a poem on the civic crown, of which he sends me a description quoted from Adam's Antiquities, which mellifluous performance is to persuade the Admiralty to give the young conservator promotion. Oh! he is a rare headpiece, an admirable Merron. I do not believe there is in nature such a full-acorned Boar.

Could not write to purpose for thick-coming fancies; the wheel would not turn easily, and cannot be forced.

"My spinning-wheel is auld and stiff,
The rock o't winna stand, sir;
To keep the temper-pin in tiff
Employs aft my hand, sir."

Went to dine at the L[ord] J[ustice]-C[lerk's] as I thought by invitation, but it was for Tuesday se'nnight. Returned very well pleased, not being exactly in the humour for company, and had a beefsteak. My appetite is surely, excepting in quantity, that of a farmer; for, eating moderately of anything, my Epicurean pleasure is in the most simple diet. Wine I seldom taste when alone, and use instead a little spirits and water. I have of late diminished the quantity, for fear of a weakness inductive to a diabetes — a disease which broke up my father's health, though one of the most temperate men who ever lived. I smoke a couple of cigars instead, which operates equally as a sedative —

"Just to drive the cold winter away,
And drown the fatigues of the day."

I smoked a good deal about twenty years ago when at Ashestiel; but, coming down one morning to the parlour, I found, as the room was small and confined, that the smell was unpleasant, and laid aside the use of the Nicotian weed for many years; but was again led to use it by the example of my son, a hussar officer, and my son-in-law, an Oxford student. I could lay it aside tomorrow; I laugh at the dominion of custom in this and many things.

"We make the giants first, and then — do not kill them."

November 23. — On comparing notes with Moore, I was confirmed in one or two points which I had always laid down in considering poor Byron. One was, that like Rousseau he was apt to be very suspicious, and a plain downright steadiness of manner was the true mode to maintain his good opinion. Will Rose told me that once, while sitting with Byron, he fixed insensibly his eyes on his feet, one of which, it must be remembered, was deformed. Looking up suddenly, he saw Byron regarding him with a look of concentrated and deep displeasure, which wore off when he observed no consciousness or embarrassment in the countenance of Rose. Murray

afterwards explained this, by telling Rose that Lord Byron was very jealous of having this personal imperfection noticed or attended to. In another point, Moore confirmed my previous opinion, namely, that Byron loved mischief-making. Moore had written to him cautioning him against the project of establishing the paper called the Liberal, in communion with such men as P.B. Shelley and Hunt, on whom he said the world had set its mark. Byron showed this to the parties. Shelley wrote a modest and rather affecting expostulation to Moore. These two peculiarities of extreme suspicion and love of mischief are both shades of the malady which certainly tinctured some part of the character of this mighty genius; and, without some tendency towards which, genius — I mean that kind which depends on the imaginative power — perhaps cannot exist to great extent. The wheels of a machine, to play rapidly, must not fit with the utmost exactness, else the attrition diminishes the impetus.

Another of Byron's peculiarities was the love of mystifying; which indeed may be referred to that of mischief. There was no knowing how much or how little to believe of his narratives. Instance: — Mr. Bankes expostulating with him upon a dedication which he had written in extravagant terms of praise to Cam Hobhouse, Byron told him that Cam had teased him into the dedication till he had said, "Well; it shall be so, — providing you will write the dedication yourself"; and affirmed that Cam Hobhouse did write the highcoloured dedication accordingly. I mentioned this to Murray, having the report from Will Rose, to whom Bankes had mentioned it. Murray, in reply, assured me that the dedication was written by Lord Byron himself, and showed it me in his own hand. I wrote to Rose to mention the thing to Bankes, as it might have made mischief had the story got into the circle. Byron was disposed to think all men of imagination were addicted to mix fiction (or poetry) with their prose. He used to say he dared believe the celebrated courtezan of Venice, about whom Rousseau makes so piquante a story, was, if one could see her, a draggletailed wench enough. I believe that he embellished his own amours considerably, and that he was, in many respects, le fanfaron de vices qu'il n'avoit pas. He loved to be thought awful, mysterious, and gloomy, and sometimes hinted at strange causes. I believe the whole to have been the creation and sport of a wild and powerful fancy. In the same manner he crammed people, as it is termed, about duels, etc., which never existed, or were much exaggerated.

Constable has been here as lame as a duck upon his legs, but his heart and courage as firm as a cock. He has convinced me we will do well to support the London House. He has sent them about £5000, and proposes we should borrow on our joint security £5000 for their accommodation. J.B. and R. Cadell present. I must be guided by them, and hope for the best. Certainly to part company would be to incur an awful risk.

What I liked about Byron, besides his boundless genius, was his generosity of spirit as well as purse, and his utter contempt of all the affectations of literature, from the school-magisterial style to the lackadaisical. Byron's example has formed a sort of upper house of poetry. There is Lord Leveson Gower, a very clever young man. Lord Porchester too, nephew to Mrs. Scott of Harden, a young man who lies on the carpet and looks poetical and dandyish — fine lad too, but —

> "There will be many peers
> Ere such another Byron."

Talking of Abbotsford, it begins to be haunted by too much company of every kind, but especially foreigners. I do not like them. I hate fine waistcoats and breastpins upon dirty shirts. I detest the impudence that pays a stranger compliments, and harangues about his works in the author's house, which is usually ill-breeding. Moreover, they are seldom long of making it evident that they know nothing about what they are talking of, except having seen the Lady of the Lake at the Opera.

Dined at St. Catherine's with Lord Advocate, Lord and Lady Melville, Lord Justice-Clerk, Sir Archibald Campbell of Succoth, all class companions and acquainted well for more than forty years. All except Lord J.C. were at Fraser's class, High School. Boyle joined us at college. There are, besides, Sir Adam Ferguson, Colin Mackenzie, James Hope, Dr. James Buchan, Claud Russell, and perhaps two or three more of and about the same period — but

> "Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto."

November 24. — Talking of strangers, London held, some four or five years since, one of those animals who are lions at first, but by transmutation of two seasons become in regular course Boars! — Ugo Foscolo by name, a

haunter of Murray's shop and of literary parties. Ugly as a baboon, and intolerably conceited, he spluttered, blustered, and disputed, without even knowing the principles upon which men of sense render a reason, and screamed all the while like a pig when they cut its throat. Another such Animaluccio is a brute of a Sicilian Marquis de — — who wrote something about Byron. He inflicted two days on us at Abbotsford. They never know what to make of themselves in the forenoon, but sit tormenting the women to play at proverbs and such trash.

Foreigner of a different cast, — Count Olonym (Olonyne — that's it), son of the President of the Royal Society and a captain in the Imperial Guards. He is mean-looking and sickly, but has much sense, candour, and general information. There was at Abbotsford, and is here, for education just now, a young Count Davidoff, with a tutor Mr. Collyer. He is a nephew of the famous Orloffs. It is quite surprising how much sense and sound thinking this youth has at the early age of sixteen, without the least self-conceit or forwardness. On the contrary, he seems kind, modest, and ingenuous. To questions which I asked about the state of Russia he answered with the precision and accuracy of twice his years. I should be sorry the saying were verified in him —

> "So wise so young, they say, do ne'er live long."

Saw also at Abbotsford two Frenchmen whom I liked, friends of Miss Dumergue. One, called Le Noir, is the author of a tragedy which he had the grace never to quote, and which I, though poked by some malicious persons, had not the grace even to hint at. They were disposed at first to be complimentary, but I convinced them it was not the custom here, and they took it well, and were agreeable.

A little bilious this morning, for the first time these six months. It cannot be the London matters which stick on my stomach, for that is mending, and may have good effects on myself and others.

Dined with Robert Cockburn. Company, Lord Melville and family; Sir John and Lady Hope; Lord and Lady R. Kerr, and so forth. Combination of colliers general, and coals up to double price; the men will not work, although, or rather because, they can make from thirty to forty shillings per week. Lord R.K. told us that he had a letter from Lord Forbes (son of Earl Granard, Ireland), that he was asleep in his house at Castle Forbes, when awakened by a sense of suffocation which deprived him of the power of

stirring a limb, yet left him the consciousness that the house was on fire. At this moment, and while his apartment was in flames, his large dog jumped on the bed, seized his shirt, and dragged him to the staircase, where the fresh air restored his powers of exertion and of escape. This is very different from most cases of preservation of life by the canine race, when the animal generally jumps into the water, in which [element] he has force and skill. That of fire is as hostile to him as to mankind.

November 25. — Read Jeffrey's neat and well-intended address to the mechanics upon their combinations. Will it do good? Umph. It takes only the hand of a Lilliputian to light a fire, but would require the diuretic powers of Gulliver to extinguish it. The Whigs will live and die in the heresy that the world is ruled by little pamphlets and speeches, and that if you can sufficiently demonstrate that a line of conduct is most consistent with men's interest, you have therefore and thereby demonstrated that they will at length, after a few speeches on the subject, adopt it of course. In this case we would have [no] need of laws or churches, for I am sure there is no difficulty in proving that moral, regular, and steady habits conduce to men's best interest, and that vice is not sin merely, but folly. But of these men each has passions and prejudices, the gratification of which he prefers, not only to the general weal, but to that of himself as an individual. Under the action of these wayward impulses a man drinks to-day though he is sure of starving tomorrow. He murders tomorrow though he is sure to be hanged on Wednesday; and people are so slow to believe that which makes against their own predominant passions, that mechanics will combine to raise the price for one week, though they destroy the manufacture for ever. The best remedy seems to be the probable supply of labourers from other trades. Jeffrey proposes each mechanic shall learn some other trade than his own, and so have two strings to his bow. He does not consider the length of a double apprenticeship. To make a man a good weaver and a good tailor would require as much time as the patriarch served for his two wives, and after all, he would be but a poor workman at either craft. Each mechanic has, indeed, a second trade, for he can dig and do rustic work. Perhaps the best reason for breaking up the association will prove to be the expenditure of the money which they have been simple enough to levy from the industrious for the support of the idle. How much provision for the sick and the aged, the widow and the orphan, has been expended in the attempt to

get wages which the manufacturer cannot afford them, with any profitable chance of selling his commodity?

I had a bad fall last night coming home. There were unfinished houses at the east end of Atholl Place, and as I was on foot, I crossed the street to avoid the material which lay about; but, deceived by the moonlight, I stepped ankle-deep in a sea of mud (honest earth and water, thank God), and fell on my hands. Never was there such a representative of Wall in Pyramus and Thisbe — I was absolutely rough-cast. Luckily Lady S. had retired when I came home; so I enjoyed my tub of water without either remonstrance or condolences. Cockburn's hospitality will get the benefit and renown of my downfall, and yet has no claim to it. In future though, I must take a coach at night — a control on one's freedom, but it must be submitted to. I found a letter from [R.] C[adell], giving a cheering account of things in London. Their correspondent is getting into his strength. Three days ago I would have been contented to buy this consola, as Judy says, dearer than by a dozen falls in the mud. For had the great Constable fallen, O my countrymen, what a fall were there!

N.B. Within eight weeks after recording this graceful act of submission, I found I was unable to keep a carriage at all.

Mrs. Coutts, with the Duke of St. Albans and Lady Charlotte Beauclerk, called to take leave of us. When at Abbotsford his suit throve but coldly. She made me, I believe, her confidant in sincerity. She had refused him twice, and decidedly. He was merely on the footing of friendship. I urged it was akin to love. She allowed she might marry the Duke, only she had at present not the least intention that way. Is this frank admission more favourable for the Duke than an absolute protestation against the possibility of such a marriage? I think not. It is the fashion to attend Mrs. Coutts' parties and to abuse her. I have always found her a kind, friendly woman, without either affectation or insolence in the display of her wealth, and most willing to do good if the means be shown to her. She can be very entertaining too, as she speaks without scruple of her stage life. So much wealth can hardly be enjoyed without some ostentation. But what then? If the Duke marries her, he ensures an immense fortune; if she marries him, she has the first rank. If he marries a woman older than himself by twenty years, she marries a man younger in wit by twenty degrees. I do not think he will dilapidate her fortune — he seems quiet and gentle. I do not think that she will abuse his softness — of disposition, shall I say, or of heart?

The disparity of ages concerns no one but themselves; so they have my consent to marry, if they can get each other's. Just as this is written, enter my Lord of St. Albans and Lady Charlotte, to beg I would recommend a book of sermons to Mrs. Coutts. Much obliged for her good opinion: recommended Logan's — one poet should always speak for another. The mission, I suppose, was a little display on the part of good Mrs. Coutts of authority over her high aristocratic suitor. I do not suspect her of turning dévote, and retract my consent given as above, unless she remains "lively, brisk, and jolly."

Dined quiet with wife and daughter. R[obert] Cadell looked in in the evening on business.

I here register my purpose to practise economics. I have little temptation to do otherwise. Abbotsford is all that I can make it, and too large for the property; so I resolve —

> No more building;
> No purchases of land till times are quite safe;
> No buying books or expensive trifles — I mean to any extent;
> and
> Clearing off encumbrances, with the returns of this year's labour; —

Which resolutions, with health and my habits of industry, will make me "sleep in spite of thunder."

After all, it is hard that the vagabond stock-jobbing Jews should, for their own purposes, make such a shake of credit as now exists in London, and menace the credit of men trading on sure funds like H[urst] and R[obinson]. It is just like a set of pickpockets, who raise a mob, in which honest folks are knocked down and plundered, that they may pillage safely in the midst of the confusion they have excited.

I was obliged to give this up in consequence of my own misfortunes.

November 26. — The court met late, and sat till one; detained from that hour till four o'clock, being engaged in the perplexed affairs of Mr. James Stewart of Brugh. This young gentleman is heir to a property of better than £1000 a year in Orkney. His mother married very young, and was wife, mother, and widow in the course of the first year. Being unfortunately under the direction of a careless agent, she was unlucky enough to embarrass her

own affairs by many transactions with this person. I was asked to accept the situation of one of the son's curators; and trust to clear out his affairs and hers — at least I will not fail for want of application. I have lent her £300 on a second (and therefore doubtful) security over her house in Newington, bought for £1000, and on which £600 is already secured. I have no connection with the family except that of compassion, and may not be rewarded even by thanks when the young man comes of age. I have known my father often so treated by those whom he had laboured to serve. But if we do not run some hazard in our attempts to do good, where is the merit of them? So I will bring through my Orkney laird if I can. Dined at home quiet with Lady S. and Anne.

November 27. — Some time since John Murray entered into a contract with my son-in-law, John G. Lockhart, giving him on certain ample conditions the management and editorship of the Quarterly Review, for which they could certainly scarcely find a fitter person, both from talents and character. It seems that Barrow and one or two stagers have taken alarm at Lockhart's character as a satirist, and his supposed accession to some of the freaks in Blackwood's Magazine, and down comes young D'Israeli to Scotland imploring Lockhart to make interest with my friends in London to remove objections, and so forth. I have no idea of telling all and sundry that my son-in-law is not a slanderer, or a silly thoughtless lad, although he was six or seven years ago engaged in some light satires. I only wrote to Heber and to Southey — the first upon the subject of the reports which had startled Murray, (the most timorous, as Byron called him, of all God's booksellers), and such a letter as he may show Barrow if he judges proper. To Southey I wrote more generally, acquainting him of my son's appointment to the Editorship, and mentioning his qualifications, touching, at the same time, on his very slight connection with Blackwood's Magazine, and his innocence as to those gambades which may have given offence, and which, I fear, they may ascribe too truly to an eccentric neighbour of their own. I also mentioned that I had heard nothing of the affair until the month of October. I am concerned that Southey should know this; for, having been at the Lakes in September, I would not have him suppose that I had been using interest with Canning or Ellis to supersede young Mr. Coleridge, their editor, and place my son-in-law in the situation; indeed I was never more surprised than when this proposal came upon us. I suppose it had come

from Canning originally, as he was sounding Anne when at Colonel Bolton's about Lockhart's views, *etc.* To me he never hinted anything on the subject. Other views are held out to Lockhart which may turn to great advantage. Only one person (John Cay of Charlton) knows their object, and truly I wish it had not been confided to any one. Yesterday I had a letter from Murray in answer to one I had written in something a determined style, for I had no idea of permitting him to start from the course after my son giving up his situation and profession, merely because a contributor or two chose to suppose gratuitously that Lockhart was too imprudent for the situation. My physic has wrought well, for it brought a letter from Murray saying all was right, that D'Israeli was sent to me, not to Lockhart, and that I was only invited to write two confidential letters, and other incoherencies — which intimate his fright has got into another quarter. It is interlined and franked by Barrow, which shows that all is well, and that John's induction into his office will be easy and pleasant. I have not the least fear of his success; his talents want only a worthy sphere of exertion. He must learn, however, to despise petty adversaries. No good sportsman ought to shoot at crows unless for some special purpose. To take notice of such men as Hazlitt and Hunt in the Quarterly would be to introduce them into a world which is scarce conscious of their existence. It is odd enough that many years since I had the principal share in erecting this Review which has been since so prosperous, and now it is placed under the management of my son-in-law upon the most honourable principle of detur digniori. Yet there are sad drawbacks so far as family comfort is concerned. To-day is Sunday, when they always dined with us, and generally met a family friend or two, but we are no longer to expect them. In the country, where their little cottage was within a mile or two of Abbotsford, we shall miss their society still more, for Chiefswood was the perpetual object of our walks, rides, and drives. Lockhart is such an excellent family man, so fond of his wife and child, that I hope all will go well. A letter from Lockhart in the evening. All safe as to his unanimous reception in London; his predecessor, young [Coleridge], handsomely, and like a gentleman, offers his assistance as a contributor, *etc.*

November 28. — I have the less dread, or rather the less anxiety, about the consequences of this migration, that I repose much confidence in Sophia's tact and good sense. Her manners are good, and have the appearance of

being perfectly natural. She is quite conscious of the limited range of her musical talents, and never makes them common or produces them out of place, — a rare virtue; moreover she is proud enough, and will not be easily netted and patronised by any of that class of ladies who may be called Lion-providers for town and country. She is domestic besides, and will not be disposed to gad about. Then she seems an economist, and on £3000, living quietly, there should be something to save. Lockhart must be liked where his good qualities are known, and where his fund of information has room to be displayed. But, notwithstanding a handsome exterior and face, I am not sure he will succeed in London Society; he sometimes reverses the proverb, and gives the volte strette e pensiere sciolti, withdraws his attention from the company, or attaches himself to some individual, gets into a corner, and seems to be quizzing the rest. This is the want of early habits of being in society, and a life led much at college. Nothing is, however, so popular, and so deservedly so, as to take an interest in whatever is going forward in society. A wise man always finds his account in it, and will receive information and fresh views of life even in the society of fools. Abstain from society altogether when you are not able to play some part in it. This reserve, and a sort of Hidalgo air joined to his character as a satirist, have done the best-humoured fellow in the world some injury in the opinion of Edinburgh folks. In London it is of less consequence whether he please in general society or not, since if he can establish himself as a genius it will only be called "Pretty Fanny's Way."

People make me the oddest requests. It is not unusual for an Oxonian or Cantab, who has outrun his allowance, and of whom I know nothing, to apply to me for the loan of £20, £50, or £100. A captain of the Danish naval service writes to me, that being in distress for a sum of money by which he might transport himself to Columbia, to offer his services in assisting to free that province, he had dreamed I generously made him a present of it. I can tell him his dream by contraries. I begin to find, like Joseph Surface, that too good a character is inconvenient. I don't know what I have done to gain so much credit for generosity, but I suspect I owe it to being supposed, as Puff says, one of those "whom Heaven has blessed with affluence." Not too much of that neither, my dear petitioners, though I may thank myself that your ideas are not correct.

Dined at Melville Castle, whither I went through a snowstorm. I was glad to find myself once more in a place connected with many happy days.

Met Sir R. Dundas and my old friend George, now Lord Abercromby, with his lady, and a beautiful girl, his daughter. He is what he always was — the best-humoured man living; and our meetings, now more rare than usual, are seasoned with a recollection of old frolics and old friends. I am entertained to see him just the same he has always been, never yielding up his own opinion in fact, and yet in words acquiescing in all that could be said against it. George was always like a willow — he never offered resistance to the breath of argument, but never moved from his rooted opinion, blow as it listed. Exaggeration might make these peculiarities highly dramatic: Conceive a man who always seems to be acquiescing in your sentiments, yet never changes his own, and this with a sort of bonhomie which shows there is not a particle of deceit intended. He is only desirous to spare you the trouble of contradiction.

November 29. — A letter from Southey, malcontent about Murray having accomplished the change in the Quarterly without speaking to him, and quoting the twaddle of some old woman, male or female, about Lockhart's earlier jeux d'esprit, but concluding most kindly that in regard to my daughter and me he did not mean to withdraw. That he has done yeoman's service to the Review is certain, with his genius, his universal reading, his powers of regular industry, and at the outset a name which, though less generally popular than it deserves, is still too respectable to be withdrawn without injury. I could not in reply point out to him what is the truth, that his rigid Toryism and High Church prejudices rendered him an unsafe counsellor in a matter where the spirit of the age must be consulted; but I pointed out to him what I am sure is true, that Murray, apprehensive of his displeasure, had not ventured to write to him out of mere timidity and not from any [intention to offend]. I treated [lightly] his old woman's apprehensions and cautions, and all that gossip about friends and enemies, to which a splendid number or two will be a sufficient answer, and I accepted with due acknowledgment his proposal of continued support. I cannot say I was afraid of his withdrawing. Lockhart will have hard words with him, for, great as Southey's powers are, he has not the art to make them work popularly; he is often diffuse, and frequently sets much value on minute and unimportant facts, and useless pieces of abstruse knowledge. Living too exclusively in a circle where he is idolised both for his genius and the excellence of his disposition, he has acquired strong prejudices,

though all of an upright and honourable cast. He rides his High Church hobby too hard, and it will not do to run a tilt upon it against all the world. Gifford used to crop his articles considerably, and they bear mark of it, being sometimes décousues. Southey said that Gifford cut out his middle joints. When John comes to use the carving-knife I fear Dr. Southey will not be so tractable. Nous verrons. I will not show Southey's letter to Lockhart, for there is to him personally no friendly tone, and it would startle the Hidalgo's pride. It is to be wished they may draw kindly together. Southey says most truly that even those who most undervalue his reputation would, were he to withdraw from the Review, exaggerate the loss it would thereby sustain. The bottom of all these feuds, though not named, is Blackwood's Magazine; all the squibs of which, which have sometimes exploded among the Lakers, Lockhart is rendered accountable for. He must now exert himself at once with spirit and prudence. He has good backing — Canning, Bishop Blomfield, Gifford, Wright, Croker, Will Rose, — and is there not besides the Douglas? An excellent plot, excellent friends, and full of preparations? It was no plot of my making, I am sure, yet men will say and believe that [it was], though I never heard a word of the matter till first a hint from Wright, and then the formal proposal of Murray to Lockhart announced. I believe Canning and Charles Ellis were the prime movers. I'll puzzle my brains no more about it.

Dined at Justice-Clerk's — the President — Captain Smollett, etc., — our new Commanderin-chief, Hon. Sir Robert O'Callaghan, brother to Earl of Lismore, a fine soldierly-looking man, with orders and badges; — his brother, an agreeable man, whom I met at Lowther Castle this season. He composes his own music and sings his own poetry — has much humour, enhanced by a strong touch of national dialect, which is always a rich sauce to an Irishman's good things. Dandyish, but not offensively, and seems to have a warm feeling for the credit of his country — rather inconsistent with the trifling and selfish quietude of a mere man of society.

November 30. — I am come to the time when those who look out of the windows shall be darkened. I must now wear spectacles constantly in reading and writing, though till this winter I have made a shift by using only their occasional assistance. Although my health cannot be better, I feel my lameness becomes sometimes painful, and often inconvenient. Walking on the pavement or causeway gives me trouble, and I am glad when I have

accomplished my return on foot from the Parliament House to Castle Street, though I can (taking a competent time, as old Braxie said on another occasion) walk five or six miles in the country with pleasure. Well — such things must come, and be received with cheerful submission. My early lameness considered, it was impossible for a man labouring under a bodily impediment to have been stronger or more active than I have been, and that for twenty or thirty years. Seams will slit, and elbows will out, quoth the tailor; and as I was fifty-four on 15th August last, my mortal vestments are none of the newest. Then Walter, Charles, and Lockhart are as active and handsome young fellows as you can see; and while they enjoy strength and activity I can hardly be said to want it. I have perhaps all my life set an undue value on these gifts. Yet it does appear to me that high and independent feelings are naturally, though not uniformly or inseparably, connected with bodily advantages. Strong men are usually good-humoured, and active men often display the same elasticity of mind as of body. These are superiorities, however, that are often misused. But even for these things God shall call us to judgment.

Some months since I joined with other literary folks in subscribing a petition for a pension to Mrs. G. of L., which we thought was a tribute merited by her works as an authoress, and, in my opinion, much more by the firmness and elasticity of mind with which she had borne a succession of great domestic calamities. Unhappily there was only about £100 open on the pension list, and this the minister assigned in equal portions to Mrs. G — — and a distressed lady, granddaughter of a forfeited Scottish nobleman. Mrs. G — — , proud as a Highlandwoman, vain as a poetess, and absurd as a bluestocking, has taken this partition in malam partem, and written to Lord Melville about her merits, and that her friends do not consider her claims as being fairly canvassed, with something like a demand that her petition be submitted to the King. This is not the way to make her plack a bawbee, and Lord M., a little miffed in turn, sends the whole correspondence to me to know whether Mrs. G — — will accept the £50 or not. Now, hating to deal with ladies when they are in an unreasonable humour, I have got the good-humoured "Man of Feeling" to find out the lady's mind, and I take on myself the task of making her peace with Lord M. There is no great doubt how it will end, for your scornful dog will always eat your dirty pudding. After all, the poor lady is greatly to be pitied;

— her sole remaining daughter, deep and far gone in a decline, has been seized with alienation of mind.

Dined with my cousin, R[obert] R[utherford], being the first invitation since my uncle's death, and our cousin Lieutenant-Colonel Russell of Ashestiel, with his sister Anne — the former newly returned from India — a fine gallant fellow, and distinguished as a cavalry officer. He came overland from India and has observed a good deal. General L — — of L — — , in Logan's orthography a fowl, Sir William Hamilton, Miss Peggie Swinton, William Keith, and others. Knight Marischal not well, so unable to attend the convocation of kith and kin.

December

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December 1st. — Colonel R[ussell] told me that the European Government had discovered an ingenious mode of diminishing the number of burnings of widows. It seems the Shaster positively enjoins that the pile shall be so constructed that, if the victim should repent even at the moment when it is set on fire, she may still have the means of saving herself. The Brahmins soon found it was necessary to assist the resolution of the sufferers, by means of a little pit into which they contrive to let the poor widow sink, so as to prevent her reaping any benefit from a late repentance. But the Government has brought them back to the regard of their law, and only permit the burning to go on when the pile is constructed with full opportunity of a locus penitentiæ. Yet the widow is so degraded if she dare to survive, that the number of burnings is still great. The quantity of female children destroyed by the Rajput tribes Colonel R. describes as very great indeed. They are strangled by the mother. The principle is the aristocratic pride of these high castes, who breed up no more daughters than they can reasonably hope to find matches for in their own tribe. Singular how artificial systems of feeling can be made to overcome that love of offspring which seems instinctive in the females, not of the human race only, but of the lower animals. This is the reverse of our system of increasing game by shooting the old cock-birds. It is a system would aid Malthus rarely.

Nota bene, the day before yesterday I signed the bond for £5000, with Constable, for relief of Robinson's house. I am to be secured by good bills.

I think this journal will suit me well. If I can coax myself into an idea that it is purely voluntary, it may go on — Nulla dies sine lineâ. But never a being, from my infancy upwards, hated task-work as I hate it; and yet I have done a great deal in my day. It is not that I am idle in my nature neither. But propose to me to do one thing, and it is inconceivable the desire I have to do something else — not that it is more easy or more pleasant, but just because it is escaping from an imposed task. I cannot trace this love of contradiction to any distinct source, but it has haunted me all my life. I could almost suppose it was mechanical, and that the imposition of a piece of duty-labour operated on me like the mace of a bad billiard-player, which gives an impulse to the ball indeed, but sends it off at a tangent different

from the course designed by the player. Now, if I expend such eccentric movements on this journal, it will be turning this wretched propensity to some tolerable account. If I had thus employed the hours and half-hours which I have whiled away in putting off something that must needs be done at last, "My Conscience!" I should have had a journal with a witness. Sophia and Lockhart came to Edinburgh to-day and dined with us, meeting Hector Macdonald Buchanan, his lady, and Missie, James Skene and his lady, Lockhart's friend Cay, *etc.* They are lucky to be able to assemble so many real friends, whose good wishes, I am sure, will follow them in their new undertaking.

December 2. — Rather a blank day for the Gurnal. Correcting proofs in the morning. Court from halfpast ten till two; poor dear Colin Mackenzie, one of the wisest, kindest, and best men of his time, in the country, — I fear with very indifferent health. From two till three transacting business with J.B.; all seems to go smoothly. Sophia dined with us alone, Lockhart being gone to the west to bid farewell to his father and brothers. Evening spent in talking with Sophia on their future prospects. God bless her, poor girl! she never gave me a moment's reason to complain of her. But, O my God! that poor delicate child, so clever, so animated, yet holding by this earth with so fearfully slight a tenure. Never out of his mother's thoughts, almost never out of his father's arms when he has but a single moment to give to anything. Deus providebit.

December 3. — R.P.G. came to call last night to excuse himself from dining with Lockhart's friends to-day. I really fear he is near an actual standstill. He has been extremely improvident. When I first knew him he had an excellent estate, and now he is deprived, I fear, of the whole reversion of the price, and this from no vice or extreme, except a wasteful mode of buying pictures and other costly trifles at high prices, and selling them again for nothing, besides an extravagant housekeeping and profuse hospitality. An excellent disposition, with a considerable fund of acquired knowledge, would have rendered him an agreeable companion, had he not affected singularity, and rendered himself accordingly singularly affected. He was very near being a poet — but a miss is as good as a mile, and he always fell short of the mark. I knew him first, many years ago, when he was desirous of my acquaintance; but he was too poetical for me, or I was

not poetical enough for him, so that we continued only ordinary acquaintance, with goodwill on either side, which R.P.G. really deserves, as a more friendly, generous creature never lived. Lockhart hopes to get something done for him, being sincerely attached to him, but says he has no hopes till he is utterly ruined. That point, I fear, is not far distant; but what Lockhart can do for him then I cannot guess. His last effort failed, owing to a curious reason. He had made some translations from the German, which he does extremely [well] — for give him ideas and he never wants choice of good words — and Lockhart had got Constable to offer some sort of terms for them. R.P.G. has always, though possessing a beautiful power of handwriting, had some whim or other about imitating that of some other person, and has written for months in the imitation of one or other of his friends. At present he has renounced this amusement, and chooses to write with a brush upon large cartridge paper, somewhat in the Chinese fashion, — so when his work, which was only to extend to one or two volumes, arrived on the shoulders of two porters, in immense bales, our jolly bibliopolist backed out of the treaty, and would have nothing more to do with R.P. He is a creature that is, or would be thought, of imagination all compact, and is influenced by strange whims. But he is a kind, harmless, friendly soul, and I fear has been cruelly plundered of money, which he now wants sadly.

Dined with Lockhart's friends, about fifty in number, who gave him a parting entertainment. John Hope, Solicitor-General, in the chair, and Robert Dundas [of Arniston], croupier. The company most highly respectable, and any man might be proud of such an indication of the interest they take in his progress in life. Tory principles rather too violently upheld by some speakers. I came home about ten; the party sat late.

December 4. — Lockhart and Sophia, with his brother William, dined with us, and talked over our separation, and the mode of their settling in London, and other family topics.

December 5. — This morning Lockhart and Sophia left us early, and without leave-taking; when I rose at eight o'clock they were gone. This was very right. I hate red eyes and blowing of noses. Agere et pati Romanum est. Of all schools commend me to the Stoics. We cannot indeed overcome our affections, nor ought we if we could, but we may repress them within

due bounds, and avoid coaxing them to make fools of those who should be their masters. I have lost some of the comforts to which I chiefly looked for enjoyment. Well, I must make the more of such as remain — God bless them. And so "I will unto my holy work again," which at present is the description of that heilige Kleeblatt, that worshipful triumvirate, Danton, Robespierre, and Marat.

I cannot conceive what possesses me, over every person besides, to mislay papers. I received a letter Saturday at e'en, enclosing a bill for £750; no deaf nuts. Well, I read it, and note the contents; and this day, as if it had been a wind-bill in the literal sense of the words, I search everywhere, and lose three hours of my morning — turn over all my confusion in the writing-desk — break open one or two letters, lest I should have enclosed the sweet and quickly convertible document in them, — send for a joiner, and disorganise my scrutoire, lest it should have fallen aside by mistake. I find it at last — the place where is of little consequence; but this trick must be amended.

Dined at the Royal Society Club, where, as usual, was a pleasant meeting of from twenty to twentyfive. It is a very good institution; we pay two guineas only for six dinners in the year, present or absent. Dine at five, or rather halfpast five, at the Royal Hotel, where we have an excellent dinner, with soups, fish, etc., and all in good order; port and sherry till halfpast seven, then coffee, and we go to the Society. This has great influence in keeping up the attendance, it being found that this preface of a good dinner, to be paid for whether you partake or not, brings out many a philosopher who might not otherwise have attended the Society. Harry Mackenzie, now in his eighty-second or third year, read part of an Essay on Dreams. Supped at Dr. Russell's usual party, which shall serve for one while.

December 6. — A rare thing this literature, or love of fame or notoriety which accompanies it. Here is Mr. H[enry] M[ackenzie] on the very brink of human dissolution, as actively anxious about it as if the curtain must not soon be closed on that and everything else. He calls me his literary confessor; and I am sure I am glad to return the kindnesses which he showed me long since in George Square. No man is less known from his writings. We would suppose a retired, modest, somewhat affected man, with a white handkerchief, and a sigh ready for every sentiment. No such thing:

H.M. is alert as a contracting tailor's needle in every sort of business — a politician and a sportsman — shoots and fishes in a sort even to this day — and is the life of the company with anecdote and fun. Sometimes, his daughter tells me, he is in low spirits at home, but really I never see anything of it in society.

There is a maxim almost universal in Scotland, which I should like much to see controlled. Every youth, of every temper and almost every description of character, is sent either to study for the bar, or to a writer's office as an apprentice. The Scottish seem to conceive Themis the most powerful of goddesses. Is a lad stupid, the law will sharpen him; — is he too mercurial, the law will make him sedate; — has he an estate, he may get a sheriffdom; — is he poor, the richest lawyers have emerged from poverty; — is he a Tory, he may become a depute-advocate; — is he a Whig, he may with far better hope expect to become, in reputation at least, that rising counsel Mr. — — , when in fact he only rises at tavern dinners. Upon some such wild views lawyers and writers multiply till there is no life for them, and men give up the chase, hopeless and exhausted, and go into the army at five-and-twenty, instead of eighteen, with a turn for expense perhaps — almost certainly for profligacy, and with a heart embittered against the loving parents or friends who compelled them to lose six or seven years in dusting the rails of the stair with their black gowns, or scribbling nonsense for twopence a page all day, and laying out twice their earnings at night in whisky-punch. Here is R.L. now. Four or five years ago, from certain indications, I assured his friends he would never be a writer. Goodnatured lad, too, when Bacchus is out of the question; but at other times so pugnacious, that it was wished he could only be properly placed where fighting was to be a part of his duty, regulated by time and place, and paid for accordingly. Well, time, money, and instruction have been thrown away, and now, after fighting two regular boxing matches and a duel with pistols in the course of one week, he tells them roundly he will be no writer, which common-sense might have told them before. He has now perhaps acquired habits of insubordination, unfitting him for the army, where he might have been tamed at an earlier period. He is too old for the navy, and so he must go to India, a guinea-pig on board a Chinaman, with what hope or view it is melancholy to guess. His elder brother did all man could to get his friends to consent to his going into the army in time. The lad has good-humour, courage, and most gentlemanlike feelings, but he is incurably dissipated, I

hear; so goes to die in youth in a foreign land. Thank God, I let Walter take his own way; and I trust he will be a useful, honoured soldier, being, for his time, high in the service; whereas at home he would probably have been a winebibbing, moorfowl-shooting, foxhunting Fife squire — living at Lochore without either aim or end — and well if he were no worse. Dined at home with Lady S. and Anne. Wrote in the evening.

December 7. — Teind day; — at home of course. Wrote answers to one or two letters which have been lying on my desk like snakes, hissing at me for my dilatoriness. Bespoke a tun of palm-oil for Sir John Forbes. Received a letter from Sir W. Knighton, mentioning that the King acquiesced in my proposal that Constable's Miscellany should be dedicated to him. Enjoined, however, not to make this public, till the draft of dedication shall be approved. This letter tarried so long, I thought some one had insinuated the proposal was infra dig. I don't think so. The purpose is to bring all the standard works, both in sciences and the liberal arts, within the reach of the lower classes, and enable them thus to use with advantage the education which is given them at every hand. To make boys learn to read, and then place no good books within their reach, is to give men an appetite, and leave nothing in the pantry save unwholesome and poisonous food, which, depend upon it, they will eat rather than starve. Sir William, it seems, has been in Germany.

Mighty dark this morning; it is past ten, and I am using my lamp. The vast number of houses built beneath us to the north certainly render our street darker during the days when frost or haze prevents the smoke from rising. After all, it may be my older eyes. I remember two years ago, when Lord H. began to fail somewhat in his limbs, he observed that Lord S. came to Court at a more early hour than usual, whereas it was he himself who took longer time to walk the usual distance betwixt his house and the Parliament Square. I suspect old gentlemen often make such mistakes. A letter from Southey in a very pleasant strain as to Lockhart and myself. Of Murray he has perhaps ground to complain as well for consulting him late in the business, as for the manner in which he intimated to young Coleridge, who had no reason to think himself handsomely treated, though he has acquiesced in the arrangement in a very gentlemanlike tone. With these matters we, of course, have nothing to do; having no doubt that the situation was vacant when M. offered it as such. Southey says, in alteration of

Byron's phrase, that M. is the most timorous, not of God's, but of the devil's, booksellers. The truth I take to be that Murray was pushed in the change of Editor (which was really become necessary) probably by Gifford, Canning, Ellis, etc.; and when he had fixed with Lockhart by their advice his constitutional nervousness made him delay entering upon a full explanation with Coleridge. But it is all settled now — I hope Lockhart will be able to mitigate their High Church bigotry. It is not for the present day, savouring too much of jure divino.

Dined quiet with Lady S. and Anne. Anne is practising Scots songs, which I take as a kind compliment to my own taste, as hers leads her chiefly to foreign music. I think the good girl sees that I want and must miss her sister's peculiar talent in singing the airs of our native country, which, imperfect as my musical ear is, make, and always have made, the most pleasing impression on me. And so if she puts a constraint on herself for my sake, I can only say, in requital, God bless her.

I have much to comfort me in the present aspect of my family. My eldest son, independent in fortune, united to an affectionate wife — and of good hopes in his profession; my second, with a good deal of talent, and in the way, I trust, of cultivating it to good purpose; Anne, an honest, downright, good Scots lass, in whom I would only wish to correct a spirit of satire; and Lockhart is Lockhart, to whom I can most willingly confide the happiness of the daughter who chose him, and whom he has chosen. My dear wife, the partner of early cares and successes, is, I fear, frail in health — though I trust and pray she may see me out. Indeed, if this troublesome complaint goes on — it bodes no long existence. My brother was affected with the same weakness, which, before he was fifty, brought on mortal symptoms. The poor Major had been rather a free liver. But my father, the most abstemious of men, save when the duties of hospitality required him to be very moderately free with his bottle, and that was very seldom, had the same weakness which now annoys me, and he, I think, was not above seventy when cut off. Square the odds, and goodnight Sir Walter about sixty. I care not, if I leave my name unstained, and my family properly settled. Sat est vixisse.

December 8. — Talking of the vixisse, it may not be impertinent to notice that Knox, a young poet of considerable talent, died here a week or two since. His father was a respectable yeoman, and he himself, succeeding to

good farms under the Duke of Buccleuch, became too soon his own master, and plunged into dissipation and ruin. His poetical talent, a very fine one, then showed itself in a fine strain of pensive poetry, called, I think, The Lonely Hearth, far superior to those of Michael Bruce, whose consumption, by the way, has been the life of his verses. But poetry, nay, good poetry, is a drug in the present day. I am a wretched patron. I cannot go with a subscription-paper, like a pocketpistol about me, and draw unawares on some honest country-gentleman, who has as much alarm as if I had used the phrase "stand and deliver," and parts with his money with a grimace, indicating some suspicion that the crown-piece thus levied goes ultimately into the collector's own pocket. This I see daily done; and I have seen such collectors, when they have exhausted Papa and Mamma, continue their trade among the misses, and conjure out of their pockets those little funds which should carry them to a play or an assembly. It is well people will go through this — it does some good, I suppose, and they have great merit who can sacrifice their pride so far as to attempt it in this way. For my part I am a bad promoter of subscriptions; but I wished to do what I could for this lad, whose talent I really admired; and I am not addicted to admire heaven-born poets, or poetry that is reckoned very good considering. I had him, Knox, at Abbotsford, about ten years ago, but found him unfit for that sort of society. I tried to help him, but there were temptations he could never resist. He scrambled on, writing for the booksellers and magazines, and living like the Otways, and Savages, and Chattertons of former days, though I do not know that he was in actual want. His connection with me terminated in begging a subscription or a guinea now and then. His last works were spiritual hymns, and which he wrote very well. In his own line of society he was said to exhibit infinite humour; but all his works are grave and pensive, a style perhaps, like Master Stephen's melancholy, affected for the nonce.

Mrs. G[rant] of L. intimates that she will take her pudding — her pension, I mean (see 30th November), and is contrite, as H[enry] M[ackenzie] vouches. I am glad the stout old girl is not foreclosed; faith, cabbing a pension in these times is like hunting a pig with a soap'd tail, monstrous apt to slip through your fingers. Dined at home with Lady S. and Anne.

December 9. — Yesterday I read and wrote the whole day and evening. To-

day I shall not be so happy. Having GasLight Company to attend at two, I must be brief in journalising.

The gay world has been kept in hot water lately by the impudent publication of the celebrated Harriet Wilson, — — from earliest possibility, I suppose, who lived with half the gay world at hack and manger, and now obliges such as will not pay hushmoney with a history of whatever she knows or can invent about them. She must have been assisted in the style, spelling, and diction, though the attempt at wit is very poor, that at pathos sickening. But there is some good retailing of conversations, in which the style of the speakers, so far as known to me, is exactly imitated, and some things told, as said by individuals of each other, which will sound unpleasantly in each other's ears. I admire the address of Lord A — — y, himself very severely handled from time to time. Some one asked him if H.W. had been pretty correct on the whole. "Why, faith," he replied, "I believe so" — when, raising his eyes, he saw Quentin Dick, whom the little jilt had treated atrociously — "what concerns the present company always excepted, you know," added Lord A — — y, with infinite presence of mind. As he was in pari casu with Q.D. no more could be said. After all, H.W. beats Con Philips, Anne Bellamy, and all former demireps out and out. I think I supped once in her company, more than twenty years since, at Mat Lewis's in Argyle Street, where the company, as the Duke says to Lucio, chanced to be "fairer than honest." She was far from beautiful, if it be the same chiffonne, but a smart saucy girl, with good eyes and dark hair, and the manners of a wild schoolboy. I am glad this accidental meeting has escaped her memory — or, perhaps, is not accurately recorded in mine — for, being a sort of French falconer, who hawk at all they see, I might have had a distinction which I am far from desiring.

Dined at Sir John Hay's — a large party; Skenes there, the Newenhams and others, strangers. In the morning a meeting of Oil Gas Committee. The concern lingers a little;

> "It may do weel, for ought it's done yet,
> But only — it's no just begun yet."

December 10. — A stormy and rainy day. Walked from the Court through the rain. I don't dislike this. Egad, I rather like it; for no man that ever stepped on heather has less dread than I of catch-cold; and I seem to regain,

in buffeting with the wind, a little of the high spirit with which, in younger days, I used to enjoy a Tam-o'-Shanter ride through darkness, wind, and rain, — the boughs groaning and cracking over my head, the good horse free to the road and impatient for home, and feeling the weather as little as I did.

> "The storm around might roar and rustle,
> We didna mind the storm a whistle."

Answered two letters — one, answer to a schoolboy, who writes himself Captain of Giggleswick School (a most imposing title), entreating the youngster not to commence editor of a magazine to be entitled the "Yorkshire Muffin," I think, at seventeen years old; second, to a soldier of the 79th, showing why I cannot oblige him by getting his discharge, and exhorting him rather to bear with the wickedness and profanity of the service, than take the very precarious step of desertion. This is the old receipt of Durandarte — Patience, cousin, and shuffle the cards; and I suppose the correspondents will think I have been too busy in offering my counsel where I was asked for assistance.

A third rogue writes to tell me — rather of the latest, if the matter was of consequence — that he approves of the first three volumes of the H[eart] of Midlothian, but totally condemns the fourth. Doubtless he thinks his opinion worth the sevenpence sterling which his letter costs. However, authors should be reasonably well pleased when three-fourths of their work are acceptable to the reader. The knave demands of me in a postscript, to get back the sword of Sir W[illiam] Wallace from England, where it was carried from Dumbarton Castle. I am not Master-General of the Ordnance, that I know. It was wrong, however, to take away that and Mons Meg. If I go to town this spring, I will renew my negotiation with the Great Duke for recovery of Mons Meg.

There is no theme more awful than to attempt to cast a glance among the clouds and mists which hide the broken extremity of the celebrated bridge of Mirza. Yet, when every day brings us nearer that termination, one would almost think that our views should become clearer, as the regions we are approaching are brought nigher. Alas! it is not so: there is a curtain to be withdrawn, a veil to be rent, before we shall see things as they really are. There are few, I trust, who disbelieve the existence of a God; nay, I doubt if at all times, and in all moods, any single individual ever adopted that

hideous creed, though some have professed it. With the belief of a Deity, that of the immortality of the soul and of the state of future rewards and punishments is indissolubly linked. More we are not to know; but neither are we prohibited from our attempts, however vain, to pierce the solemn sacred gloom. The expressions used in Scripture are doubtless metaphorical, for penal fires and heavenly melody are only applicable to bodies endowed with senses; and, at least till the period of the resurrection of the body, the spirits of men, whether entering into the perfection of the just, or committed to the regions of punishment, are incorporeal. Neither is it to be supposed that the glorified bodies which shall arise in the last day will be capable of the same gross indulgences with which they are now solaced. That the idea of Mahomet's paradise is inconsistent with the purity of our heavenly religion will be readily granted; and see Mark xii. 25. Harmony is obviously chosen as the least corporeal of all gratifications of the sense, and as the type of love, unity, and a state of peace and perfect happiness. But they have a poor idea of the Deity, and the rewards which are destined for the just made perfect, who can only adopt the literal sense of an eternal concert — a never-ending Birthday Ode. I rather suppose there should be understood some commission from the Highest, some duty to discharge with the applause of a satisfied conscience. That the Deity, who himself must be supposed to feel love and affection for the beings he has called into existence, should delegate a portion of those powers, I for one cannot conceive altogether so wrong a conjecture. We would then find reality in Milton's sublime machinery of the guardian saints or genii of kingdoms. Nay, we would approach to the Catholic idea of the employment of saints, though without approaching the absurdity of saint-worship, which degrades their religion. There would be, we must suppose, in these employments difficulties to be overcome, and exertions to be made, for all which the celestial beings employed would have certain appropriate powers. I cannot help thinking that a life of active benevolence is more consistent with my ideas than an eternity of music. But it is all speculation, and it is impossible even to guess what we shall [do], unless we could ascertain the equally difficult previous question, what we are to be. But there is a God, and a just God — a judgment and a future life — and all who own so much let them act according to the faith that is in them. I would [not], of course, limit the range of my genii to this confined earth. There is the universe, with all its endless extent of worlds.

Company at home — Sir Adam Ferguson and his Lady; Colonel and Miss Russell; Count Davidoff, and Mr. Collyer. By the by, I observe that all men whose names are obviously derived from some mechanical trade, endeavour to disguise and antiquate, as it were, their names, by spelling them after some quaint manner or other. Thus we have Collyer, Smythe, Tailleure; as much as to say, My ancestor was indeed a mechanic, but it was a world of time ago, when the word was spelled very [differently]. Then we had young Whytbank and Will Allan the artist, a very agreeable, simple-mannered, and pleasant man.

December 11. — A touch of the morbus eruditorum, to which I am as little subject as most folks, and have it less now than when young. It is a tremor of the heart, the pulsation of which becomes painfully sensible — a disposition to causeless alarm — much lassitude — and decay of vigour of mind and activity of intellect. The reins feel weary and painful, and the mind is apt to receive and encourage gloomy apprehensions and causeless fears. Fighting with this fiend is not always the best way to conquer him. I have always found exercise and the open air better than reasoning. But such weather as is now without doors does not encourage la petite guerre, so we must give him battle in form, by letting both mind and body know that, supposing one the House of Commons and the other the House of Peers, my will is sovereign over both. There is a good description of this species of mental weakness in the fine play of Beaumont and Fletcher called The Lover's Progress, where the man, warned that his death is approaching, works himself into an agony of fear, and calls for assistance, though there is no apparent danger. The apparition of the innkeeper's ghost, in the same play, hovers between the ludicrous and [the terrible]. To me the touches of the former quality which it contains seem to augment the effect of the latter — they seem to give reality to the supernatural, as being circumstances with which an inventor would hardly have garnished his story.

Will Clerk says he has a theory on the vitrified forts. I wonder if he and I agree. I think accidental conflagration is the cause.

December 12. — Hogg came to breakfast this morning, having taken and brought for his companion the Galashiels bard, David Thomson, as to a meeting of "huzz Tividale poets." The honest grunter opines with a delightful naïveté that Moore's verses are far owre sweet — answered by

Thomson that Moore's ear or notes, I forget which, were finely strung. "They are far owre finely strung," replied he of the Forest, "for mine are just reeght." It reminded me of Queen Bess, when questioning Melville sharply and closely whether Queen [Mary] was taller than her, and, extracting an answer in the affirmative, she replied, "Then your Queen is too tall, for I am just the proper height."

Was engaged the whole day with Sheriff Court processes. There is something sickening in seeing poor devils drawn into great expense about trifles by interested attorneys. But too cheap access to litigation has its evils on the other hand, for the proneness of the lower class to gratify spite and revenge in this way would be a dreadful evil were they able to endure the expense. Very few cases come before the Sheriff-court of Selkirkshire that ought to come anywhere. Wretched wranglings about a few pounds, begun in spleen, and carried on from obstinacy, and at length from fear of the conclusion to the banquet of illhumour, "D — n — n of expenses." I try to check it as well as I can; "but so 'twill be when I am gone."

December 12. — Dined at home, and spent the evening in writing — Anne and Lady Scott at the theatre to see Mathews; a very clever man my friend Mathews; but it is tiresome to be funny for a whole evening, so I was content and stupid at home.

An odd optical delusion has amused me these two last nights. I have been of late, for the first time, condemned to the constant use of spectacles. Now, when I have laid them aside to step into a room dimly lighted, out of the strong light which I use for writing, I have seen, or seemed to see, through the rims of the same spectacles which I have left behind me. At first the impression was so lively that I put my hand to my eyes believing I had the actual spectacles on at the moment. But what I saw was only the eidolon or image of said useful servants. This fortifies some of Dr. Hibbert's positions about spectral appearances.

December 13. — Letter from Lady Stafford — kind and friendly after the wont of Banzu-Mohr-ar-chat. This is wrong spelled, I know. Her countenance is something for Sophia, whose company should be — as ladies are said to choose their liquor — little and good. To be acquainted with persons of mere ton is a nuisance and a scrape — to be known to persons of real fashion and fortune is in London a very great advantage. She

is besides sure of the hereditary and constant friendship of the Buccleuch ladies, as well as those of Montagu and of the Harden family, of the Marchioness of Northampton, Lady Melville, and others, also the Miss Ardens, upon whose kind offices I have some claim, and would count upon them whether such claim existed or no. So she is well enough established among the Righthand file, which is very necessary in London where secondrate fashion is like false jewels.

Went to the yearly court of the Edinburgh Assurance Company, to which I am one of those graceful and useless appendages, called Directors Extraordinary — an extraordinary director I should prove had they elected me an ordinary one. There were there moneyers and great oneyers, men of metal — discounters and counters — sharp, grave, prudential faces — eyes weak with ciphering by lamplight — men who say to gold, Be thou paper, and to paper, Be thou turned into fine gold. Many a bustling, sharp-faced, keen-eyed writer too — some perhaps speculating with their clients' property. My reverend seigniors had expected a motion for printing their contract, which I, as a piece of light artillery, was brought down and got into battery to oppose. I should certainly have done this on the general ground, that while each partner could at any time obtain sight of the contract at a call on the directors or managers, it would be absurd to print it for the use of the Company — and that exposing it to the world at large was in all respects unnecessary, and might teach novel companies to avail themselves of our rules and calculations — if false, for the purpose of exposing our errors — if correct, for the purpose of improving their own schemes on our model. But my eloquence was not required, no one renewing the motion under question; so off I came, my ears still ringing with the sounds of thousands and tens of thousands, and my eyes dazzled with the golden gleam offered by so many capitalists.

Walked home with the Solicitor — decidedly the most hopeful young man of his time; high connection, great talent, spirited ambition, a ready and prompt elocution, with a good voice and dignified manner, prompt and steady courage, vigilant and constant assiduity, popularity with the young men, and the good opinion of the old, will, if I mistake not, carry him as [high as] any man who has been since the days of old Hal Dundas. He is hot though, and rather hasty: this should be amended. They who would play at single-stick must bear with patience a rap over the knuckles. Dined quietly with Lady Scott and Anne.

December 14. — Affairs very bad in the money-market in London. It must come here, and I have far too many engagements not to feel it. To end the matter at once, I intend to borrow £10,000, with which my son's marriage-contract allows me to charge my estate. At Whitsunday and Martinmas I will have enough to pay up the incumbrance of £3000 due to old Moss's daughter, and £5000 to Misses Ferguson, in whole or part. This will enable us to dispense in a great measure with bank assistance, and sleep in spite of thunder. I do not know whether it is this business which makes me a little bilious, or rather the want of exercise during the season of late, and change of the weather to too much heat. Thank God, my circumstances are good, — upon a fair balance which I have made, certainly not less than £40,000 or nearly £50,000 above the world. But the sun and moon shall dance on the green ere carelessness, or hope of gain, or facility of getting cash, shall make me go too deep again, were it but for the disquiet of the thing. Dined: Lady Scott and Anne quietly.

December 15. — R.P. G[illies] came sicut mos est at five o'clock to make me confidant of the extremities of his distress. It is clear all he has to do is to make the best agreement he can with his creditors. I remember many years since the poor fellow told me he thought there was something interesting in having difficulties. Poor lad, he will have enough of them now. He talks about writing translations for the booksellers from the German to the amount of five or six hundred pounds, but this is like a man proposing to run a whole day at top speed. Yet, if he had good subjects, R.P.G. is one of the best translators I know, and something must be done for him certainly, though, I fear, it will be necessary to go to the bottom of the ulcer; palliatives won't do. He is terribly imprudent, yet a worthy and benevolent creature — a great bore withal. Dined alone with family. I am determined not to stand mine host to all Scotland and England as I have done. This shall be a saving, since it must be a borrowing, year. We heard from Sophia; they are got safe to town; but as Johnnie had a little bag of meal with him, to make his porridge on the road, the whole innyard assembled to see the operation. Junor, his maid, was of opinion that England was an "awfu' country to make parritch in." God bless the poor baby, and restore his perfect health!

December 16. — R.P.G. and his friend Robert Wilson came — the former at five, as usual — the latter at three, as appointed. R[obert] W[ilson] frankly said that R.P.G.'s case was quite desperate, that he was insolvent, and that any attempt to save him at present would be just so much cash thrown away. God knows, at this moment I have none to throw away uselessly. For poor Gillies there was a melancholy mixture of pathos and affectation in his statement, which really affected me; while it told me that it would be useless to help him to money on such very empty plans. I endeavoured to persuade him to make a virtue of necessity, resign all to his creditors, and begin the world on a new leaf. I offered him Chiefswood for a temporary retirement. Lady Scott thinks I was wrong, and nobody could less desire such a neighbour, all his affectations being caviare to me. But then the wife and children! Went again to the Solicitor on a wrong night, being asked for tomorrow. Lady Scott undertakes to keep my engagements recorded in future. Sed quis custodiet ipsam custodem?

December 17. — Dined with the Solicitor — Lord Chief-Baron — Sir William Boothby, nephew of old Sir Brooke, the dandy poet, *etc.* Annoyed with anxious presentiments, which the night's post must dispel or confirm — all in London as bad as possible.

December 18. — Ballantyne called on me this morning. Venit illa suprema dies. My extremity is come. Cadell has received letters from London which all but positively announce the failure of Hurst and Robinson, so that Constable & Co. must follow, and I must go with poor James Ballantyne for company. I suppose it will involve my all. But if they leave me £500, I can still make it £1000 or £1200 a year. And if they take my salaries of £1300 and £300, they cannot but give me something out of them. I have been rash in anticipating funds to buy land, but then I made from £5000 to £10,000 a year, and land was my temptation. I think nobody can lose a penny — that is one comfort. Men will think pride has had a fall. Let them indulge their own pride in thinking that my fall makes them higher, or seems so at least. I have the satisfaction to recollect that my prosperity has been of advantage to many, and that some at least will forgive my transient wealth on account of the innocence of my intentions, and my real wish to do good to the poor. This news will make sad hearts at Darnick, and in the cottages of

Abbotsford, which I do not nourish the least hope of preserving. It has been my Delilah, and so I have often termed it; and now the recollection of the extensive woods I planted, and the walks I have formed, from which strangers must derive both the pleasure and profit, will excite feelings likely to sober my gayest moments. I have half resolved never to see the place again. How could I tread my hall with such a diminished crest? How live a poor indebted man where I was once the wealthy, the honoured? My children are provided; thank God for that. I was to have gone there on Saturday in joy and prosperity to receive my friends. My dogs will wait for me in vain. It is foolish — but the thoughts of parting from these dumb creatures have moved me more than any of the painful reflections I have put down. Poor things, I must get them kind masters; there may be yet those who loving me may love my dog because it has been mine. I must end this, or I shall lose the tone of mind with which men should meet distress.

I find my dogs' feet on my knees. I hear them whining and seeking me everywhere — this is nonsense, but it is what they would do could they know how things are. Poor Will Laidlaw! poor Tom Purdie! this will be news to wring your heart, and many a poor fellow's besides to whom my prosperity was daily bread.

Ballantyne behaves like himself, and sinks his own ruin in contemplating mine. I tried to enrich him indeed, and now all — all is gone. He will have the "Journal" still, that is a comfort, for sure they cannot find a better Editor. They — alas! who will they be — the unbekannten Obern who are to dispose of my all as they will? Some hard-eyed banker; some of those men of millions whom I described. Cadell showed more kind and personal feeling to me than I thought he had possessed. He says there are some properties of works that will revert to me, the copy-money not being paid, but it cannot be any very great matter, I should think.

Another person did not afford me all the sympathy I expected, perhaps because I seemed to need little support, yet that is not her nature, which is generous and kind. She thinks I have been imprudent, trusting men so far. Perhaps so — but what could I do? I must sell my books to some one, and these folks gave me the largest price; if they had kept their ground I could have brought myself round fast enough by the plan of 14th December. I now view matters at the very worst, and suppose that my all must go to supply the deficiencies of Constable. I fear it must be so. His connections with Hurst and Robinson have been so intimate that they must be largely

involved. This is the worst of the concern; our own is comparatively plain sailing.

Poor Gillies called yesterday to tell me he was in extremity. God knows I had every cause to have returned him the same answer. I must think his situation worse than mine, as through his incoherent, miserable tale, I could see that he had exhausted each access to credit, and yet fondly imagines that, bereft of all his accustomed indulgences, he can work with a literary zeal unknown to his happier days. I hope he may labour enough to gain the mere support of his family. For myself, the magic wand of the Unknown is shivered in his grasp. He must henceforth be termed the Too-well-known. The feast of fancy is over with the feeling of independence. I can no longer have the delight of waking in the morning with bright ideas in my mind, haste to commit them to paper, and count them monthly, as the means of planting such groves, and purchasing such wastes; replacing my dreams of fiction by other prospective visions of walks by

> "Fountain heads, and pathless groves
> Places which pale passion loves."

Footnote to page 44 in the original MS.: — "Turn back to page 41 and 42. I turned the page accidentally, and the partner of a bankrupt concern ought not to waste two leaves of paper."

This cannot be; but I may work substantial husbandry, work history, and such concerns. They will not be received with the same enthusiasm; at least I much doubt the general knowledge that an author must write for his bread, at least for improving his pittance, degrades him and his productions in the public eye. He falls into the secondrate rank of estimation:

> "While the harness sore galls, and the spurs his sides goad,
> The high-mettled racer's a hack on the road."

It is a bitter thought; but if tears start at it, let them flow. I am so much of this mind, that if any one would now offer to relieve all my embarrassments on condition I would continue the exertions which brought it there, dear as the place is to me, I hardly think I could undertake the labour on which I entered with my usual alacrity only this morning, though not without a boding feeling of my exertions proving useless. Yet to save Abbotsford I would attempt all that was possible. My heart clings to the place I have

created. There is scarce a tree on it that does not owe its being to me, and the pain of leaving it is greater than I can tell. I have about £10,000 of Constable's, for which I am bound to give literary value, but if I am obliged to pay other debts for him, I will take leave to retain this sum at his credit. We shall have made some kittle questions of literary property amongst us. Once more, "Patience, cousin, and shuffle the cards."

I have endeavoured at times to give vent to thoughts naturally so painful, by writing these notices, partly to keep them at bay by busying myself with the history of the French Convention. I thank God I can do both with reasonable composure. I wonder how Anne will bear this affliction? She is passionate, but stouthearted and courageous in important matters, though irritable in trifles. I am glad Lockhart and his wife are gone. Why? I cannot tell; but I am pleased to be left to my own regrets without being melted by condolences, though of the most sincere and affectionate kind.

Anne bears her misfortune gallantly and well, with a natural feeling, no doubt, of the rank and consideration she is about to lose. Lady Scott is incredulous, and persists in cherishing hope where there is no ground for hope. I wish it may not bring on the gloom of spirits which has given me such distress. If she were the active person she once was that would not be. Now I fear it more than what Constable or Cadell will tell me this evening, so that my mind is made up.

Oddly enough, it happened. Mine honest friend Hector came in before dinner to ask a copy of my seal of Arms, with a sly kindliness of intimation that it was for some agreeable purpose.

Halfpast Eight. — I closed this book under the consciousness of impending ruin, I open it an hour after, thanks be to God, with the strong hope that matters may be got over safely and honourably, in a mercantile sense. Cadell came at eight to communicate a letter from Hurst and Robinson, intimating they had stood the storm, and though clamorous for assistance from Scotland, saying they had prepared their strongholds without need of the banks.

This was a mistake.

This is all so far well, but I will not borrow any money on my estate till I see things reasonably safe. Stocks have risen from — — to — — , a strong proof that confidence is restored. But I will yield to no delusive hopes, and fall back fall edge, my resolutions hold.

I shall always think the better of Cadell for this, not merely because his feet are beautiful on the mountains who brings good tidings, but because he showed feeling — deep feeling, poor fellow — he who I thought had no more than his numeration table, and who, if he had had his whole counting-house full of sensibility, had yet his wife and children to bestow it upon — I will not forget this if I get through. I love the virtues of rough and round men; the others are apt to escape in salt rheum, sal-volatile, and a white pocket-handkerchief. An odd thought strikes me: when I die will the Journal of these days be taken out of the ebony cabinet at Abbotsford, and read as the transient pout of a man worth £60,000, with wonder that the well-seeming Baronet should ever have experienced such a hitch? Or will it be found in some obscure lodginghouse, where the decayed son of chivalry has hung up his scutcheon for some 20s. a week, and where one or two old friends will look grave and whisper to each other, "Poor gentleman," "A well-meaning man," "Nobody's enemy but his own," "Thought his parts could never wear out," "Family poorly left," "Pity he took that foolish title"? Who can answer this question?

What a life mine has been! — half educated, almost wholly neglected or left to myself, stuffing my head with most nonsensical trash, and undervalued in society for a time by most of my companions, getting forward and held a bold and clever fellow, contrary to the opinion of all who thought me a mere dreamer, brokenhearted for two years, my heart handsomely pieced again, but the crack will remain to my dying day. Rich and poor four or five times, once on the verge of ruin, yet opened new sources of wealth almost overflowing. Now taken in my pitch of pride, and nearly winged (unless the good news hold), because London chooses to be in an uproar, and in the tumult of bulls and bears, a poor inoffensive lion like myself is pushed to the wall. And what is to be the end of it? God knows. And so ends the catechism.

December 19. — Ballantyne here before breakfast. He looks on Cadell's last night's news with more confidence than I do; but I must go to work be my thoughts sober or lively. Constable came in and sat an hour. The old gentleman is firm as a rock, and scorns the idea of Hurst and Robinson's stopping. He talks of going up to London next week and making sales of our interest in W[oodstock] and Boney, which would put a hedge round his finances. He is a very clever fellow, and will, I think, bear us through.

Dined at Lord Chief-Baron's. Lord Justice-Clerk; Lord President; Captain Scarlett, a gentlemanlike young man, the son of the great Counsel, and a friend of my son Walter; Lady Charlotte Hope, and other womankind; R. Dundas of Arniston, and his pleasant and good-humoured little wife, whose quick intelligent look pleases me more, though her face be plain, than a hundred mechanical beauties.

December 20. — I like Ch. Ba. Shepherd very much — as much, I think, as any man I have learned to know of late years. There is a neatness and precision, a closeness and truth, in the tone of his conversation, which shows what a lawyer he must have been. Perfect good-humour and suavity of manner, with a little warmth of temper on suitable occasions. His great deafness alone prevented him from being Lord Chief-Justice. I never saw a man so patient under such a malady. He loves society, and converses excellently; yet is often obliged, in a mixed company particularly, to lay aside his trumpet, retire into himself, and withdraw from the talk. He does this with an expression of patience on his countenance which touches one much. He has occasion for patience otherwise, I should think, for Lady S. is fine and fidgety, and too anxious to have everything pointe devise.

Constable's licence for the Dedication is come, which will make him happy.

Dined with James Ballantyne, and met my old friend Mathews, the comedian, with his son, now grown up a clever, rather forward lad, who makes songs in the style of James Smith or Colman, and sings them with spirit; rather lengthy though.

December 21. — There have been odd associations attending my two last meetings with Mathews. The last time I saw him, before yesterday evening, he dined with me in company with poor Sir Alexander Boswell, who was killed within two or three months. I never saw Sir Alexander more. The time before was in 1815, when John Scott of Gala and I were returning from France, and passed through London, when we brought Mathews down as far as Leamington. Poor Byron lunched, or rather made an early dinner, with us at Long's, and a most brilliant day we had of it. I never saw Byron so full of fun, frolic, wit, and whim: he was as playful as a kitten. Well, I never saw him again. So this man of mirth, with his merry meetings, has brought me no luck. I like better that he should throw in his talent of

mimicry and humour into the present current tone of the company, than that he should be required to give this, that, and t'other bit selected from his public recitations. They are good certainly — excellent; but then you must laugh, and that is always severe to me. When I do laugh in sincerity, the joke must be or seem unpremeditated. I could not help thinking, in the midst of the glee, what gloom had lately been over the minds of three of the company, Cadell, J.B., and the Journalist. What a strange scene if the surge of conversation could suddenly ebb like the tide, and [show] us the state of people's real minds! Savary might have been gay in such a party with all his forgeries in his heart.

> "No eyes the rooks discover
> Which lurk beneath the deep."

Life could not be endured were it seen in reality.

Things are mending in town, and H[urst] and R[obinson] write with confidence, and are, it would seem, strongly supported by wealthy friends. Cadell and Constable are confident of their making their way through the storm, and the impression of their stability is general in London. I hear the same from Lockhart. Indeed, I now believe that they wrote gloomy letters to Constable, chiefly to get as much money out of them as they possibly could. But they had wellnigh overdone it. This being Teind Wednesday must be a day of leisure and labour. Sophia has got a house, 25 Pall Mall. Dined at home with Lady Scott and Anne.

December 22. — I wrote six of my close pages yesterday, which is about twentyfour pages in print. What is more, I think it comes off twangingly. The story is so very interesting in itself, that there is no fear of the book answering. Superficial it must be, but I do not disown the charge. Better a superficial book, which brings well and strikingly together the known and acknowledged facts, than a dull boring narrative, pausing to see further into a millstone at every moment than the nature of the millstone admits. Nothing is so tiresome as walking through some beautiful scene with a minute philosopher, a botanist, or pebble-gatherer, who is eternally calling your attention from the grand features of the natural scenery to look at grasses and chucky-stones. Yet, in their way, they give useful information; and so does the minute historian. Gad, I think that will look well in the

preface. My bile is quite gone. I really believe it arose from mere anxiety. What a wonderful connection between the mind and body!

The air of "Bonnie Dundee" running in my head to-day, I [wrote] a few verses to it before dinner, taking the keynote from the story of Clavers leaving the Scottish Convention of Estates in 1688-9. I wonder if they are good. Ah! poor Will Erskine! thou couldst and wouldst have told me. I must consult J.B., who is as honest as was W.E. But then, though he has good taste too, there is a little of Big Bow-wow about it. Can't say what made me take a frisk so uncommon of late years, as to write verses of freewill. I suppose the same impulse which makes birds sing when the storm seems blown over.

Dined at Lord Minto's. There were Lord and Lady Ruthven, Will Clerk, and Thomas Thomson, — a right choice party. There was also my very old friend Mrs. Brydone, the relict of the traveller, and daughter of Principal Robertson, and really worthy of such a connection — Lady Minto, who is also peculiarly agreeable — and her sister, Mrs. Admiral Adam, in the evening.

December 23. — The present Lord Minto is a very agreeable, wellinformed, and sensible man, but he possesses neither the high breeding, ease of manner, nor eloquence of his father, the first Earl. That Sir Gilbert was indeed a man among a thousand. I knew him very intimately in the beginning of the century, and, which was very agreeable, was much at his house on very easy terms. He loved the Muses, and worshipped them in secret, and used to read some of his poetry, which was but middling.

Tom Campbell lived at Minto, but it was in a state of dependence which he brooked very ill. He was kindly treated, but would not see it in the right view, and suspected slights, and so on, where no such thing was meant. There was a turn of Savage about Tom though without his blackguardism — a kind of waywardness of mind and irritability that must have made a man of his genius truly unhappy. Lord Minto, with the mildest manners, was very tenacious of his opinions, although he changed them twice in the crisis of politics. He was the early friend of Fox, and made a figure towards the end of the American war, or during the struggles betwixt Fox and Pitt. Then came the Revolution, and he joined the Anti-Gallican party so keenly, that he declared against Addington's peace with France, and was for a time, I believe, a Wyndhamite. He was reconciled to the Whigs on the Fox and

Grenville coalition; but I have heard that Fox, contrary to his wont, retained such personal feelings as made him object to Sir Gilbert Elliot's having a seat in the Cabinet; so he was sent as Governor-General to India — a better thing, I take it, for his fortune. He died shortly after his return, at Hatfield or Barnet, on his way down to his native country. He was a most pleasing and amiable man. I was very sorry for his death, though I do not know how we should have met, for the contested election in 1805 [in Roxburghshire] had placed some coldness betwixt the present Lord and me. I was certainly anxious for Sir Alexander Don, both as friend of my most kind friend Charles, Duke of Buccleuch, and on political accounts; and those thwartings are what men in public life do not like to endure. After a cessation of friendship for some years, we have come about again. We never had the slightest personal dispute or disagreement. But politics are the blowpipe beneath whose influence the best cemented friendships too often dissever; and ours, after all, was only a very familiar acquaintance.

It is very odd that the common people at Minto and the neighbourhood will not believe to this hour that the first Earl is dead. They think he had done something in India which he could not answer for — that the house was rebuilt on a scale unusually large to give him a suite of secret apartments, and that he often walks about the woods and crags of Minto at night, with a white nightcap, and long white beard. The circumstance of his having died on the road down to Scotland is the sole foundation of this absurd legend, which shows how willing the vulgar are to gull themselves when they can find no one else to take the trouble. I have seen people who could read, write, and cipher, shrug their shoulders and look mysterious when this subject was mentioned. One very absurd addition was made on occasion of a great ball at Minto House, which it was said was given to draw all people away from the grounds, that the concealed Earl might have leisure for his exercise. This was on the principle in the German play, where, to hide their conspiracy, the associates join in a chorus song.

We dined at home; Mr. Davidoff and his tutor kept an engagement with us to dinner notwithstanding the death of the Emperor Alexander. They went to the play with the womankind; I stayed at home to write.

December 24. — Wrote Walter and Jane, and gave the former an account of how things had been in the money market, and the loan of £10,000. Constable has a scheme of publishing the works of the Author of

W[averley] in a superior style, at £1, 1s. volume. He says he will answer for making £20,000 of this, and liberally offered me any share of the profit. I have no great claim to any, as I have only to contribute the notes, which are light work; yet a few thousands coming in will be a good thing — besides the P[rinting] Office. Constable, though valetudinary, and cross with his partner, is certainly as good a pilot in these rough seas as ever man put faith in. His rally has put me in mind of the old song: —

> "The tailor raise and shook his duds,
> He gar'd the BILLS flee aff in cluds,
> And they that stayed gat fearfu' thuds —
> The tailor proved a man, O."
> We are for Abbotsford to-day, with a light heart.

Abbotsford, December 25. — Arrived here last night at seven. Our halls are silent compared to last year, but let us be thankful — when we think how near the chance appeared but a week since that these halls would have been ours no longer. Barbarus has segetes? Nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia. There shall be no lack of wisdom. But come — il faut cultiver notre jardin. Let us see: I will write out the "Bonnets of Bonnie Dundee"; I will sketch a preface to La Rochejacquelin for Constable's Miscellany, and try about a specimen of notes for the W[averley Novels]. Together with letters and by-business, it will be a good day's work.

> "I make a vow,
> And keep it true."

I will accept no invitation for dinner, save one to Newton-Don, and Mertoun tomorrow, instead of Christmas Day. On this day of general devotion I have a particular call for gratitude!!

My God! what poor creatures we are! After all my fair proposals yesterday, I was seized with a most violent pain in the right kidney and parts adjacent, which, joined to deadly sickness which it brought on, forced me instantly to go to bed and send for Clarkson. He came and inquired, pronouncing the complaint to be gravel augmented by bile. I was in great agony till about two o'clock, but awoke with the pain gone. I got up, had a fire in my dressing-closet, and had Dalgleish to shave me — two trifles,

which I only mention, because they are contrary to my hardy and independent personal habits. But although a man cannot be a hero to his valet, his valet in sickness becomes of great use to him. I cannot expect that this first will be the last visit of this cruel complaint; but shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not receive evil?

December 27th. — Slept twelve hours at a stretch, being much exhausted. Totally without pain to-day, but uncomfortable from the effects of calomel, which, with me at least, is like the assistance of an auxiliary army, just one degree more tolerable than the enemy it chases away. Calomel contemplations are not worth recording. I wrote an introduction and a few notes to the Memoirs of Madame La Rochejacquelin, being all that I was equal to.

Sir Adam Ferguson came over and tried to marry my verses to the tune of "Bonnie Dundee." They seem well adapted to each other. Dined with Lady Scott and Anne.

Worked at Pepys in the evening, with the purpose of review for Lockhart. Notwithstanding the depressing effects of the calomel, I feel the pleasure of being alone and uninterrupted. Few men, leading a quiet life, and without any strong or highly varied change of circumstances, have seen more variety of society than I — few have enjoyed it more, or been bored, as it is called, less by the company of tiresome people. I have rarely, if ever, found any one, out of whom I could not extract amusement or edification; and were I obliged to account for hints afforded on such occasions, I should make an ample deduction from my inventive powers. Still, however, from the earliest time I can remember, I preferred the pleasure of being alone to waiting for visitors, and have often taken a bannock and a bit of cheese to the wood or hill, to avoid dining with company. As I grew from boyhood to manhood I saw this would not do; and that to gain a place in men's esteem I must mix and bustle with them. Pride and an excitation of spirits supplied the real pleasure which others seem to feel in society, and certainly upon many occasions it was real. Still, if the question was, eternal company, without the power of retiring within yourself, or solitary confinement for life, I should say, "Turnkey, lock the cell!" My life, though not without its fits of waking and strong exertion, has been a sort of dream, spent in

> "Chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy."

I have worn a wishing-cap, the power of which has been to divert present griefs by a touch of the wand of imagination, and gild over the future prospect by prospects more fair than can ever be realised. Somewhere it is said that this castle-building — this wielding of the aërial trowel — is fatal to exertions in actual life. I cannot tell, I have not found it so. I cannot, indeed, say like Madame Genlis, that in the imaginary scenes in which I have acted a part I ever prepared myself for anything which actually befell me; but I have certainly fashioned out much that made the present hour pass pleasantly away, and much that has enabled me to contribute to the amusement of the public. Since I was five years old I cannot remember the time when I had not some ideal part to play for my own solitary amusement.

December 28. — Somehow I think the attack on Christmas Day has been of a critical kind, and, having gone off so well, may be productive rather of health than continued indisposition. If one is to get a renewal of health in his fifty-fourth year, he must look to pay fine for it. Last night George Thomson came to see how I was, poor fellow. He has talent, is well informed, and has an excellent heart; but there is an eccentricity about him that defies description. I wish to God I saw him provided in a country kirk. That, with a rational wife — that is, if there is such a thing to be gotten for him, — would, I think, bring him to a steady temper. At present he is between the tyning and the winning. If I could get him to set to any hard study, he would do something clever.

How to make a critic. — A sly rogue, sheltering himself under the generic name of Mr. Campbell, requested of me, through the penny-post, the loan of £50 for two years, having an impulse, as he said, to make this demand. As I felt no corresponding impulse, I begged to decline a demand which might have been as reasonably made by any Campbell on earth; and another impulse has determined the man of fifty pounds to send me anonymous abuse of my works and temper and selfish disposition. The severity of the joke lies in 14d. for postage, to avoid which his next epistle shall go back to the clerks of the Post Office, as not for S.W.S. How the severe rogue would be disappointed, if he knew I never looked at more than the first and last lines of his satirical effusion!

When I first saw that a literary profession was to be my fate, I endeavoured by all efforts of stoicism to divest myself of that irritable

degree of sensibility — or, to speak plainly, of vanity — which makes the poetical race miserable and ridiculous. The anxiety of a poet for praise and for compliments I have always endeavoured [to keep down].

December 29. — Base feelings this same calomel gives one — mean, poor, and abject — a wretch, as Will Rose says: —

> "Fie, fie, on silly coward man,
> That he should be the slave o't."

Then it makes one "wofully dogged and snappish," as Dr. Rutty, the Quaker, says in his Gurnal.

Sent Lockhart four pages on Sheridan's plays; not very good, I think, but the demand came sudden. Must go to W — — k! yet am vexed by that humour of contradiction which makes me incline to do anything else in preference. Commenced preface for new edition of my Novels. The city of Cork send my freedom in a silver box. I thought I was out of their grace for going to see Blarney rather than the Cove, for which I was attacked and defended in the papers when in Ireland. I am sure they are so civil that I would have gone wherever they wished me to go if I had had any one to have told me what I ought to be most inquisitive about.

> "For if I should as lion come in strife
> Into such place, 't were pity of my life."

December 30. — Spent at home and in labour — with the weight of unpleasant news from Edinburgh. J.B. is like to be pinched next week unless the loan can be brought forward. I must and have endeavoured to supply him. At present the result of my attempts is uncertain. I am even more anxious about C[onstable] & Co., unless they can get assistance from their London friends to whom they gave much. All is in God's hands. The worst can only be what I have before anticipated. But I must, I think, renounce the cigars. They brought back (using two this evening) the irritation of which I had no feelings while abstaining from them. Dined alone with Gordon, Lady S., and Anne. James Curle, Melrose, has handsomely lent me £600; he has done kindly. I have served him before and will again if in my power.

December 31. — Took a good sharp walk the first time since my illness, and found myself the better in health and spirits. Being Hogmanay, there dined with us Colonel Russell and his sisters, Sir Adam Ferguson and Lady, Colonel Ferguson, with Mary and Margaret; an auld-warld party, who made themselves happy in the auld fashion. I felt so tired about eleven that I was forced to steal to bed.

1826. — January

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January 1. — A year has passed — another has commenced. These solemn divisions of time influence our feelings as they recur. Yet there is nothing in it; for every day in the year closes a twelvemonth as well as the 31st December. The latter is only the solemn pause, as when a guide, showing a wild and mountainous road, calls on a party to pause and look back at the scenes which they have just passed. To me this new year opens sadly. There are these troublesome pecuniary difficulties, which however, I think, this week should end. There is the absence of all my children, Anne excepted, from our little family festival. There is, besides, that ugly report of the 15th Hussars going to India. Walter, I suppose, will have some step in view, and will go, and I fear Jane will not dissuade him.

A hard, frosty day — cold, but dry and pleasant under foot. Walked into the plantations with Anne and Anne Russell. A thought strikes me, alluding to this period of the year. People say that the whole human frame in all its parts and divisions is gradually in the act of decaying and renewing. What a curious timepiece it would be that could indicate to us the moment this gradual and insensible change had so completely taken place, that no atom was left of the original person who had existed at a certain period, but there existed in his stead another person having the same limbs, thews, and sinews, the same face and lineaments, the same consciousness — a new ship built on an old plank — a pair of transmigrated stockings, like those of Sir John Cutler, all green silk, without one thread of the original black silk left! Singular — to be at once another and the same.

January 2. — Weather clearing up in Edinburgh once more, and all will, I believe, do well. I am pressed to get on with Woodstock, and must try. I wish I could open a good vein of interest which would breathe freely. I must take my old way, and write myself into good-humour with my task. It is only when I dally with what I am about, look back, and aside, instead of keeping my eyes straight forward, that I feel these cold sinkings of the heart. All men I suppose do, less or more. They are like the sensation of a sailor when the ship is cleared for action, and all are at their places —

gloomy enough; but the first broadside puts all to rights. Dined at Huntly Burn with the Fergusons en masse.

January 3. — Promises a fair day, and I think the progress of my labours will afford me a little exercise, which I greatly need to help off the calomel feeling. Walked with Colonel Russell from eleven till two — the first good day's exercise I have had since coming here. We went through all the Terrace, the Roman Planting, over by the Stiel and Haxellcleuch, and so by the Rhymer's Glen to Chiefswood, which gave my heart a twinge, so disconsolate it seemed. Yet all is for the best. Called at Huntly Burn, and shook hands with Sir Adam and his Lady just going off. When I returned, signed the bond for £10,000, which will disencumber me of all pressing claims; when I get forward W — — k and Nap. there will be £12,000 and upwards, and I hope to add £3000 against this time next year, or the devil must hold the dice. J.B. writes me seriously on the carelessness of my style. I do not think I am more careless than usual; but I dare say he is right. I will be more cautious.

January 4. — Despatched the deed yesterday executed. Mr. and Mrs. Skene, my excellent friends, came to us from Edinburgh. Skene, distinguished for his attainments as a draughtsman, and for his highly gentlemanlike feelings and character, is Laird of Rubislaw, near Aberdeen. Having had an elder brother, his education was somewhat neglected in early life, against which disadvantage he made a most gallant [fight], exerting himself much to obtain those accomplishments which he has since possessed. Admirable in all exercises, there entered a good deal of the cavalier into his early character. Of late he has given himself much to the study of antiquities. His wife, a most excellent person, was tenderly fond of Sophia. They bring so much old-fashioned kindness and good-humour with them, besides the recollections of other times, that they must be always welcome guests. Letter from Mr. Scrope, announcing a visit.

January 5. — Got the desired accommodation with Coutts, which will put J.B. quite straight, but am a little anxious still about Constable. He has immense stock, to be sure, and most valuable, but he may have sacrifices to make to convert a large proportion of it into ready money. The accounts from London are most disastrous. Many wealthy persons totally ruined, and

many, many more have been obliged to purchase their safety at a price they will feel all their lives. I do not hear things are so bad in Edinburgh; and J.B.‘s business has been transacted by the banks with liberality.

Colonel Russell told us last night that the last of the Moguls, a descendant of Kubla-Khan, though having no more power than his effigies at the back of a set of playing-cards, refused to meet Lord Hastings, because the Governor-General would not agree to remain standing in his presence. Pretty well for the blood of Timur in these degenerate days!

Much alarmed. I had walked till twelve with Skene and Col. Russell, and then sat down to my work. To my horror and surprise I could neither write nor spell, but put down one word for another, and wrote nonsense. I was much overpowered at the same time, and could not conceive the reason. I fell asleep, however, in my chair, and slept for two hours. On waking my head was clearer, and I began to recollect that last night I had taken the anodyne left for the purpose by Clarkson, and being disturbed in the course of the night, I had not slept it off.

Obliged to give up writing to-day — read Pepys instead. The Scotts of Harden were to have dined, but sent an apology, — storm coming on. Russells left us this morning to go to Haining.

January 6. — This seems to be a feeding storm, coming on by little and little. Wrought all day, and dined quiet. My disorder is wearing off, and the quiet society of the Skenes suits with my present humour. I really thought I was in for some very bad illness. Curious expression of an Indian-born boy just come from Bengal, a son of my cousin George Swinton. The child saw a hare run across the fields, and exclaimed, “See, there is a little tiger!”

January 7, Sunday. — Knight, a young artist, son of the performer, came to paint my picture at the request of Terry. This is very far from being agreeable, as I submitted to this distressing state of constraint last year to Newton, at request of Lockhart; to Leslie at request of my American friend; to Wilkie, for his picture of the King’s arrival at Holyrood House; and some one besides. I am as tired of the operation as old Maida, who had been so often sketched that he got up and went away with signs of loathing whenever he saw an artist unfurl his paper and handle his brushes. But this young man is civil and modest; and I have agreed he shall sit in the room while I work, and take the best likeness he can, without compelling me into fixed attitudes or the yawning fatigues of an actual sitting. I think, if he has

talent, he may do more my way than in the customary mode; at least I can't have the hangdog look which the unfortunate Theseus has who is doomed to sit for what seems an eternity.

I wrought till two o'clock — indeed till I was almost nervous with correcting and scribbling. I then walked, or rather was dragged, through the snow by Tom Purdie, while Skene accompanied. What a blessing there is in a man like Tom, whom no familiarity can spoil, whom you may scold and praise and joke with, knowing the quality of the man is unalterable in his love and reverence to his master. Use an ordinary servant in the same way and he will be your master in a month. We should thank God for the snow as well as summer flowers. This brushing exercise has put all my nerves into tone again, which were really jarred with fatigue until my very backbone seemed breaking. This comes of trying to do too much. J.B.'s news are as good as possible. — Prudence, prudence, and all will do excellently.

January 8. — Frost and snow still. Write to excuse myself from attending the funeral of my aunt, Mrs. Curle, which takes place tomorrow at Kelso. She was a woman of the old Sandy-Knowe breed, with the strong sense, high principle, and indifferent temper which belonged to my father's family. She lived with great credit on a moderate income, and, I believe, gave away a great deal of it.

January 9. — Mathews the comedian and his son came to spend a day at Abbotsford. The last is a clever young man, with much of his father's talent for mimicry. Rather forward though. Mr. Scrope also came out, which fills our house.

January 10. — Bodily health, the mainspring of the microcosm, seems quite restored. No more flinching or nervous fits, but the sound mind in the sound body. What poor things does a fever-fit or an overflowing of the bile make of the masters of creation!

The snow begins to fall thick this morning —

> "The landlord then aloud did say,
> As how he wished they would go away."

To have our friends shut up here would be rather too much of a good thing.

The day cleared up and was very pleasant. Had a good walk and looked at the curling. Mr. Mathews made himself very amusing in the evening. He has the goodnature to show his accomplishments without pressing, and without the appearance of feeling pain. On the contrary, I dare say he enjoys the pleasure he communicates.

January 11. — I got proof-sheets, in which it seems I have repeated a whole passage of history which had been told before. James is in an awful stew, and I cannot blame him; but then he should consider the hyoscyamus which I was taking, and the anxious botheration about the money-market. However, as Chaucer says: —

> "There is na workeman
> That can bothe worken wel and hastilie;
> This must be done at leisure parfitly."

January 12. — Mathews last night gave us a very perfect imitation of old Cumberland, who carried the poetic jealousy and irritability further than any man I ever saw. He was a great flatterer too, the old rogue. Will Erskine used to admire him. I think he wanted originality. A very high-bred man in point of manners in society.

My little artist, Knight, gets on better with his portrait — the features are, however, too pinched, I think.

Upon the whole, the days pass pleasantly enough — work till one or two, then an hour or two's walk in the snow, then lighter work, or reading. Late dinner, and singing or chat in the evening. Mathews has really all the will, as well as the talent, to be amusing. He confirms my idea of ventriloquism (which is an absurd word), as being merely the art of imitating sounds at a greater or less distance, assisted by some little points of trick to influence the imagination of the audience — the vulgar idea of a peculiar organisation (beyond fineness of ear and of utterance) is nonsense.

January 13. — Our party are about to disperse —

> "Like youthful steers unyoked, east, north, and south."

I am not sorry, being one of those whom too much mirth always inclines to sadness. The missing so many of my own family, together with the serious inconveniences to which I have been exposed, gave me at present a desire to be alone. The Skenes return to Edinburgh, so does Mr. Scrope — item, the little artist; Mathews to Newcastle; his son to Liverpool. So exeunt omnes.

Mathews assures me that Sheridan was generally very dull in society, and sate sullen and silent, swallowing glass after glass, rather a hindrance than a help. But there was a time when he broke out with a resumption of what had been going on, done with great force, and generally attacking some person in the company, or some opinion which he had expressed. I never saw Sheridan but in large parties. He had a Bardolph countenance, with heavy features, but his eye possessed the most distinguished brilliancy. Mathews says it is very simple in Tom Moore to admire how Sheridan came by the means of paying the price of Drury Lane Theatre, when all the world knows he never paid it at all; and that Lacy, who sold it, was reduced to want by his breach of faith. Dined quiet with Anne, Lady Scott, and Gordon.

January 14. — An odd mysterious letter from Constable, who is gone post to London, to put something to rights which is wrong betwixt them, their banker, and another moneyed friend. It strikes me to be that sort of letter which I have seen men write when they are desirous that their disagreeable intelligence should be rather apprehended than avowed. I thought he had been in London a fortnight ago, disposing of property to meet this exigence, and so I think he should. Well, I must have patience. But these terrors and frights are truly annoying. Luckily the funny people are gone, and I shall not have the task of grinning when I am serious enough. Dined as yesterday.

A letter from J.B. mentioning Constable's journey, but without expressing much, if any, apprehension. He knows C. well, and saw him before his departure, and makes no doubt of his being able easily to extricate whatever may be entangled. I will not, therefore, make myself uneasy. I can help doing so surely, if I will. At least, I have given up cigars since the year began, and have now no wish to return to the habit, as it is called. I see no reason why one should not be able to vanquish, with God's assistance, these noxious thoughts which foretell evil but cannot remedy it.

January 15. — Like yesterday, a hard frost. Thermometer at 10; water in my dressing-room frozen to flint; yet I had a fine walk yesterday, the sun dancing delightfully on "grim Nature's visage hoar." Were it not the plague of being dragged along by another person, I should like such weather as well as summer; but having Tom Purdie to do this office reconciles me to it. I cannot cleik with John, as old Mrs. Mure [of Caldwell] used to say. I mean, that an ordinary menial servant thus hooked to your side reminds me of the twin bodies mentioned by Pitscottie, being two trunks on the same waist and legs. One died before the other, and remained a dead burden on the back of its companion. Such is close union with a person whom you cannot well converse with, and whose presence is yet indispensable to your getting on. An actual companion, whether humble or your equal, is still worse. But Tom Purdie is just the thing, kneaded up between the friend and servant, as well as Uncle Toby's bowling-green between sand and clay. You are certain he is proud as well as patient under his burthen, and you are under no more constraint than with a pony. I must ride him to-day if the weather holds up. Meantime I will correct that curious fellow Pepys' Diary, — I mean the article I have made of it for the Quarterly.

Edinburgh, January 16. — Came through cold roads to as cold news. Hurst and Robinson have suffered a bill of £1000 to come back upon Constable, which I suppose infers the ruin of both houses. We shall soon see. Constable, it seems, who was to have set off in the last week of December, dawdled here till in all human probability his going or staying became a matter of mighty little consequence. He could not be there till Monday night, and his resources must have come too late. Dined with the Skenes.

January 17. — James Ballantyne this morning — good honest fellow, with a visage as black as the crook. He hopes no salvation; has indeed taken measures to stop. It is hard, after having fought such a battle. Have apologised for not attending the Royal Society Club, who have a gaudeamus on this day, and seemed to count much on my being the preses.

My old acquaintance, Miss Elizabeth Clerk, sister of Willie, died suddenly. I cannot choose but wish it had been S.W.S., and yet the feeling is unmanly. I have Anne, my wife, and Charles to look after. I felt rather

sneaking as I came home from the Parliament House — felt as if I were liable monstrari digito in no very pleasant way. But this must be borne cum caeteris; and, thank God, however uncomfortable, I do not feel despondent.

I have seen Cadell, Ballantyne, and Hogarth. All advise me to execute a trust of my property for payment of my obligations. So does John Gibson, and so I resolve to do. My wife and daughter are gloomy, but yet patient. I trust by my hold on the works to make it every man's interest to be very gentle with me. Cadell makes it plain that by prudence they will, in six months, realise £20,000, which can be attainable by no effort of their own.

January 18. — He that sleeps too long in the morning, let him borrow the pillow of a debtor. So says the Spaniard, and so say I. I had of course an indifferent night of it. I wish these two days were over; but the worst is over. The Bank of Scotland has behaved very well; expressing a resolution to serve Constable's house and me to the uttermost; but as no one can say to what extent Hurst and Robinson's failure may go, borrowing would but linger it out.

January 19. — During yesterday I received formal visits from my friends, Skene and Colin Mackenzie (who, I am glad to see, looks well), with every offer of service. The Royal Bank also sent Sir John Hope and Sir Henry Jardine to offer to comply with my wishes. The Advocate came on the same errand. But I gave all the same answer — that my intention was to put the whole into the hands of a trustee, and to be contented with the event, and that all I had to ask was time to do so, and to extricate my affairs. I was assured of every accommodation in this way. From all quarters I have had the same kindness. Letters from Constable and Robinson have arrived. The last persist in saying they will pay all and everybody. They say, moreover, in a postscript, that had Constable been in town ten days sooner, all would have been well. When I saw him on 24th December, he proposed starting in three days, but dallied, God knows why, in a kind of infatuation, I think, till things had got irretrievably wrong. There would have been no want of support then, and his stock under his own management would have made a return immensely greater than it can under any other. Now I fear the loss must be great, as his fall will involve many of the country dealers who traded with him.

I feel quite composed and determined to labour. There is no remedy. I guess (as Mathews makes his Yankees say) that we shall not be troubled with visitors, and I calculate that I will not go out at all; so what can I do better than labour? Even yesterday I went about making notes on Waverley, according to Constable's plan. It will do good one day. To-day, when I lock this volume, I go to W[oodstock]. Heigho!

Knight came to stare at me to complete his portrait. He must have read a tragic page, compared to what he saw at Abbotsford.

We dined of course at home, and before and after dinner I finished about twenty printed pages of Woodstock, but to what effect others must judge. A painful scene after dinner, and another after supper, endeavouring to convince these poor dear creatures that they must not look for miracles, but consider the misfortune as certain, and only to be lessened by patience and labour.

January 20. — Indifferent night — very bilious, which may be want of exercise. A letter from Sir J. Sinclair, whose absurd vanity bids him thrust his finger into every man's pie, proposing that Hurst and Robinson should sell their prints, of which he says they have a large collection, by way of lottery like Boydell.

> "In scenes like these which break our heart
> Comes Punch, like you and — — "

Mais pourtant, cultivons notre jardin. The public favour is my only lottery. I have long enjoyed the foremost prize, and something in my breast tells me my evil genius will not overwhelm me if I stand by myself. Why should I not? I have no enemies — many attached friends. The popular ascendency which I have maintained is of the kind which is rather improved by frequent appearances before the public. In fact, critics may say what they will, but "hain your reputation, and tyne your reputation," is a true proverb.

Sir William Forbes called — the same kind, honest friend as ever, with all offers of assistance, *etc. etc.* All anxious to serve me, and careless about their own risk of loss. And these are the cold, hard, money-making men whose questions and control I apprehended.

Lord Chief Commissioner Adam also came to see me, and the meeting, though pleasing, was melancholy. It is the first time we have met since the break up of his hopes in the death of his eldest son on his return from India,

where he was Chief in Council and highly esteemed. The Commissioner is not a very early friend of mine, for I scarce knew him till his settlement in Scotland with his present office. But I have since lived much with him, and taken kindly to him as one of the most pleasant, kindhearted, benevolent, and pleasing men I have ever known. It is high treason among the Tories to express regard for him, or respect for the Jury Court in which he presides. I was against that experiment as much as any one. But it is an experiment, and the establishment (which the fools will not perceive) is the only thing which I see likely to give some prospects of ambition to our bar, which has been otherwise so much diminished. As for the Chief Commissioner, I dare say he jobs, as all other people of consequence do, in elections, and so forth. But he is the personal friend of the King, and the decided enemy of whatever strikes at the constitutional rights of the Monarch. Besides, I love him for the various changes which he has endured through life, and which have been so great as to make him entitled to be regarded in one point of view as the most fortunate — in the other, the most unfortunate — man in the world. He has gained and lost two fortunes by the same good luck, and the same rash confidence, which raised, and now threatens, my peculium. And his quiet, honourable, and generous submission under circumstances more painful than mine, — for the loss of world's wealth was to him aggravated by the death of his youngest and darling son in the West Indies, — furnished me at the time and now with a noble example. So the Tories and Whigs may go be d — — d together, as names that have disturbed old Scotland, and torn asunder the most kindly feelings since the first day they were invented. Yes, — — them, they are spells to rouse all our angry passions, and I dare say, notwithstanding the opinion of my private and calm moments, I will open on the cry again so soon as something occurs to chafe my mood; and yet, God knows, I would fight in honourable contest with word or blow for my political opinions; but I cannot permit that strife to "mix its waters with my daily meal," those waters of bitterness which poison all mutual love and confidence betwixt the well-disposed on either side, and prevent them, if need were, from making mutual concessions and balancing the constitution against the ultras of both parties. The good man seems something broken by these afflictions.

January 21. — Susannah in Tristram Shandy thinks death is best met in bed. I am sure trouble and vexation are not. The watches of the night pass

wearily when disturbed by fruitless regrets and disagreeable anticipations. But let it pass.

> "Well, Goodman Time, or blunt, or keen,
> Move thou quick, or take thy leisure,
> Longest day will have its e'en,
> Weariest life but treads a measure."

I have seen Cadell, who is very much downcast for the risk of their copyrights being thrown away by a hasty sale. I suggested that if they went very cheap, some means might be fallen on to keep up their value or purchase them in. I fear the split betwixt Constable and Cadell will render impossible what might otherwise be hopeful enough. It is the Italian racehorses, I think, which, instead of riders, have spurs tied to their sides, so as to prick them into a constant gallop. Cadell tells me their gross profit was sometimes £10,000 a year, but much swallowed up with expenses, and his partner's draughts, which came to £4000 yearly. What there is to show for this, God knows. Constable's apparent expenses were very much within bounds.

Colin Mackenzie entered, and with his usual kindness engages to use his influence to recommend some moderate proceeding to Constable's creditors, such as may permit him to go on and turn that species of property to account, which no man alive can manage so well as he.

Followed Mr. Gibson with a most melancholy tale. Things are so much worse with Constable than I apprehended that I shall neither save Abbotsford nor anything else. Naked we entered the world, and naked we leave it — blessed be the name of the Lord!

January 22. — I feel neither dishonoured nor broken down by the bad — now really bad news I have received. I have walked my last on the domains I have planted — sate the last time in the halls I have built. But death would have taken them from me if misfortune had spared them. My poor people whom I loved so well! There is just another die to turn up against me in this run of ill-luck; *i.e.* if I should break my magic wand in the fall from this elephant, and lose my popularity with my fortune. Then Woodstock and Bony may both go to the papermaker, and I may take to smoking cigars and drinking grog, or turn devotee, and intoxicate the brain another way. In

prospect of absolute ruin, I wonder if they would let me leave the Court of Session. I would like, methinks, to go abroad,

"And lay my bones far from the Tweed."

But I find my eyes moistening, and that will not do. I will not yield without a fight for it. It is odd, when I set myself to work doggedly, as Dr. Johnson would say, I am exactly the same man that I ever was, neither low-spirited nor distrait. In prosperous times I have sometimes felt my fancy and powers of language flag, but adversity is to me at least a tonic and bracer; the fountain is awakened from its inmost recesses, as if the spirit of affliction had troubled it in his passage.

Poor Mr. Pole the harper sent to offer me £500 or £600, probably his all. There is much good in the world, after all. But I will involve no friend, either rich or poor. My own right hand shall do it — else will I be done in the slang language, and undone in common parlance.

I am glad that, beyond my own family, who are, excepting L.S., young and able to bear sorrow, of which this is the first taste to some of them, most of the hearts are past aching which would have once been inconsolable on this occasion. I do not mean that many will not seriously regret, and some perhaps lament, my misfortunes. But my dear mother, my almost sister, Christy R[utherfor]d, poor Will Erskine — these would have been mourners indeed.

Well — exertion — exertion. O Invention, rouse thyself! May man be kind! May God be propitious! The worst is, I never quite know when I am right or wrong; and Ballantyne, who does know in some degree, will fear to tell me. Lockhart would be worth gold just now, but he too would be too diffident to speak broad out. All my hope is in the continued indulgence of the public. I have a funeral-letter to the burial of the Chevalier Yelin, a foreigner of learning and talent, who has died at the Royal Hotel. He wished to be introduced to me, and was to have read a paper before the Royal Society when this introduction was to have taken place. I was not at the Society that evening, and the poor gentleman was taken ill at the meeting and unable to proceed. He went to his bed and never rose again; and now his funeral will be the first public place I shall appear at. He dead, and I ruined; this is what you call a meeting.

January 23. — Slept ill, not having been abroad these eight days —

splendida bilis. Then a dead sleep in the morning, and when the awakening comes, a strong feeling how well I could dispense with it for once and for ever. This passes away, however, as better and more dutiful thoughts arise in my mind. I know not if my imagination has flagged; probably it has; but at least my powers of labour have not diminished during the last melancholy week. On Monday and Tuesday my exertions were suspended. Since Wednesday inclusive I have written thirty-eight of my close manuscript pages, of which seventy make a volume of the usual Novel size.

Wrote till twelve A.M., finishing half of what I call a good day's work — ten pages of print, or rather twelve. Then walked in Princes Street pleasure-grounds with good Samaritan James Skene, the only one among my numerous friends who can properly be termed amicus curarum mearum, others being too busy or too gay, and several being estranged by habit.

The walks have been conducted on the whole with much taste, though Skene has undergone much criticism, the usual reward of public exertions, on account of his plans. It is singular to walk close beneath the grim old Castle, and to think what scenes it must have seen, and how many generations of three score and ten have risen and passed away. It is a place to cure one of too much sensation over earthly subjects of mutation. My wife and girl's tongues are chatting in a lively manner in the drawingroom. It does me good to hear them.

January 24. — Constable came yesterday, and saw me for half an hour. He seemed irritable, but kept his temper under command. Was a little shocked when I intimated that I was disposed to regard the present works in progress as my own. I think I saw two things: — (1) That he is desirous to return into the management of his own affairs without Cadell, if he can. (2) That he relies on my connection as the way of helping us out of the slough. Indeed he said he was ruined utterly without my countenance. I certainly will befriend him if I can, but Constable without Cadell is like getting the clock without the pendulum — the one having the ingenuity, the other the caution of the business. I will see my way before making any bargain, and I will help them, I am sure, if I can, without endangering my last cast for freedom. Worked out my task yesterday. My kind friend Mrs. Coutts has got the cadetship for Pringle Shortreed, in which he was peculiarly interested.

I went to the Court for the first time to-day, and, like the man with the large nose, thought everybody was thinking of me and my mishaps. Many

were, undoubtedly, and all rather regrettingly; some obviously affected. It is singular to see the difference of men's manner whilst they strive to be kind or civil in their way of addressing me. Some smile as they wish me good-day, as if to say, "Think nothing about it, my lad; it is quite out of our thoughts." Others greeted me with the affected gravity which one sees and despises at a funeral. The best bred — all, I believe, meaning equally well — just shook hands and went on. A foolish puff in the papers, calling on men and gods to assist a popular author, who, having choused the public of many thousands, had not the sense to keep wealth when he had it. If I am hard pressed, and measures used against me, I must use all means of legal defence, and subscribe myself bankrupt in a petition for sequestration. It is the course I would have advised a client to take, and would have the effect of saving my land, which is secured by my son's contract of marriage. I might save my library, etc., by assistance of friends, and bid my creditors defiance. But for this I would, in a court of honour, deserve to lose my spurs. No, if they permit me, I will be their vassal for life, and dig in the mine of my imagination to find diamonds (or what may sell for such) to make good my engagements, not to enrich myself. And this from no reluctance to allow myself to be called the Insolvent, which I probably am, but because I will not put out of the [power] of my creditors the resources, mental or literary, which yet remain to me.

Went to the funeral of Chevalier Yelin, the literary foreigner mentioned on 22d. How many and how various are the ways of affliction! Here is this poor man dying at a distance from home, his proud heart broken, his wife and family anxiously expecting letters, and doomed only to learn they have lost a husband and father for ever. He lies buried on the Calton Hill, near learned and scientific dust — the graves of David Hume and John Playfair being side by side.

January 25. — Anne is ill this morning. May God help us! If it should prove serious, as I have known it in such cases, where am I to find courage or comfort? A thought has struck me — Can we do nothing for creditors with the goblin drama, called Fortunes of Devorgoil? Could it not be added to Woodstock as a fourth volume? Terry refused a gift of it, but he was quite and entirely wrong; it is not good, but it may be made so. Poor Will Erskine liked it much. Gave my wife her £12 allowance. £24 to last till Wednesday fortnight.

January 26. — Spoke to J.B. last night about Devorgoil, who does not seem to relish the proposal, alleging the comparative failure of Halidon Hill. Ay, says Self-Conceit, but he has not read it; and when he does, it is the sort of wild fanciful work betwixt heaven and earth, which men of solid parts do not estimate. Pepys thought Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream the most silly play he had ever seen, and Pepys was probably judging on the same grounds with J.B., though presumptuous enough to form conclusions against a very different work from any of mine. How if I send it to Lockhart by and by?

I called to-day at Constable's; both partners seemed secure that Hurst and Robinson were to go on and pay. Strange that they should have stopped. Constable very anxious to have husbanding of the books. I told him the truth that I would be glad to have his assistance, and that he should have the benefit of the agency, but that he was not to consider past transactions as a rule for selling them in future, since I must needs make the most out of the labours I could: item, that I, or whoever might act for me, would of course, after what has happened, look especially to the security. He said if Hurst and Robinson were to go on, bank notes would be laid down. I conceive indeed that they would take Woodstock and Napoleon almost at loss rather than break the connection in the public eye. Sir William Arbuthnot and Mr. Kinnear were very kind. But cui bono?

Gibson comes with a joyful face announcing all the creditors had unanimously agreed to a private trust. This is handsome and confidential, and must warm my best efforts to get them out of the scrape. I will not doubt — to doubt is to lose. Sir William Forbes took the chair, and behaved as he has ever done, with the generosity of ancient faith and early friendship. They are deeper concerned than most. In what scenes have Sir William and I not borne share together — desperate, and almost bloody affrays, rivalries, deep drinking-matches, and, finally, with the kindest feelings on both sides, somewhat separated by his retiring much within the bosom of his family, and I moving little beyond mine. It is fated our planets should cross though, and that at the periods most interesting for me. Down — down — a hundred thoughts.

Jane Russell drank tea with us.

I hope to sleep better tonight. If I do not I shall get ill, and then I cannot keep my engagements. Is it not odd? I can command my eyes to be awake

when toil and weariness sit on my eyelids, but to draw the curtain of oblivion is beyond my power. I remember some of the wild Buccaneers, in their impiety, succeeded pretty well by shutting hatches and burning brimstone and assafœtida in making a tolerable imitation of hell — but the pirates' heaven was a wretched affair. It is one of the worst things about this system of ours, that it is a hundred times more easy to inflict pain than to create pleasure.

January 27. — Slept better and less bilious, owing doubtless to the fatigue of the preceding night, and the more comfortable news. I drew my salaries of various kinds amounting to £300 and upwards and sent, with John Gibson's consent, £200 to pay off things at Abbotsford which must be paid. Wrote Laidlaw with the money, directing him to make all preparations for reduction. Anne ill of rheumatism: I believe caught cold by vexation and exposing herself to bad weather.

The Celtic Society present me with the most splendid broadsword I ever saw; a beautiful piece of art, and a most noble weapon. Honourable Mr. Stuart (second son of the Earl of Moray), General Graham Stirling, and MacDougal, attended as a committee to present it. This was very kind of my friends the Celts, with whom I have had so many merry meetings. It will be a rare legacy to Walter; — for myself, good lack! it is like Lady Dowager Don's prize in a lottery of hardware; she — a venerable lady who always wore a haunch-hoop, silk négligé, and triple ruffles at the elbow — having the luck to gain a pair of silver spurs and a whip to correspond.

January 28. — Ballantyne and Cadell wish that Mr. Alex. Cowan should be Constable's Trustee instead of J.B.'s. Gibson is determined to hold by Cowan. I will not interfere, although I think Cowan's services might do us more good as Constable's Trustee than as our own, but I will not begin with thwarting the managers of my affairs, or even exerting strong influence; it is not fair. These last four or five days I have wrought little; to-day I set on the steam and ply my paddles.

January 29. — The proofs of vol. i. came so thick in yesterday that much was not done. But I began to be hard at work to-day, and must not gurnalise much.

Mr. Jollie, who is to be my trustee, in conjunction with Gibson, came to see me: — a, pleasant and good-humoured man, and has high reputation as a man of business. I told him, and I will keep my word, that he would at least have no trouble by my interfering and thwarting their management, which is the not unfrequent case of trusters and trustees.

Constable's business seems unintelligible. No man thought the house worth less than £150,000. Constable told me when he was making his will that he was worth £80,000. Great profits on almost all the adventures. No bad speculations — yet neither stock nor debt to show: Constable might have eaten up his share; but Cadell was very frugal. No doubt trading almost entirely on accommodation is dreadfully expensive.

January 30. — False delicacy. Mr. Gibson, Mr. Cowan, Mr. J.B., were with me last night to talk over important matters, and suggest an individual for a certain highly confidential situation. I was led to mention a person of whom I knew nothing but that he was an honest and intelligent man. All seemed to acquiesce, and agreed to move the thing to the party concerned this morning, and so Mr. G. and Mr. C. left me, when J.B. let out that it was their unanimous opinion that we should be in great trouble were the individual appointed, from faults of temper, etc., which would make it difficult to get on with him. With a hearty curse I hurried J.B. to let them know that I had no partiality for the man whatever, and only named him because he had been proposed for a similar situation elsewhere. This is provoking enough, that they would let me embarrass my affairs with a bad man (an unfit one, I mean) rather than contradict me. I dare say great men are often used so.

I laboured freely yesterday. The stream rose fast — if clearly, is another question; but there is bulk for it, at least — about thirty printed pages.

"And now again, boys, to the oar."

January 31. — There being nothing in the roll to-day, I stay at home from the Court, and add another day's perfect labour to Woodstock, which is worth five days of snatched intervals, when the current of thought and invention is broken in upon, and the mind shaken and diverted from its purpose by a succession of petty interruptions. I have now no pecuniary provisions to embarrass me, and I think, now the shock of the discovery is

past and over, I am much better off on the whole; I am as if I had shaken off from my shoulders a great mass of garments, rich, indeed, but cumbrous, and always more a burden than a comfort. I am free of an hundred petty public duties imposed on me as a man of consideration — of the expense of a great hospitality — and, what is better, of the great waste of time connected with it. I have known, in my day, all kinds of society, and can pretty well estimate how much or how little one loses by retiring from all but that which is very intimate. I sleep and eat, and work as I was wont; and if I could see those about me as indifferent to the loss of rank as I am, I should be completely happy. As it is, Time must salve that sore, and to Time I trust it.

Since the 14th of this month no guest has broken bread in my house save G.H. Gordon one morning at breakfast. This happened never before since I had a house of my own. But I have played Abou Hassan long enough; and if the Caliph came I would turn him back again.

February

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February 1. — A most generous letter (though not more so than I expected) from Walter and Jane, offering to interpose with their fortune, *etc.* God Almighty forbid! that were too unnatural in me to accept, though dutiful and affectionate in them to offer. They talk of India still. With my damaged fortune I cannot help them to remain by exchange, and so forth. He expects, if they go, to go out eldest Captain, when, by staying two or three years, he will get the step of Major. His whole thoughts are with his profession, and I understand that when you quit or exchange, when a regiment goes on distant or disagreeable service, you are not accounted as serious in your profession; God send what is for the best! Remitted Charles a bill for £40 — £35 advance at Christmas makes £75. He must be frugal.

Attended the Court, and saw J.B. and Cadell as I returned. Both very gloomy. Came home to work, etc., about two.

February 2. — An odd visit this morning from Miss Jane Bell of North Shields, whose lawsuit with a Methodist parson of the name of Hill made some noise. The worthy divine had in the basest manner interfered to prevent this lady's marriage by two anonymous letters, in which he contrived to refer the lover, to whom they were addressed, for further corroboration to himself. The whole imposition makes the subject of a little pamphlet published by Marshall, Newcastle. The lady ventured for redress into the thicket of English law — lost one suit — gained another, with £300 damages, and was ruined. The appearance and person of Miss Bell are prepossessing. She is about thirty years old, a brunette, with regular and pleasing features, marked with melancholy, — an enthusiast in literature, and probably in religion. She had been at Abbotsford to see me, and made her way to me here, in the vain hope that she could get her story worked up into a novel; and certainly the thing is capable of interesting situations. It throws a curious light upon the aristocratic or rather hieratic influence exercised by the Methodist preachers within the connection, as it is called. Admirable food this would be for the Quarterly, or any other reviewers who might desire to feed fat their grudge against these sectarians. But there are two reasons against such a publication. First, it would do the poor sufferer

no good. Secondly, it might hurt the Methodistic connection very much, which I for one would not like to injure. They have their faults, and are peculiarly liable to those of hypocrisy, and spiritual ambition, and priestcraft. On the other hand, they do infinite good, carrying religion into classes in society where it would scarce be found to penetrate, did it rely merely upon proof of its doctrines, upon calm reasoning, and upon rational argument. Methodists add a powerful appeal to the feelings and passions; and though I believe this is often exaggerated into absolute enthusiasm, yet I consider upon the whole they do much to keep alive a sense of religion, and the practice of morality necessarily connected with it. It is much to the discredit of the Methodist clergy, that when this calumniator was actually convicted of guilt morally worse than many men are hanged for, they only degraded him from the first to the second class of their preachers, — leaving a man who from mere hatred at Miss Bell's brother, who was a preacher like himself, had proceeded in such a deep and infamous scheme to ruin the character and destroy the happiness of an innocent person, in possession of the pulpit, and an authorised teacher of others. If they believed him innocent they did too much — if guilty, far too little.

I wrote to my nephew Walter to-day, cautioning him against a little disposition which he has to satire or méchanceté, which may be a great stumblingblock in his course in life. Otherwise I presage well of him. He is lieutenant of engineers, with high character for mathematical science — is acute, very well-mannered, and, I think, good-hearted. He has seen enough of the world too, to regulate his own course through life, better than most lads at his age.

February 3. — This is the first morning since my troubles that I felt at awaking

> "I had drunken deep
> Of all the blessedness of sleep."

I made not the slightest pause, nor dreamed a single dream, nor even changed my side. This is a blessing to be grateful for. There is to be a meeting of the creditors to-day, but I care not for the issue. If they drag me into the Court, obtorto collo, instead of going into this scheme of arrangement, they would do themselves a great injury, and, perhaps, eventually do me good, though it would give me much pain. James

Ballantyne is severely critical on what he calls imitations of Mrs. Radcliffe in Woodstock. Many will think with him, yet I am of opinion he is quite wrong, or, as friend J. F[errier] says, vrong In the first place, I am to look on the mere fact of another author having treated a subject happily as a bird looks on a potato-bogle which scares it away from a field otherwise as free to its depredations as any one's else! In 2d place, I have taken a wide difference: my object is not to excite fear of supernatural tilings in my reader, but to show the effect of such fear upon the agents in the story — one a man of sense and firmness — one a man unhinged by remorse — one a stupid uninquiring clown — one a learned and worthy, but superstitious divine. In the third place, the book turns on this hinge, and cannot want it. But I will try to insinuate the refutation of Aldiboronti's exception into the prefatory matter.

From the 19th January to the 2d February inclusive is exactly fifteen days, during which time, with the intervention of some days' idleness, to let imagination brood on the task a little, I have written a volume. I think, for a bet, I could have done it in ten days. Then I must have had no Court of Session to take me up two or three hours every morning, and dissipate my attention and powers of working for the rest of the day. A volume, at cheapest, is worth £1000. This is working at the rate of £24,000 a year; but then we must not bake buns faster than people have appetite to eat them. They are not essential to the market, like potatoes.

John Gibson came to tell me in the evening that a meeting to-day had approved of the proposed trust. I know not why, but the news gives me little concern. I heard it as a party indifferent. I remember hearing that Mandrin testified some horror when he found himself bound alive on the wheel, and saw an executioner approach with a bar of iron to break his limbs. After the second and third blow he fell a-laughing, and being asked the reason by his confessor, said he laughed at his own folly which had anticipated increased agony at every blow, when it was obvious that the first must have jarred and confounded the system of the nerves so much as to render the succeeding blows of little consequence. I suppose it is so with the moral feelings; at least I could not bring myself to be anxious whether these matters were settled one way or another.

February 4. — Wrote to Mr. Laidlaw to come to town upon Monday and see the trustees. To farm or not to farm, that is the question. With our

careless habits, it were best, I think, to risk as little as possible. Lady Scott will not exceed with ready money in her hand; but calculating on the produce of a farm is different, and neither she nor I are capable of that minute economy. Two cows should be all we should keep. But I find Lady S. inclines much for the four. If she had her youthful activity, and could manage things, it would be well, and would amuse her. But I fear it is too late a week.

Returned from Court by Constable's, and found Cadell had fled to the sanctuary, being threatened with ultimate diligence by the Bank of Scotland. If this be a vindictive movement, it is harsh, useless, and bad of them, and flight, on the contrary, seems no good sign on his part. I hope he won't prove his father or grandfather at Prestonpans: —

> "Cadell dressed among the rest,
> Wi' gun and good claymore, man,
> On gelding grey he rode that day,
> Wi' pistols set before, man.
> The cause was gude, he'd spend his blude
> Before that he would yield, man,
> But the night before he left the corps,
> And never faced the field, man."

Harden and Mrs. Scott called on Mamma. I was abroad. Henry called on me. Wrote only two pages (of manuscript) and a half to-day. As the boatswain said, one can't dance always nowther, but, were we sure of the quality of the stuff, what opportunities for labour does this same system of retreat afford us! I am convinced that in three years I could do more than in the last ten, but for the mine being, I fear, exhausted. Give me my popularity — an awful postulate! — and all my present difficulties shall be a joke in five years; and it is not lost yet, at least.

February 5. — Rose after a sound sleep, and here am I without bile or anything to perturb my inward man. It is just about three weeks since so great a change took place in my relations in society, and already I am indifferent to it. But I have been always told my feelings of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, enjoyment and privation, are much colder than those of other people.

"I think the Romans call it stoicism."

Missie was in the drawingroom, and overheard William Clerk and me laughing excessively at some foolery or other in the back-room, to her no small surprise, which she did not keep to herself. But do people suppose that he was less sorry for his poor sister, or I for my lost fortune? If I have a very strong passion in the world, it is pride, and that never hinged upon world's gear, which was always with me — Light come, light go.

February 6. — Letters received yesterday from Lord Montagu, John Morritt, and Mrs. Hughes — kind and dear friends all — with solicitous inquiries. But it is very tiresome to tell my story over again, and I really hope I have few more friends intimate enough to ask me for it. I dread letter-writing, and envy the old hermit of Prague, who never saw pen or ink. What then? One must write; it is a part of the law we live on. Talking of writing, I finished my six pages, neat and handsome, yesterday. N.B. At night I fell asleep, and the oil dropped from the lamp upon my manuscript. Will this extreme unction make it go smoothly down with the public?

Thus idly we "profane the sacred time"
By silly prose, light jest, and lighter rhyme.

I have a song to write, too, and I am not thinking of it. I trust it will come upon me at once — a sort of catch it should be. I walked out, feeling a little overwrought. Saw Constable and turned over Clarendon. Cadell not yet out of hiding. This is simple work. Obliged to borrow £240, to be refunded in spring, from John Gibson, to pay my nephew's outfit and passage to Bombay. I wish I could have got this money otherwise, but I must not let the orphan boy, and such a clever fellow, miscarry through my fault. His education, etc., has been at my expense ever since he came from America.

February 7. — Had letters yesterday from Lady Davy and Lady Louisa Stuart, two very different persons. Lady Davy, daughter and co-heiress of a wealthy Antigua merchant, has been known to me all my life. Her father was a relation of ours of a Scotch calculation. He was of a good family, Kerr of Bloodielaws, but decayed. Miss Jane Kerr married first Mr. Apreece, son of a Welsh Baronet. The match was not happy. I had lost all acquaintance with her for a long time, when about twenty years ago we

renewed it in London. She was then a widow, gay, clever, and most actively ambitious to play a distinguished part in London society. Her fortune, though handsome and easy, was not large enough to make way by dint of showy entertainments, and so forth. So she took the blue line, and by great tact and management actually established herself as a leader of literary fashion. Soon after, she visited Edinburgh for a season or two, and studied the Northern Lights. One of the best of them, poor Jack Playfair, was disposed "to shoot madly from his sphere," and, I believe, asked her, but he was a little too old. She found a fitter husband in every respect in Sir Humphry Davy, to whom she gave a handsome fortune, and whose splendid talents and situation as President of the Royal Society gave her naturally a distinguished place in the literary society of the Metropolis. Now this is a very curious instance of an active-minded woman forcing her way to the point from which she seemed furthest excluded. For, though clever and even witty, she had no peculiar accomplishment, and certainly no good taste either for science or letters naturally. I was once in the Hebrides with her, and I admired to observe how amidst sea-sickness, fatigue, some danger, and a good deal of indifference as to what she saw, she gallantly maintained her determination to see everything. It marked her strength of character, and she joined to it much tact, and always addressed people on the right side. So she stands high, and deservedly so, for to these active qualities, more French I think than English, and partaking of the Creole vivacity and suppleness of character, she adds, I believe, honourable principles and an excellent heart. As a lion-catcher, I could pit her against the world. She flung her lasso (see Hall's South America) over Byron himself. But then, poor soul, she is not happy. She has a temper, and Davy has a temper, and these tempers are not one temper, but two tempers, and they quarrel like cat and dog, which may be good for stirring up the stagnation of domestic life, but they let the world see it, and that is not so well. Now in all this I may be thought a little harsh on my friend, but it is between my Gurnal and me, and, moreover, I would cry heartily if anything were to ail my little cousin, though she be addicted to rule the Cerulean atmosphere. Then I suspect the cares of this as well as other empires overbalance its pleasures. There must be difficulty in being always in the right humour to hold a court. There are usurpers to be encountered, and insurrections to be put down, an incessant troop, bienséances to be discharged, a sort of etiquette which is the curse of all courts. An old lion cannot get hamstrung quietly at four hundred miles

distance, but the Empress must send him her condolence and a pot of lipsalve. To be sure the monster is consanguinean, as Sir Toby says.

Looked in at Constable's coming home; Cadell emerged from Alsatia; borrowed Clarendon. Home by halfpast twelve.

My old friend Sir Peter Murray called to offer his own assistance, Lord Justice-Clerk's, and Abercromby's, to negotiate for me a seat upon the Bench [of the Court of Session] instead of my Sheriffdom and Clerkship. I explained to him the use which I could make of my pen was not, I thought, consistent with that situation; and that, besides, I had neglected the law too long to permit me to think of it; but this was kindly and honourably done. I can see people think me much worse off than I think myself. They may be right; but I will not be beat till I have tried a rally, and a bold one.

February 8. — Slept ill, and rather bilious in the morning. Many of the Bench now are my juniors. I will not seek ex eleemosynâ a place which, had I turned my studies that way, I might have aspired to long ago ex meritis. My pen should do much better for me than the odd £1000 a year. If it fails, I will lean on what they leave me. Another chance might be, if it fails, in the patronage which might, after a year or two, place me in Exchequer. But I do not count on this unless, indeed, the D[uke] of B[uccleuch], when he comes of age, should choose to make play.

Got to my work again, and wrote easier than the two last days.

Mr. Laidlaw came in from Abbotsford and dined with us. We spent the evening in laying down plans for the farm, and deciding whom we should keep and whom dismiss among the people. This we did on the true negro-driving principle of self-interest, the only principle I know which never swerves from its objects. We chose all the active, young, and powerful men, turning old age and infirmity adrift. I cannot help this, for a guinea cannot do the work of five; but I will contrive to make it easier to the sufferers.

February 9. — A stormy morning, lowering and blustering, like our fortunes. Mea virtute me involvo. But I must say to the Muse of fiction, as the Earl of Pembroke said to the ejected nuns of Wilton, "Go spin, you jades, go spin!" Perhaps she has no tow on her rock. When I was at Kilkenny last year we went to see a nunnery, but could not converse with the sisters because they were in strict retreat. I was delighted with the red-nosed Padre, who showed us the place with a sort of proud, unctuous

humiliation, and apparent dereliction of the world, that had to me the air of a complete Tartuffe; a strong, sanguine, square-shouldered son of the Church, whom a Protestant would be apt to warrant against any sufferings he was like to sustain by privation. My purpose, however, just now was to talk of the "strict retreat," which did not prevent the nuns from walking in their little garden, breviary in hand, peeping at us, and allowing us to peep at them. Well, now, we are in strict retreat; and if we had been so last year, instead of gallivanting to Ireland, this affair might not have befallen — if literary labour could have prevented it. But who could have suspected Constable's timbers to have been rotten from the beginning?

Visited the Exhibition on my way home from the Court. The new rooms are most splendid, and several good pictures. The Institution has subsisted but five years, and it is astonishing how much superior the worst of the present collection are to the teaboard-looking things which first appeared. John Thomson, of Duddingston, has far the finest picture in the Exhibition, of a large size — subject Dunluce, a ruinous castle of the Antrim family, near the Giant's Causeway, with one of those terrible seas and skies which only Thomson can paint. Found Scrope there improving a picture of his own, an Italian scene in Calabria. He is, I think, greatly improved, and one of the very best amateur painters I ever saw — Sir George Beaumont scarcely excepted. Yet, hang it, I do except Sir George.

I would not write to-day after I came home. I will not say could not, for it is not true; but I was lazy; felt the desire far niente, which is the sign of one's mind being at ease. I read The English in Italy, which is a clever book.

Byron used to kick and frisk more contemptuously against the literary gravity and slang than any one I ever knew who had climbed so high. Then, it is true, I never knew any one climb so high; and before you despise the eminence, carrying people along with you, as convinced that you are not playing the fox and the grapes, you must be at the top. Moore told me some delightful stories of him. One was that while they stood at the window of Byron's Palazzo in Venice, looking at a beautiful sunset, Moore was naturally led to say something of its beauty, when Byron answered in a tone that I can easily conceive, "Oh! come, d — n me, Tom, don't be poetical." Another time, standing with Moore on the balcony of the same Palazzo, a gondola passed with two English gentlemen, who were easily distinguished by their appearance. They cast a careless look at the balcony and went on. Byron crossed his arms, and half stooping over the balcony said, "Ah! d —

n ye, if ye had known what two fellows you were staring at, you would have taken a longer look at us." This was the man, quaint, capricious, and playful, with all his immense genius. He wrote from impulse, never from effort; and therefore I have always reckoned Burns and Byron the most genuine poetical geniuses of my time, and half a century before me. We have, however, many men of high poetical talent, but none, I think, of that ever-gushing and perennial fountain of natural water.

Mr. Laidlaw dined with us. Says Mr. Gibson told him he would dispose of my affairs, were it any but S.W.S. No doubt, so should I, and am wellnigh doing so at any rate. But, fortuna juvante! much may be achieved. At worst, the prospect is not very discouraging to one who wants little. Methinks I have been like Burns's poor labourer,

> "So constantly in Ruin's sight,
> The view o't gives me little fright."

[Edinburgh,] February 10. — Went through, for a new day, the task of buttoning, which seems to me somehow to fill up more of my morning than usual — not, certainly, that such is really the case, but that my mind attends to the process, having so little left to hope or fear. The half hour between waking and rising has all my life proved propitious to any task which was exercising my invention. When I get over any knotty difficulty in a story, or have had in former times to fill up a passage in a poem, it was always when I first opened my eyes that the desired ideas thronged upon me. This is so much the case that I am in the habit of relying upon it, and saying to myself, when I am at a loss, "Never mind, we shall have it at seven o'clock tomorrow morning." If I have forgot a circumstance, or a name, or a copy of verses, it is the same thing. There is a passage about this sort of matutinal inspiration in the Odyssey, which would make a handsome figure here if I could read or write Greek. I will look into Pope for it, who, ten to one, will not tell me the real translation. I think the first hour of the morning is also favourable to the bodily strength. Among other feats, when I was a young man, I was able at times to lift a smith's anvil with one hand, by what is called the horn, or projecting piece of iron on which things are beaten to turn them round. But I could only do this before breakfast, and shortly after rising. It required my full strength, undiminished by the least exertion, and those who choose to try it will find the feat no easy one. This morning I had

some good ideas respecting Woodstock which will make the story better. The devil of a difficulty is, that one puzzles the skein in order to excite curiosity, and then cannot disentangle it for the satisfaction of the prying fiend they have raised. A letter from Sir James Mackintosh of condolence, prettily expressed, and which may be sung to the old tune of "Welcome, welcome, brother Debtor." A brother son of chivalry dismounted by mischance is sure to excite the compassion of one laid on the arena before him.

Yesterday I had an anecdote from old Sir James Steuart Denham, which is worth writing down. His uncle, Lord Elcho, was, as is well known, engaged in the affair of 1745. He was dissatisfied with the conduct of matters from beginning to end. But after the left wing of the Highlanders was repulsed and broken at Culloden, Elcho rode up to the Chevalier and told him all was lost, and that nothing remained except to charge at the head of two thousand men, who were still unbroken, and either turn the fate of the day or die sword in hand, as became his pretensions. The Chevalier gave him some evasive answer, and, turning his horse's head, rode off the field. Lord Elcho called after him (I write the very words), "There you go for a damned cowardly Italian," and never would see him again, though he lost his property and remained an exile in the cause. Lord Elcho left two copies of his memoirs, one with Sir James Steuart's family, one with Lord Wemyss. This is better evidence than the romance of Chevalier Johnstone; and I have little doubt it is true. Yet it is no proof of the Prince's cowardice, though it shows him to have been no John of Gaunt. Princes are constantly surrounded with people who hold up their own life and safety to them as by far the most important stake in any contest; and this is a doctrine in which conviction is easily received. Such an eminent person finds everybody's advice, save here and there that of a desperate Elcho, recommend obedience to the natural instinct of self-preservation, which very often men of inferior situations find it difficult to combat, when all the world are crying to them to get on and be damned, instead of encouraging them to run away. At Prestonpans the Chevalier offered to lead the van, and he was with the second line, which, during that brief affair, followed the first very close. Johnstone's own account, carefully read, brings him within a pistolshot of the first line. At the same time, Charles Edward had not a head or heart for great things, notwithstanding his daring adventure; and the Irish officers, by

whom he was guided, were poor creatures. Lord George Murray was the soul of the undertaking.

February 11. — Court sat till halfpast one. I had but a trifle to do, so wrote letters to Mrs. Maclean Clephane and nephew Walter. Sent the last, £40 in addition to £240 sent on the 6th, making his full equipment £280. A man, calling himself Charles Gray of Carse, wrote to me, expressing sympathy for my misfortunes, and offering me half the profits of what, if I understand him right, is a patent medicine, to which I suppose he expects me to stand trumpeter. He endeavours to get over my objections to accepting his liberality (supposing me to entertain them) by assuring me his conduct is founded on a sage selfishness. This is diverting enough. I suppose the Commissioners of, Police will next send me a letter of condolence, begging my acceptance of a broom, a shovel, and a scavenger's greatcoat, and assuring me that they had appointed me to all the emoluments of a well-frequented crossing. It would be doing more than they have done of late for the cleanliness of the streets, which, witness my shoes, are in a piteous pickle. I thanked the selfish sage with due decorum — for what purpose can anger serve? I remember once before, a mad woman, from about Alnwick, baited me with letters and plans — first for charity to herself or some protégé. I gave my guinea. Then she wanted to have half the profit of a novel which I was to publish under my name and auspices. She sent me the manuscript, and a moving tale it was, for some of the scenes lay in the cabinet à l'eau. I declined the partnership. Lastly, my fair correspondent insisted I was a lover of speculation, and would be much profited by going shares in a patent medicine which she had invented for the benefit of little babies, I believe. I dreaded to have anything to do with such a Herod-like affair, and begged to decline the honour of her correspondence in future. I should have thought the thing a quiz, but that the novel was real and substantial. Anne goes to Ravelston to-day to remain tomorrow. Sir Alexander Don called, and we had a good laugh together.

February 12. — Having ended the second volume of Woodstock last night, I have to begin the third this morning. Now I have not the slightest idea how the story is to be wound up to a catastrophe. I am just in the same case as I used to be when I lost myself in former days in some country to which I was a stranger. I always pushed for the pleasantest road, and either found or

made it the nearest. It is the same in writing, I never could lay down a plan — or, having laid it down, I never could adhere to it; the action of composition always diluted some passages, and abridged or omitted others; and personages were rendered important or insignificant, not according to their agency in the original conception of the plan, but according to the success, or otherwise, with which I was able to bring them out. I only tried to make that which I was actually writing diverting and interesting, leaving the rest to fate. I have been often amused with the critics distinguishing some passages as particularly laboured, when the pen passed over the whole as fast as it could move, and the eye never again saw them, except in proof. Verse I write twice, and sometimes three times over. This may be called in Spanish the Dar donde diere mode of composition, in English hab nab at a venture; it is a perilous style, I grant, but I cannot help it. When I chain my mind to ideas which are purely imaginative — for argument is a different thing — it seems to me that the sun leaves the landscape, that I think away the whole vivacity and spirit of my original conception, and that the results are cold, tame, and spiritless. It is the difference between a written oration and one bursting from the unpremeditated exertions of the speaker, which have always something the air of enthusiasm and inspiration. I would not have young authors imitate my carelessness, however; consilium non currum eape.

Read a few pages of Will D'Avenant, who was fond of having it supposed that Shakespeare intrigued with his mother. I think the pretension can only be treated as Phaeton's was, according to Fielding's farce —

> "Besides, by all the village boys I'm shamed,
> You, the sun's son, you rascal? — you be damn'd."

Egad — I'll put that into Woodstock. It might come well from the old admirer of Shakespeare. Then Fielding's lines were not written. What then? — it is an anachronism for some sly rogue to detect. Besides, it is easy to swear they were written, and that Fielding adopted them from tradition. Walked with Skene on the Calton Hill.

February 13. — The Institution for the Encouragment of the Fine Arts opens to-day, with a handsome entertainment in the Exhibition-room, as at Somerset House. It strikes me that the direction given by amateurs and professors to their protégés and pupils, who aspire to be artists, is upon a

pedantic and false principle. All the Fine Arts have it for their highest and more legitimate end and purpose, to affect the human passions, or smooth and alleviate for a time the more unquiet feelings of the mind — to excite wonder, or terror, or pleasure, or emotion of some kind or other. It often happens that, in the very rise and origin of these arts, as in the instance of Homer, the principal object is obtained in a degree not equalled by his successors. But there is a degree of execution which, in more refined times, the poet or musician begins to study, which gives a value of its own to their productions of a different kind from the rude strength of their predecessors. Poetry becomes complicated in its rules — music learned in its cadences and harmonies — rhetoric subtle in its periods. There is more given to the labour of executing — less attained by the effect produced. Still the nobler and popular end of these arts is not forgotten; and if we have some productions too learned, too recherchés for public feeling, we have, every now and then, music that electrifies a whole assembly, eloquence which shakes the forum, and poetry which carries men up to the third heaven. But in painting it is different; it is all become a mystery, the secret of which is lodged in a few connoisseurs, whose object is not to praise the works of such painters as produce effect on mankind at large, but to class them according to their proficiency in the inferior rules of the art, which, though most necessary to be taught and learned, should yet only be considered as the Gradus ad Parnassum — the steps by which the higher and ultimate object of a great popular effect is to be attained. They have all embraced the very style of criticism which induced Michael Angelo to call some Pope a poor creature, when, turning his attention from the general effect of a noble statue, his Holiness began to criticise the hem of the robe. This seems to me the cause of the decay of this delightful art, especially in history, its noblest branch. As I speak to myself, I may say that a painting should, to be excellent, have something to say to the mind of a man, like myself, well-educated, and susceptible of those feelings which anything strongly recalling natural emotion is likely to inspire. But how seldom do I see anything that moves me much! Wilkie, the far more than Teniers of Scotland, certainly gave many new ideas. So does Will Allan, though overwhelmed with their rebukes about colouring and grouping, against which they are not willing to place his general and original merits. Landseer’s dogs were the most magnificent things I ever saw — leaping, and bounding, and grinning on the canvas. Leslie has great powers; and the

scenes from Moliere by [Newton] are excellent. Yet painting wants a regenerator — some one who will sweep the cobwebs out of his head before he takes the palette, as Chantrey has done in the sister art. At present we are painting pictures from the ancients, as authors in the days of Louis Quatorze wrote epic poems according to the recipe of Madame Dacier and Co. The poor reader or spectator has no remedy; the compositions are secundum artem, and if he does not like them, he is no judge — that's all.

February 14 — I had a call from Glengarry yesterday, as kind and friendly as usual. This gentleman is a kind of Quixote in our age, having retained, in their full extent, the whole feelings of clanship and chieftainship, elsewhere so long abandoned. He seems to have lived a century too late, and to exist, in a state of complete law and order, like a Glengarry of old, whose will was law to his sept. Warmhearted, generous, friendly, he is beloved by those who know him, and his efforts are unceasing to show kindness to those of his clan who are disposed fully to admit his pretensions. To dispute them is to incur his resentment, which has sometimes broken out in acts of violence which have brought him into collision with the law. To me he is a treasure, as being full of information as to the history of his own clan, and the manners and customs of the Highlanders in general. Strong, active, and muscular, he follows the chase of the deer for days and nights together, sleeping in his plaid when darkness overtakes him in the forest. He was fortunate in marrying a daughter of Sir William Forbes, who, by yielding to his peculiar ideas in general, possesses much deserved influence with him. The number of his singular exploits would fill a volume; for, as his pretensions are high, and not always willingly yielded to, he is every now and then giving rise to some rumour. He is, on many of these occasions, as much sinned against as sinning; for men, knowing his temper, sometimes provoke him, conscious that Glengarry, from his character for violence, will always be put in the wrong by the public. I have seen him behave in a very manly manner when thus tempted. He has of late prosecuted a quarrel, ridiculous enough in the present day, to have himself admitted and recognised as Chief of the whole Clan Ranald, or surname of Macdonald. The truth seems to be, that the present Clanranald is not descended from a legitimate Chieftain of the tribe; for, having accomplished a revolution in the sixteenth century, they adopted a Tanist, or Captain — that is, a Chief not in the direct line of succession, a certain Ian Moidart, or John of

Moidart, who took the title of Captain of Clanranald, with all the powers of Chief, and even Glengarry's ancestor recognised them as chiefs de facto if not de jure. The fact is, that this elective power was, in cases of insanity, imbecility, or the like, exercised by the Celtic tribes; and though Ian Moidart was no chief by birth, yet by election he became so, and transmitted his power to his descendants, as would King William III., if he had had any. So it is absurd to set up the jus sanguinis now, which Glengarry's ancestors did not, or could not, make good, when it was a right worth combating for. I wrought out my full task yesterday.

Saw Cadell as I returned from the Court. He seems dejected, apprehensive of another trustee being preferred to Cowan, and gloomy about the extent of stock of novels, etc., on hand. He infected me with his want of spirits, and I almost wish my wife had not asked Mr. Scrope and Charles K. Sharpe for this day. But the former sent such loads of game that Lady Scott's gratitude became ungovernable. I have not seen a creature at dinner since the direful 17th January, except my own family and Mr. Laidlaw. The love of solitude increases by indulgence; I hope it will not diverge into misanthropy. It does not mend the matter that this is the first day that a ticket for sale is on my house. Poor No. 39. One gets accustomed even to stone walls, and the place suited me very well. All our furniture, too, is to go — a hundred little articles that seemed to me connected with all the happier years of my life. It is a sorry business. But sursum corda.

My two friends came as expected, also Missie, and stayed till halfpast ten. Promised Sharpe the set of Piranesi's views in the dining-parlour. They belonged to my uncle, so I do not like to sell them.

February 15. — Yesterday I did not write a line of Woodstock. Partly, I was a little out of spirits, though that would not have hindered. Partly, I wanted to wait for some new ideas — a sort of collecting of straw to make bricks of. Partly, I was a little too far beyond the press. I cannot pull well in long traces, when the draught is too far behind me. I love to have the press thumping, clattering, and banging in my rear; it creates the necessity which almost always makes me work best. Needs must when the devil drives — and drive he does even according to the letter. I must work to-day, however. Attended a meeting of the Faculty about our new library. I spoke — saying that I hoped we would now at length act upon a general plan, and look forward to commencing upon such a scale as would secure us at least for a

century against the petty and partial management, which we have hitherto thought sufficient, of fitting up one room after another. Disconnected and distant, these have been costing large sums of money from time to time, all now thrown away. We are now to have space enough for a very large range of buildings, which we may execute in a simple taste, leaving Government to ornament them if they shall think proper — otherwise, to be plain, modest, and handsome, and capable of being executed by degrees, and in such portions as convenience may admit of.

Poor James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, came to advise with me about his affairs, — he is sinking under the times; having no assistance to give him, my advice, I fear, will be of little service. I am sorry for him if that would help him, especially as, by his own account, a couple of hundred pounds would carry him on.

February 16. — ”Misfortune’s gowling bark” comes louder and louder. By assigning my whole property to trustees for behoof of creditors, with two works in progress and nigh publication, and with all my future literary labours, I conceived I was bringing into the field a large fund of payment, which could not exist without my exertions, and that thus far I was entitled to a corresponding degree of indulgence. I therefore supposed, on selling this house, and various other property, and on receiving the price of Woodstock and Napoleon, that they would give me leisure to make other exertions, and be content with the rents of Abbotsford, without attempting a sale. This would have been the more reasonable, as the very printing of these works must amount to a large sum, of which they will reap the profits. In the course of this delay I supposed I was to have the chance of getting some insight both into Constable’s affairs and those of Hurst and Robinson. Nay, employing these houses, under precautions, to sell the works, the publisher’s profit would have come in to pay part of their debts. But Gibson last night came in after dinner, and gave me to understand that the Bank of Scotland see this in a different point of view, and consider my contribution of the produce of past, present, and future labours, as compensated in full by their accepting of the trust-deed, instead of pursuing the mode of sequestration, and placing me in the Gazette. They therefore expected the trustees instantly to commence a lawsuit to reduce the marriage settlement, which settles the estate upon Walter, thus loading me with a most expensive suit, and, I suppose, selling library and whatever they can lay hold on.

Now this seems unequal measure, and would besides of itself totally destroy any power of fancy or genius, if it deserves the name, which may remain to me. A man cannot write in the House of Correction; and this species of peine forte et dure which is threatened would render it impossible for one to help himself or others. So I told Gibson I had my mind made up as far back as the 24th of January, not to suffer myself to be harder pressed than law would press me. If this great commercial company, through whose hands I have directed so many thousands, think they are right in taking every advantage and giving none, it must be my care to see that they take none but what law gives them. If they take the sword of the law, I must lay hold of the shield. If they are determined to consider me as an irretrievable bankrupt, they have no title to object to my settling upon the usual terms which the Statute requires. They probably are of opinion that I will be ashamed to do this by applying publicly for a sequestration. Now, my feelings are different. I am ashamed to owe debts I cannot pay; but I am not ashamed of being classed with those to whose rank I belong. The disgrace is in being an actual bankrupt, not in being made a legal one. I had like to have been too hasty in this matter. I must have a clear understanding that I am to be benefited or indulged in some way, if I bring in two such funds as those works in progress, worth certainly from £10,000 to £15,000.

Clerk came in last night and drank wine and water.

Slept ill, and bilious in the morning. N.B. — I smoked a cigar, the first for this present year, yesterday evening.

February 17. — Slept sound, for Nature repays herself for the vexation the mind sometimes gives her. This morning put interlocutors on several Sheriff-Court processes from Selkirkshire. Gibson came tonight to say that he had spoken at full length with Alexander Monypenny, proposed as trustee on the part of the Bank of Scotland, and found him decidedly in favour of the most moderate measures, and taking burthen on himself for the Bank of Scotland proceeding with such lenity as might enable me to have some time and opportunity to clear these affairs out. I repose trust in Mr. M. entirely. His father, old Colonel Monypenny, was my early friend, kind and hospitable to me when I was a mere boy. He had much of old Withers about him, as expressed in Pope's epitaph —

"O youth in arms approved!
O soft humanity in age beloved."

His son David, and a younger brother, Frank, a soldier who perished by drowning on a boating party from Gibraltar, were my schoolfellows; and with the survivor, now Lord Pitmilly, I have always kept up a friendly intercourse. Of this gentleman, on whom my fortunes are to depend, I know little. He was Colin Mackenzie's partner in business while my friend pursued it, and he speaks highly of him: that's a great deal. He is secretary to the Pitt Club, and we have had all our lives the habit idem sentire de republica: that's much too. Lastly, he is a man of perfect honour and reputation; and I have nothing to ask which such a man would not either grant or convince me was unreasonable. I have, to be sure, some of my constitutional and hereditary obstinacy; but it is in me a dormant quality. Convince my understanding, and I am perfectly docile; stir my passions by coldness or affronts, and the devil would not drive me from my purpose. Let me record, I have striven against this besetting sin. When I was a boy, and on foot expeditions, as we had many, no creature could be so indifferent which way our course was directed, and I acquiesced in what any one proposed; but if I was once driven to make a choice, and felt piqued in honour to maintain my proposition, I have broken off from the whole party, rather than yield to any one. Time has sobered this pertinacity of mind; but it still exists, and I must be on my guard against it.

It is the same with me in politics. In general I care very little about the matter, and from year's end to year's end have scarce a thought connected with them, except to laugh at the fools who think to make themselves great men out of little, by swaggering in the rear of a party. But either actually important events, or such as seemed so by their close neighbourhood to me, have always hurried me off my feet, and made me, as I have sometimes afterwards regretted, more forward and more violent than those who had a regular jog-trot way of busying themselves in public matters. Good luck; for had I lived in troublesome times, and chanced to be on the unhappy side, I had been hanged to a certainty. What I have always remarked has been, that many who have hallooed me on at public meetings, and so forth, have quietly left me to the odium which a man known to the public always has more than his own share of; while, on the other hand, they were easily successful in pressing before me, who never pressed forward at all, when

there was any distribution of public favours or the like. I am horribly tempted to interfere in this business of altering the system of banks in Scotland; and yet I know that if I can attract any notice, I will offend my English friends without propitiating one man in Scotland. I will think of it till tomorrow. It is making myself of too much importance after all.

February 18. — I set about Malachi Malagrowther's Letter on the late disposition to change everything in Scotland to an English model, but without resolving about the publication. They do treat us very provokingly.

> "O Land of Cakes! said the Northern bard,
> Though all the world betrays thee,
> One faithful pen thy rights shall guard,
> One faithful harp shall praise thee."

Called on the Lord Chief Commissioner, who, understanding there was a hitch in our arrangements, had kindly proposed to execute an arrangement for my relief. I could not, I think, have thought of it at any rate. But it is unnecessary.

February 19. — Finished my letter (Malachi Malagrowther) this morning, and sent it to James B., who is to call with the result this forenoon. I am not very anxious to get on with Woodstock. I want to see what Constable's people mean to do when they have their trustee. For an unfinished work they must treat with the author. It is the old story of the varnish spread over the picture, which nothing but the artist's own hand could remove. A finished work might be seized under some legal pretence.

Being troubled with thick-coming fancies, and a slight palpitation of the heart, I have been reading the Chronicle of the Good Knight Messire Jacques de Lalain — curious, but dull, from the constant repetition of the same species of combats in the same style and phrase. It is like washing bushels of sand for a grain of gold. It passes the time, however, especially in that listless mood when your mind is half on your book, half on something else. You catch something to arrest the attention every now and then, and what you miss is not worth going back upon; idle man's studies, in short. Still things occur to one. Something might be made out of the Pass or Fountain of Tears, a tale of chivalry, — taken from the Passages of Arms, which Jacques de Lalain maintained for the first day of every month for a

twelvemonth. The first mention perhaps of red-hot balls appears in the siege of Oudenarde by the citizens of Ghent. Chronique, p. 293. This would be light summer work.

J.B. came and sat an hour. I led him to talk of Woodstock; and, to say truth, his approbation did me much good. I am aware it may — nay, must — be partial; yet is he Tom Tell-truth, and totally unable to disguise his real feelings. I think I make no habit of feeding on praise, and despise those whom I see greedy for it, as much as I should an underbred fellow, who, after eating a cherry-tart, proceeded to lick the plate. But when one is flagging, a little praise (if it can be had genuine and unadulterated by flattery, which is as difficult to come by as the genuine mountain-dew) is a cordial after all. So now — vamos corazon — let us atone for the loss of the morning.

February 20. — Yesterday, though late in beginning, I nearly finished my task, which is six of my close pages, about thirty pages of print, to a full and uninterrupted day's work. To-day I have already written four, and with some confidence. Thus does flattery or praise oil the wheels. It is but two o'clock. Skene was here remonstrating against my taking apartments at the Albyn Club, and recommending that I should rather stay with them. I told him that was altogether impossible; I hoped to visit them often, but for taking a permanent residence I was altogether the country mouse, and voted for

> " — A hollow tree,
> A crust of bread and liberty."

The chain of friendship, however bright, does not stand the attrition of constant close contact.

February 21. — Corrected the proofs of Malachi this morning; it may fall dead, and there will be a squib lost; it may chance to light on some ingredients of national feeling and set folk's beards in a blaze — and so much the better if it does. I mean better for Scotland — not a whit for me. Attended the hearing in P[arliament] House till near four o'clock, so I shall do little tonight, for I am tired and sleepy. One person talking for a long time, whether in pulpit or at the bar, or anywhere else, unless the interest be great, and the eloquence of the highest character, always sets me to sleep. I

impudently lean my head on my hand in the Court and take my nap without shame. The Lords may keep awake and mind their own affairs. Quod supra nos nihil ad nos. These clerks' stools are certainly as easy seats as are in Scotland, those of the Barons of Exchequer always excepted.

February 22. — Paid Lady Scott her fortnight's allowance, £24.

Ballantyne breakfasted, and is to negotiate about Malachi with Constable and Blackwood. It reads not amiss; and if I can get a few guineas for it I shall not be ashamed to take them; for paying Lady Scott, I have just left between £3 and £4 for any necessary occasion and my salary does not become due until 20th March, and the expense of removing, etc., is to be provided for:

> "But shall we go mourn for that, my dear?
> The cold moon shines by night,
> And when we wander here and there,
> We then do go most right."

The mere scarcity of money (so that actual wants are provided) is not poverty — it is the bitter draft to owe money which we cannot pay. Laboured fairly at Woodstock to-day, but principally in revising and adding to Malachi, of which an edition as a pamphlet is anxiously desired. I have lugged in my old friend Cardrona — I hope it will not be thought unkindly. The Banks are anxious to have it published. They were lately exercising lenity towards me, and if I can benefit them, it will be an instance of the "King's errand lying in the cadger's gate."

February 23. — Corrected two sheets of Woodstock this morning. These are not the days of idleness. The fact is, that the not seeing company gives me a command of my time which I possessed at no other period in my life, at least since I knew how to make some use of my leisure. There is a great pleasure in sitting down to write with the consciousness that nothing will occur during the day to break the spell. Detained in the Court till past three, and came home just in time to escape a terrible squall. I am a good deal jaded, and will not work till after dinner. There is a sort of drowsy vacillation of mind attends fatigue with me. I can command my pen as the school copy recommends, but cannot equally command my thought, and often write one word for another. Read a little volume called The Omen —

very well written — deep and powerful language. Aut Erasmus aut Diabolus, it is Lockhart or I am strangely deceived. It is passed for Wilson's though, but Wilson has more of the falsetto of assumed sentiment, less of the depth of gloomy and powerful feeling.

February 24. — Went down to printing-office after the Court, and corrected Malachi. J.B.'s name is to be on the imprint, so he will subscribe the book. He reproaches me with having taken much more pains on this temporary pamphlet than on works which have a greater interest on my fortunes. I have certainly bestowed enough of revision and correction. But the cases are different. In a novel or poem, I run the course alone — here I am taking up the cudgels, and may expect a drubbing in return. Besides, I do feel that this is public matter in which the country is deeply interested; and, therefore, is far more important than anything referring to my fame or fortune alone. The pamphlet will soon be out — meantime Malachi prospers and excites much attention. The Banks have bespoke 500 copies. The country is taking the alarm; and I think the Ministers will not dare to press the measure. I should rejoice to see the old red lion ramp a little, and the thistle again claim its nemo me impune. I do believe Scotsmen will show themselves unanimous at least where their cash is concerned. They shall not want backing. I incline to cry with Biron in Love's Labour's Lost,

> "More Atés, more Atés! stir them on."

I suppose all imaginative people feel more or less of excitation from a scene of insurrection or tumult, or of general expression of national feeling. When I was a lad, poor Davie Douglas used to accuse me of being cupidus novarum rerum, and say that I loved the stimulus of a broil. It might be so then, and even still —

> "Even in our ashes glow their wonted fires."

Whimsical enough that when I was trying to animate Scotland against the currency bill, John Gibson brought me the deed of trust, assigning my whole estate to be subscribed by me; so that I am turning patriot, and taking charge of the affairs of the country, on the very day I was proclaiming myself incapable of managing my own. What of that? The eminent politician, Quidnunc, was in the same condition. Who would think of their

own trumpery debts, when they are taking the support of the whole system of Scottish banking on their shoulders? Odd enough too — on this day, for the first time since the awful 17th January, we entertain at dinner — Lady Anna Maria Elliot, W. Clerk, John A. Murray, and Thomas Thomson, as if we gave a dinner on account of my cessio fori.

February 25. — Our party yesterday went off very gaily; much laugh and fun, and I think I enjoyed it more from the rarity of the event — I mean from having seen society at home so seldom of late. My head aches slightly though; yet we were but a bottle of Champagne, one of Port, one of old Sherry, and two of Claret, among four gentlemen and three ladies. I have been led from this incident to think of taking chambers near Clerk, in Rose Court. Methinks the retired situation should suit me well. There a man and woman would be my whole establishment. My superfluous furniture might serve, and I could ask a friend or two to dinner, as I have been accustomed to do. I will look at the place to-day.

I must set now to a second epistle of Malachi to the Athenians. If I can but get the sulky Scottish spirit set up, the devil won't turn them.

> "Cock up your beaver, and cock it fu' sprush;
> We'll over the Border, and give them a brush;
> There's somebody there we'll teach better behaviour;
> Hey, Johnnie lad, cock up your beaver."

February 26. — Spent the morning and till dinner on Malachi's second epistle to the Athenians. It is difficult to steer betwixt the natural impulse of one's national feelings setting in one direction, and the prudent regard to the interests of the empire and its internal peace and quiet, recommending less vehement expression. I will endeavour to keep sight of both. But were my own interests alone concerned, d — n me but I would give it them hot! Had some valuable communications from Colin Mackenzie and Lord Medwyn, which will supply my plentiful lack of facts.

Received an anonymous satire in doggrel, which, having read the first verse and last, I committed to the flames. Peter Murray, son of the clever Lord Elibank, called and sat half-an-hour — an old friend, and who, from the peculiarity and originality of his genius, is one of the most entertaining companions I have ever known. But I must finish Malachi.

February 27. — Malachi is getting on; I must finish him tonight. I dare say some of my London friends will be displeased — Canning perhaps, for he is engoué of Huskisson. Can't help it.

The place I looked at won't do; but I really must get some lodging, for, reason or none, Dalgleish will not leave me, and cries and makes a scene. Now if I stayed alone in a little set of chambers, he would serve greatly for my accommodation. There are some nice places of the kind in the. New Buildings, but they are distant from the Court, and I cannot walk well on the pavement. It is odd enough that just when I had made a resolution to use my coach frequently I ceased to keep one — in town at least.

February 28. — Completed Malachi to-day. It is more serious than the first, and in some places perhaps too peppery. Never mind, if you would have a horse kick, make a crupper out of a whin-cow, and I trust to see Scotland kick and fling to some purpose. Woodstock lies back for this. But quid non pro patria?

March

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March 1. — Malachi is in the Edinburgh Journal to-day, and reads like the work of an uncompromising right-forward Scot of the old school. Some of the cautious and pluckless instigators will be afraid of their confederate; for if a man of some energy and openness of character happens to be on the same side with these truckling jobbers, they stand as much in awe of his vehemence as doth the inexperienced conjurer who invokes a fiend whom he cannot manage. Came home, in a heavy shower with the Solicitor. I tried him on the question, but found him reserved and cautious. The future Lord Advocate must be cautious; but I can tell my good friend John Hope that, if he acts the part of a firm and resolute Scottish patriot, both his own country and England will respect him the more. Ah! Hal Dundas, there was no such truckling in thy day!

Looked out a quantity of things to go to Abbotsford; for we are flitting, if you please. It is with a sense of pain that I leave behind a parcel of trumpery prints and little ornaments, once the pride of Lady S — — 's heart, but which she sees consigned with indifference to the chance of an auction. Things that have had their day of importance with me I cannot forget, though the merest trifles. But I am glad that she, with bad health and enough to vex her, has not the same useless mode of associating recollections with this unpleasant business. The best part of it is the necessity of leaving behind, viz., setting rid of, a set of most wretched daubs of landscapes, in great gilded frames, of which I have often been heartily ashamed. The history of them was curious. An amateur artist (a lady) happened to fall into misfortunes, upon which her landscapes, the character of which had been buoyed up far beyond their proper level, sank even beneath it, and it was low enough. One most amiable and accomplished old lady continued to encourage her pencil, and to order picture after picture, which she sent in presents to her friends. I suppose I have eight or ten of them, which I could not avoid accepting. There will be plenty of laughing when they come to be sold. It would be a good joke enough to cause it to be circulated that they were performances of my own in early youth, and they would be looked on and bought up as curiosities. True it is that I took lessons of oil-painting in youth from a little Jew

animalcule, a smouch called Burrell, a clever sensible creature though; but I could make no progress either in painting or drawing. Nature denied me correctness of eye and neatness of hand, yet I was very desirous to be a draughtsman at least, and laboured harder to attain that point than at any other in my recollection, to which I did not make some approaches. My oil-paintings were to Miss — — — above commemorated what hers are to Claude Lorraine. Yet Burrell was not useless to me altogether neither; he was a Prussian, and I got from him many a long story of the battles of Frederic, in whose armies his father had been a commissary, or perhaps a spy. I remember his picturesque account of seeing a party of the Black Hussars bringing in some forage carts which they had taken from a body of the Cossacks, whom he described as lying on the top of the carts of hay, mortally wounded, and, like the Dying Gladiator, eyeing their own blood as it ran down through the straw. I afterwards took lessons from Walker, whom we used to call Bluebeard. He was one of the most conceited persons in the world, but a good teacher — one of the ugliest countenances he had too — enough, as we say, to spean weans. The man was always extremely precise in the quality of everything about him, his dress, accommodations, and everything else. He became insolvent, poor man, and for some reason or other I attended the meeting of those concerned in his affairs. Instead of ordinary accommodations for writing, each of the persons present was equipped with a large sheet of drawing paper and a swan's quill. It was mournfully ridiculous enough. Skirving made an admirable likeness of Walker, not a single scar or mark of the smallpox which seamed his countenance, but the too accurate brother of the brush had faithfully laid it down in longitude and latitude. Poor Walker destroyed it (being in crayons) rather than let the caricature of his ugliness appear at the sale of his effects. I did learn myself to take some vile views from Nature. When Will Clerk and I lived very much together, I used sometimes to make them under his instruction. He to whom, as to all his family, art is a familiar attribute, wondered at me as a Newfoundland dog would at a greyhound which showed fear of the water.

Going down to Liddesdale once, I drew the castle of Hermitage in my fashion, and sketched it so accurately that with a few verbal instructions Clerk put it into regular form, Williams (the Grecian) copied over Clerk's, and his drawing was engraved as the frontispiece of the first volume of the Kelso edition, Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border. Do you know why you

have written all this down, Sir W.? Because it pleases me to record that this thrice-transmitted drawing, though taken originally from a sketch of mine, was extremely like Hermitage, which neither of my colleagues in the task had ever seen? No, that's not the reason. You want to put off writing Woodstock, just as easily done as these memoranda, but which it happens your duty and your prudence recommend, and therefore you are loath to begin.

> "Heigho,
> I can't say no;
> But this piece of task-work off I can stave, O,
> For Malachi's posting into an octavo;
> To correct the proof-sheets only this night I have, O,
> So, Madame Conscience, you've gotten as good as you gave, O
> But tomorrow's a new day and we'll better behave, O,
> So I lay down the pen, and your pardon I crave, O."

In the evening Mr. Gibson called and transacted business.

March 2. — I have a letter from Colin Mackenzie, approving Malachi, — "Cold men may say it is too strong; but from the true men of Scotland you are sure of the warmest gratitude." I never have yet found, nor do I expect it on this occasion, that illwill dies in debt, or what is called gratitude distresses herself by frequent payments. The one is like a wardholding and pays its reddendo in hard blows. The other a blanch-tenure, and is discharged for payment of a red rose or a peppercorn. He that takes the forlorn hope in an attack, is often deserted by those that should support him, and who generally throw the blame of their own cowardice upon his rashness. We shall see this will end in the same way. But I foresaw it from the beginning. The bankers will be persuaded that it is a squib which may burn their own fingers, and will curse the poor pyrotechnist that compounded it; if they do, they be d — d. Slept indifferently, and dreamed of Napoleon's last moments, of which I was reading a medical account last night, by Dr. Arnott. Horrible death — a cancer on the pylorus. I would have given something to have lain still this morning and made up for lost time. But desidiae valedixi. If you once turn on your side after the hour at which you ought to rise, it is all over. Bolt up at once. Bad night last — the next is sure to be better.

"When the drum beats, make ready;
When the fife plays, march away —
To the roll-call, to the roll-call, to the roll-call,
Before the break of day."

Dined with Chief-Commissioner, Admiral Adam, W. Clerk, Thomson, and I. The excellent old man was cheerful at intervals — at times sad, as was natural. A good blunder he told us, occurred in the Annandale case, which was a question partly of domicile. It was proved that leaving Lochwood, the Earl had given up his kain and carriages; this an English Counsel contended was the best of all possible proofs that the noble Earl designed an absolute change of residence, since he laid aside his walking-stick and his coach.

First epistle of Malachi is getting out of print, or rather is out of print already.

March 3. — Could not get the last sheets of Malachi, Second Epistle, last night, so they must go out to the world uncorrected — a great loss, for the last touches are always most effectual; and I expect misprints in the additional matter. We were especially obliged to have it out this morning, that it may operate as a gentle preparative for the meeting of inhabitants at two o'clock. Vogue la galère — we shall see if Scotsmen have any pluck left. If not, they may kill the next Percy themselves. It is ridiculous enough for me, in a state of insolvency for the present, to be battling about gold and paper currency. It is something like the humorous touch in Hogarth's Distressed Poet, where the poor starveling of the Muses is engaged, when in the abyss of poverty, in writing an Essay on payment of the National Debt; and his wall is adorned with a plan of the mines of Peru. Nevertheless, even these fugitive attempts, from the success which they have had, and the noise they are making, serve to show the truth of the old proverb —

"When house and land are gone and spent,
Then learning is most excellent."

On the whole, I am glad of this brulzie, as far as I am concerned; people will not dare talk of me as an object of pity — no more "poor-manning." Who asks how many punds Scots the old champion had in his pocket when

"He set a bugle to his mouth,
And blew so loud and shrill,
The trees in greenwood shook thereat,
Sae loud rang ilka hill"?

This sounds conceited enough, yet is not far from truth.

The meeting was very numerous, 500 or 600 at least, and unanimous, save in one Mr. Howden, who having been all his life, as I am told, in bitter opposition to Ministers, proposed on the present occasion that the whole contested measure should be trusted to their wisdom. I suppose he chose the opportunity of placing his own opinion in opposition, single opposition too, to that of a large assembly. The speaking was very moderate. Report had said that Jeffrey, J.A. Murray, and other sages of the economical school, were to unbuckle their mails, and give us their opinions. But no such great guns appeared. If they had, having the multitude on my side, I would have tried to break a lance with them. A few short but well-expressed resolutions were adopted unanimously. These were proposed by Lord Rollo, and seconded by Sir James Fergusson, Bart. I was named one of a committee to encourage all sorts of opposition to the measure. So I have already broken through two good and wise resolutions — one, that I would not write on political controversy; another, that I would not be named on public committees. If my good resolves go this way, like snaw aff a dyke — the Lord help me!

March 4. — Last night I had a letter from Lockhart, who, speaking of Malachi, says, "The Ministers are sore beyond imagination at present; and some of them, I hear, have felt this new whip on the raw to some purpose." I conclude he means Canning is offended. I can't help it, as I said before — fiat justitia, ruat coelum. No cause in which I had the slightest personal interest should have made me use my pen 'gainst them, blunt or pointed as it may be. But as they are about to throw this country into distress and danger, by a measure of useless and uncalled-for experiment, they must hear the opinion of the Scotsmen, to whom it is of no other consequence than as a general measure affecting the country at large, — and mine they shall hear. I had determined to lay down the pen. But now they shall have another of Malachi, beginning with buffoonery, and ending as seriously as I can write it. It is like a frenzy that they will agitate the upper and middling

classes of society, so very friendly to them, with unnecessary and hazardous [projects],

> "Oh, thus it was they loved them dear,
> And sought how to requite 'em,
> And having no friends left but they,
> They did resolve to fight them."

The country is very high just now. England may carry the measure if she will, doubtless. But what will be the consequence of the distress ensuing, God only can foretell.

Lockhart, moreover, inquires about my affairs anxiously, and asks what he is to say about them; says, "He has inquiries every day; kind, most kind all, and among the most interested and anxious, Sir William Knighton, who told me the king was quite melancholy all the evening he heard of it." This I can well believe, for the king, educated as a prince, has, nevertheless, as true and kind a heart as any subject in his dominions. He goes on: "I do think they would give you a Baron's gown as soon as possible," *etc.* I have written to him in answer, showing I have enough to carry me on, and can dedicate my literary efforts to clear my land. The preferment would suit me well, and the late Duke of Buccleuch gave me his interest for it. I dare say the young duke would do the same, for the unvaried love I have borne his house; and by and by he will have a voice potential. But there is Sir William Rae in the meantime, whose prevailing claim I would never place my own in opposition to, even were it possible by a tour de force, such as L. points at, to set it aside. Meantime, I am building a barrier betwixt me and promotion. Any prospect of the kind is very distant and very uncertain. Come time, come, rath, as the German says.

In the meanwhile, now I am not pulled about for money, etc., methinks I am happier without my wealth than with it. Everything is paid. I have no one wishing to make up a sum of money, and writing for his account to be paid. Since 17th January I have not laid out a guinea, out of my own hand, save two or three in charity, and six shillings for a pocketbook. But the cash with which I set out having run short for family expenses I drew on Blackwood, through Ballantyne, which was honoured, for £25, to account of Malachi's Letters, of which another edition of 1000 is ordered, and gave it to Lady Scott, because our removal will require that in hand. This is for a fortnight succeeding Wednesday next, being the 8th March current. On the

20th my quarter comes in, and though I have something to pay out of it, I shall be on velvet for expense — and regular I will be. Methinks all trifling objects of expenditure seem to grow light in my eyes. That I may regain independence, I must be saving. But ambition awakes, as love of quiet indulgence dies and is mortified within me. "Dark Cuthullin will be renowned or dead."

March 5. — Something of toddy and cigar in that last quotation, I think. Yet I only smoked two, and liquified with one glass of spirits and water. I have sworn I will not blot out what I have once written here.

Malachi goes on, but I am dubious about the commencement — it must be mended at least — reads prosy.

Had letters from Walter and Jane, the dears. All well. Regiment about to move from Dublin.

March 6. — Finished third Malachi, which I don't much like. It respects the difficulty of finding gold to replace the paper circulation. Now this should have been considered first. The admitting that the measure may be imposed is yielding up the question, and Malachi is like a commandant who should begin to fire from interior defences before his outworks were carried. If Ballantyne be of my own opinion I will suppress it. We are all in a bustle shifting things to Abbotsford. I believe we shall stay here till the beginning of next week. It is odd, but I don't feel the impatience for the country which I have usually experienced.

March 7. — Detained in the Court till three by a hearing. Then to the Committee appointed at the meeting on Friday, to look after the small-note business. A pack of old fainéants, incapable of managing such a business, and who will lose the day from mere coldness of heart. There are about a thousand names at the petition. They have added no designations — a great blunder; for testimonia sunt ponderanda, non numeranda should never be lost sight of. They are disconcerted and helpless; just as in the business of the King's visit, when everybody threw the weight on me, for which I suffered much in my immediate labour, and after bad health it brought on a violent eruption on my skin, which saved me from a fever at the time, but has been troublesome more or less ever since. I was so disgusted with seeing them sitting in ineffectual helplessness spitting on the hot iron that

lay before them, and touching it with a timid finger, as if afraid of being scalded, that at another time I might have dashed in and taken up the hammer, summoned the deacons and other heads of public bodies, and by consulting them have carried them with me. But I cannot waste my time, health, and spirits in fighting thankless battles. I left them in a quarter of an hour, and presage, unless the country make an alarm, the cause is lost. The philosophical reviewers manage their affairs better — hold off — avoid committing themselves, but throw their vis inertiæ into the opposite scale, and neutralise the feelings which they cannot combat. To force them to fight on disadvantageous ground is our policy. But we have more sneakers after Ministerial favour than men who love their country, and who upon a liberal scale would serve their party. For to force the Whigs to avow an unpopular doctrine in popular assemblies, or to wrench the government of such bodies from them, would be a coup de maître. But they are alike destitute of manly resolution and sound policy. D — n the whole nest of them! I have corrected the last of Malachi, and let the thing take its chance. I have made enemies enough, and indisposed enough of friends.

March 8. — At the Court, though a teind day. A foolish thing happened while the Court were engaged with the teinds. I amused myself with writing on a sheet of paper notes on Frederick Maitland's account of the capture of Bonaparte; and I have lost these notes — shuffled in perhaps among my own papers, or those of the teind clerks. What a curious document to be found in a process of valuation!

Being jaded and sleepy, I took up Le Due de Guise on Naples. I think this, with the old Memoires on the same subject which I have at Abbotsford, would enable me to make a pretty essay for the Quarterly. We must take up Woodstock now in good earnest. Mr. Cowan, a good and able man, is chosen trustee in Constable's affairs, with full power. From what I hear, the poor man is not sensible of the nature of his own situation; for myself, I have succeeded in putting the matters perfectly out of my mind since I cannot help them, and have arrived at a floccipauci-nihilipili-fication of money, and I thank Shenstone for inventing that long word. They are removing the wine, etc., to the carts, and you will judge if our flitting is not making a noise in the world — or in the street at least.

March 9. — I foresaw justly,

"When first I set this dangerous stone arolling,
'Twould fall upon myself."

Sir Robert Dundas to-day put into my hands a letter of between thirty and forty pages, in angry and bitter reprobation of Malachi, full of general averments and very untenable arguments, all written at me by name, but of which I am to have no copy, and which is to be shown to me in extenso, and circulated to other special friends, to whom it may be necessary to "give the sign to hate." I got it at two o'clock, and returned [it] with an answer four hours afterwards, in which I have studied not to be tempted into either sarcastic or harsh expressions. A quarrel it is however, in all the forms, between my old friend and myself, and his lordship's reprimand is to be read out in order to all our friends. They all know what I have said is true, but that will be nothing to the purpose if they are desired to consider it as false. As for Lord Melville, I do not wonder that he is angry, though he has little reason, for he, our watchman stented, has from time to time suffered all manner of tampering to go on under his nose with the institutions and habits of Scotland. As for myself, I was quite prepared for my share of displeasure. It is very curious that I should have foreseen all this so distinctly as far back as 17th February. Nobody at least can plague me for interest with Lord Melville as they used to do. By the way, from the tone of his letter, I think his lordship will give up the measure, and I will be the peace-offering. All will agree to condemn me as too warm — too rash — and get rich on privileges which they would not have been able to save but for a little rousing of spirit, which will not perhaps fall asleep again. A gentleman called on the part of a Captain [Rutherford], to make inquiry about the Border Rutherfords. Not being very cleever, as John Fraser used to say, at these pedigree matters, referred him to Mrs. Dr. Russell and Robt. Rutherford. The noble Captain conceits he has some title to the honours of Lord Rutherford. Very odd — when there is a vacant or dormant title in a Scottish family or name, everybody, and all connected with the clan, conceive they have quodam modo a right to it. Not being engrossed by any individual, it communicates part of its lustre to every individual in the tribe, as if it remained in common stock for that purpose.

March 10. — I am not made entirely in the same mould of passions like other people. Many men would deeply regret a breach with so old a friend

as Lord Melville, and many men would be in despair at losing the good graces of a Minister of State for Scotland, and all pretty visions about what might be done for myself and my sons, especially Charles. But I think my good lord doth ill to be angry, like the patriarch of old, and I have, in my odd sans souciance character, a good handful of meal from the grist of the Jolly Miller, who

> "Once
> Dwelled on the river Dee;
> I care for nobody, no, not I,
> Since nobody cares for me."

Breakfasted with me Mr. Franks, a young Irishman from Dublin, who brought letters from Walter and Captain Longmore of the Royal Staff. He has written a book of poetry, Tales of Chivalry and Romance, far from bad, yet wants spirit. He talks of publishing his recollections in the Peninsula, which must be interesting, for he has, I think, sense and reflection.

Sandie Young came in at breakfast-time with a Monsieur Brocque of Montpelier.

Saw Sir Robert Dundas at Court, who condemns Lord Melville, and says he will not show his letter to any one; in fact it would be exactly placarding me in a private and confidential manner. He is to send my letter to Lord Melville. Colin Mackenzie concurs in thinking Lord Melville quite wrong. "He must cool in the skin he het in."

On coming home from the Court a good deal fatigued, I took a nap in my easychair, then packed my books, and committed the refuse to Jock Stevenson —

> "Left not a limb on which a Dane could triumph."

Gave Mr. Gibson my father's cabinet, which suits a man of business well. Gave Jock Stevenson the picture of my old favourite dog Camp, mentioned in one of the introductions to Marmion, and a little crow-quill drawing of Melrose Abbey by Nelson, whom I used to call the Admiral. Poor fellow! he had some ingenuity, and was, in a moderate way, a good penman and draughtsman. He left his situation of amanuensis to go into Lord Home's militia regiment, but his dissipated habits got the better of a strong constitution, and he fell into bad ways and poverty, and died, I believe, in

the hospital at Liverpool. Strange enough that Henry Weber, who acted afterwards as my amanuensis for many years, had also a melancholy fate ultimately. He was a man of very superior attainments, an excellent linguist and geographer, and a remarkable antiquary. He published a collection of ancient Romances, superior, I think, to the elaborate Ritson. He also published an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, but too carelessly done to be reputable. He was a violent Jacobin, which he thought he disguised from me, while I, who cared not a fig about the poor young man's politics, used to amuse myself with teasing him. He was an excellent and affectionate creature, but unhappily was afflicted with partial insanity, especially if he used strong liquors, to which, like others with that unhappy tendency, he was occasionally addicted. In 1814 he became quite insane, and, at the risk of my life, I had to disarm him of a pair of loaded pistols, which I did by exerting the sort of authority which, I believe, gives an effectual control in such cases. His friends, who were respectable, placed him in the York Asylum, where he pined away and died, I think, in 1814 or 1815. My patronage in this way has not been lucky to the parties protected. I hope poor George Huntly Gordon will escape the influence of the evil star. He has no vice, poor fellow, but his total deafness makes him helpless.

March 11. — This day the Court rose after a long and laborious sederunt. I employed the remainder of the day in completing a set of notes on Captain Maitland's manuscript narrative of the reception of Napoleon Bonaparte on board the Bellerophon. It had been previously in the hands of my friend Basil Hall, who had made many excellent corrections in point of style; but he had been hypercritical in wishing (in so important a matter where everything depends on accuracy) this expression to be altered for delicacy's sake, — that to be omitted for fear of giving offence, — and that other to be abridged for fear of being tedious. The plain sailor's narrative for me, written on the spot, and bearing in its minuteness the evidence of its veracity.

Lord Elgin sent me, some time since, a curious account of his imprisonment in France, and the attempts which were made to draw him into some intrigue which might authorise treating him with rigour. He called to-day and communicated some curious circumstances, on the authority of Fouché, Denon, and others, respecting Bonaparte and the empress Maria Louise, whom Lord Elgin had conversed with on the subject

in Italy. His conduct towards her was something like that of Ethwald to Elburga, in Joanna Baillie's fine tragedy, making her postpone her high rank by birth to the authority which he had acquired by his talents. Dinner was usually announced for a particular hour, and Napoleon's business often made him late. She was not permitted to sit down to table, an etiquette which was reasonable enough. But from the hour of dinner till the Emperor appeared she was to be in the act of sitting down; that is to say, he was displeased if he found her engaged with a book, with work, or with anything else. She was obliged to be in a state of absolute "being about to sit down." She seemed a good deal gênée by something of that kind, though remembering with pride she had been Empress, it might almost be said of the world. The rest for tomorrow.

March 12. — Resumed Woodstock, and wrote my task of six pages. I was interrupted by a slumberous feeling which made me obliged to stop once or twice. I shall soon have a remedy in the country, which affords the pleasanter resource of a walk when such feelings come on. I hope I am the reverse of the wellknown line, "sleepy myself, to give my readers sleep." I cannot gurnalise at any rate, having wrought my eyes nearly out.

March 13. — Wrote to the end of a chapter, and knowing no more than the man in the moon what comes next, I will put down a few of Lord Elgin's remembrances, and something may occur to me in the meanwhile. When M[aria] Louise first saw B[onaparte], she was in the carriage with his representative general, when she saw a horseman ride forward at the gallop, passing and repassing the carriage in a manner which, joined to the behaviour of her companion, convinced her who it was, especially as he endeavoured, with a curiosity which would not have been tolerated in another, to peep into the windows. When she alighted at the inn at — — , Napoleon presented himself, pulled her by the ear, and kissed her forehead.

Bonaparte's happiest days passed away when he dismissed from about him such men as Talleyrand and Fouché, whose questions and objections compelled him to recur upon, modify, and render practicable the great plans which his ardent conception struck out at a heat. When he had Murat and such persons about him, who marvelled and obeyed, his schemes, equally magnificent, were not so well matured, and ended in the projector's ruin.

I have hinted in these notes that I am not entirely free from a sort of gloomy fits, with a fluttering of the heart and depression of spirits, just as if I knew not what was going to befall me. I can sometimes resist this successfully, but it is better to evade than to combat it. The hangdog spirit may have originated in the confusion and chucking about of our old furniture, the stripping of walls of pictures, and rooms of ornaments; the leaving a house we have so long called our home is altogether melancholy enough. I am glad Lady S. does not mind it, and yet I wonder, too. She insists on my remaining till Wednesday, not knowing what I suffer. Meanwhile, to make my recusant spirit do penance, I have set to work to clear away papers and pack them for my journey. What a strange medley of thoughts such a task produces! There lie letters which made the heart throb when received, now lifeless and uninteresting — as are perhaps their owners. Riddles which time has read — schemes which he has destroyed or brought to maturity — memorials of friendships and enmities which are now alike faded. Thus does the ring of Saturn consume itself. To-day annihilates yesterday, as the old tyrant swallowed his children, and the snake its tail. But I must say to my Gurnal as poor Byron did to Moore, "Damn it, Tom, don't be poetical."

Memorandum. — I received some time since from Mr. Riddoch, of Falkirk, a sort of iron mallet, said to have been found in the ruins of Grame's Dike; there it was reclaimed about three months since by the gentleman on whose lands it was found, a Doctor — by a very polite letter from his man of business. Having unluckily mislaid his letter, and being totally unable either to recollect the name of the proprietor or the professional gentleman, I returned this day the piece of antiquity to Mr. Riddoch, who sent it to me. Wrote at the same time to Tom Grahame of Airth, mentioning what I had done. "Touch my honour, touch my life — there is the spoon."

March 14. — J.B. called this morning to take leave, and receive directions about proofs, *etc.* Talks of the uproar about Malachi; but I am tired of Malachi — the humour is off, and I have said what I wanted to say, and put the people of Scotland on their guard, as well as Ministers, if they like to be warned. They are gradually destroying what remains of nationality, and making the country tabula rasa for doctrines of bold innovation. Their loosening and grinding down all those peculiarities which distinguished us

as Scotsmen will throw the country into a state in which it will be universally turned to democracy, and instead of canny Saunders, they will have a very dangerous North British neighbourhood.

Some [English] lawyer expressed to Lord Elibank an opinion, that at the Union the English law should have been extended all over Scotland. "I cannot say how that might have answered our purpose," said Lord Patrick, who was never nonsuited for want of an answer, "but it would scarce have suited yours, since by this time the Aberdeen Advocates would have possessed themselves of all the business in Westminster Hall."

What a detestable feeling this fluttering of the heart is! I know it is nothing organic, and that it is entirely nervous; but the sickening effects of it are dispiriting to a degree. Is it the body brings it on the mind, or the mind that inflicts it upon the body? I cannot tell; but it is a severe price to pay for the Fata Morgana with which Fancy sometimes amuses men of warm imaginations. As to body and mind, I fancy I might as well inquire whether the fiddle or fiddlestick makes the tune. In youth this complaint used to throw me into involuntary passions of causeless tears. But I will drive it away in the country by exercise. I wish I had been a mechanic: a turning-lathe or a chest of tools would have been a Godsend; for thought makes the access of melancholy rather worse than better. I have it seldom, thank God, and, I believe, lightly, in comparison of others.

It was the fiddle after all was out of order, not the fiddlestick; the body, not the mind. I walked out; met Mrs. Skene, who took a turn with me in Princes Street. Bade Constable and Cadell farewell, and had a brisk walk home, which enables me to face the desolation here with more spirit. News from Sophia. She has had the luck to get an anti-druggist in a Dr. Gooch, who prescribes care for Johnnie instead of drugs, and a little homebrewed ale instead of wine; and, like a liberal physician, supplies the medicine he prescribes. As for myself, while I have scarce stirred to take exercise for four or five days, no wonder I had the mulligrubs. It is an awful sensation though, and would have made an enthusiast of me, had I indulged my imagination on devotional subjects. I have been always careful to place my mind in the most tranquil posture which it can assume during my private exercises of devotion.

I have amused myself occasionally very pleasantly during the last few days, by reading over Lady Morgan's novel of O'Donnel, which has some striking and beautiful passages of situation and description, and in the

comic part is very rich and entertaining. I do not remember being so much pleased with it at first. There is a want of story, always fatal to a book the first reading — and it is well if it gets a chance of a second. Alas! poor novel! Also read again, and for the third time at least, Miss Austen's very finely written novel of Pride and Prejudice. That young lady had a talent for describing the involvements and feelings and characters of ordinary life, which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with. The Big Bow-wow strain I can do myself like any now going; but the exquisite touch, which renders ordinary commonplace things and characters interesting, from the truth of the description and the sentiment, is denied to me. What a pity such a gifted creature died so early!

March 15. — This morning I leave No. 39 Castle Street, for the last time. "The cabin was convenient," and habit had made it agreeable to me. I never reckoned upon a change in this particular so long as I held an office in the Court of Session. In all my former changes of residence it was from good to better; this is retrograding. I leave this house for sale, and I cease to be an Edinburgh citizen, in the sense of being a proprietor, which my father and I have been for sixty years at least. So farewell, poor 39, and may you never harbour worse people than those who now leave you! Not to desert the Lares all at once, Lady S. and Anne remain till Sunday. As for me, I go, as aforesaid, this morning.

"Ha til mi tulidh'! — "

Abbotsford, 9 at night. — The naturally unpleasant feelings which influenced me in my ejectment, for such it is virtually, readily evaporated in the course of the journey, though I had no pleasanter companions than Mrs. Mackay, the housekeeper, and one of the maids; and I have a shyness of disposition, which looks like pride, but it is not, which makes me awkward in speaking to my household domestics. With an out-of-doors labourer, or an old woman gathering sticks, I can talk for ever. I was welcomed here on my arrival by the tumult, great of men and dogs, all happy to see me. One of my old labourers killed by the fall of a stone working at Gattonside Bridge. Old Will Straiton, my man of wisdom and proverbs, also dead. He was entertaining from his importance and self-conceit, but really a sensible old man. When he heard of my misfortunes, he went to bed, and said he would not rise again, and kept his word. He was very infirm when I last saw

him. Tom Purdie in great glory, being released from all farm duty, and destined to attend the woods, and be my special assistant. The gardener Bogie is to take care of what small farm we have left, which little would make me give up entirely.

March 16. — Pleasant days make short Journals, and I have little to say to-day. I wrote in the morning at Woodstock; walked from one till four; was down at Huntly Burn and paid my respects to the ladies. The spring seems promising, and everything in great order. Visited Will Straiton's widow, who squeezed out among many tears a petition for a house. I do not think I shall let her have one, as she has a bad temper, but I will help her otherwise; she is greedy besides, as was the defunct philosopher William. In a year or two I shall have on the toft field a gallant show of extensive woodland, sweeping over the hill, and its boundaries carefully concealed. In the evening, after dinner, read Mrs. Charlotte Smith's novel of Desmond — decidedly the worst of her compositions.

March 17. — Sent off a packet to J.B.; only three pages copy, so must work hard for a day or two. I wish I could wind up my bottom handsomely — an odd but accredited phrase. The conclusion will be luminous; we must try to make it dashing. Go spin, you jade, go spin. Have a good deal to do between-hands in sorting up the newly arrived accession of books.

I need not have exulted so soon in having attained ease and quiet. I am robbed of both with a vengeance. A letter from Lockhart, with one enclosed from Sophia, announces the medical people think the child is visibly losing strength, that its walking becomes more difficult, and, in short, that the spine seems visibly affected. They recommend tepid baths in sea-water, so Sophia has gone down to Brighton, leaving Lockhart in town, who is to visit her once a week. Here is my worst augury verified. The bitterness of this probably impending calamity is extreme. The child was almost too good for this world; beautiful in features; and, though spoiled by every one, having one of the sweetest tempers, as well as the quickest intellect I ever saw; a sense of humour quite extraordinary in a child, and, owing to the general notice which was taken of him, a great deal more information than suited his years. He was born in the eighth month, and such children are never strong — seldom long-lived. I look on this side and that, and see nothing but protracted misery, a crippled frame, and decayed constitution,

occupying the attention of his parents for years, and dying at the end of that period, when their hearts were turned on him; or the poor child may die before Sophia's confinement, and that may again be a dangerous and bad affair; or she may, by increase of attention to him, injure her own health. In short, to trace into how many branches such a misery may flow is impossible. The poor dear love had so often a slow fever, that when it pressed its little lips to mine, I always foreboded to my own heart what all I fear are now aware of.

Lockhart writes me that Croker is the author of the Letters in the Courier against Malachi, and that Canning is to make another attack on me in the House of Commons. These things would make a man proud. I will not answer, because I must show up Sir William Rae, and even Lord Melville, and I have done enough to draw public attention, which is all I want. Let them call me ungrateful, unkind, and all sorts of names, so they keep their own fingers free of this most threatening measure. It is very curious that each of these angry friends — Melville, Canning, and Croker — has in former days appealed to me in confidence against each other.

While I smoked my cigar after dinner, my mind has been running into four threads of bitter fancies, or rather into three decidedly bitter, and one that is indifferent. There is the distress incumbent on the country by these most untimely proceedings, which I would stop with my life were that adequate to prevent them. 2d, there is the unpleasant feeling of seeing a number of valued friends pass from me; that I cannot help. 3d, there is the gnawing misery about that sweet child and its parents. 4th, there is the necessity of pursuing my own labours, for which perhaps I ought to be thankful, since it always wrenches one's mind aside from what it must dwell on with pain. It is odd that the state of excitation with me rather increases than abates the power of labour, I must finish Woodstock well if I can: otherwise how the Philistines will rejoice!

March 18. — Slept indifferently, and under the influence of Queen Mab, seldom auspicious to me, dreamed of reading the tale of the Prince of the Black Marble Islands to little Johnnie, extended on a paralytic chair, and yet telling all his pretty stories about Ha-papa, as he calls me, and Chiefswood — and waked to think I should see the little darling no more, or see him as a thing that had better never have existed. Oh, misery! misery! that the best I can wish for him is early death, with all the wretchedness to his parents

that is like to ensue! I intended to have stayed at home to-day; but Tom more wisely had resolved that I should walk, and hung about the window with his axe and my own in his hand till I turned out with him, and helped to cut some fine paling.

March 19. — I have a most melancholy letter from Anne. Lady S., the faithful and true companion of my fortunes, good and bad, for so many years, has, but with difficulty, been prevailed on to see Dr. Abercrombie, and his opinion is far from favourable. Her asthmatic complaints are fast terminating in hydropsy, as I have long suspected; yet the avowal of the truth and its probable consequences are overwhelming. They are to stay a little longer in town to try the effects of a new medicine. On Wednesday they propose to return hither — a new affliction, where there was enough before; yet her constitution is so good that if she will be guided by advice, things may be yet ameliorated. God grant it! for really these misfortunes come too close upon each other.

A letter from Croker of a very friendly tone and tenor, which I will answer accordingly, not failing, however, to let him know that if I do not reply it is not for fear of his arguments or raillery, far less from diffidence in my cause. I hope and trust it will do good.

Maxpopple and two of his boys arrived to take part of my poor dinner. I fear the little fellows had little more than the needful, but they had all I had to give them.

I wrote a good deal to-day notwithstanding heavy thoughts.

March 20. — Despatched proofs and copy this morning; and Swanston, the carpenter, coming in, I made a sort of busy idle day of it with altering and hanging pictures and prints, to find room for those which came from Edinburgh, and by dint of being on foot from ten to near five, put all things into apple-pie order. What strange beings we are! The serious duties I have on hand cannot divert my mind from the most melancholy thoughts; and yet the talking with these workmen, and the trifling occupation which they give me, serves to dissipate my attention. The truth is, I fancy that a body under the impulse of violent motion cannot be stopped or forced back, but may indirectly be urged into a different channel. In the evening I read, and sent off my Sheriff-Court processes.

I have a sort of grudging to give reasons why Malachi does not reply to the answers which have been sent forth. I don't know — I am strongly tempted — but I won't. To drop the tone might seem mean, and perhaps to maintain it would only exasperate the quarrel, without producing any beneficial results, and might be considered as a fresh insult by my alienated friends, so on the whole I won't.

The thing has certainly had more effect than it deserves; and I suspect my Ministerial friends, if they love me less, will not hold me cheaper for the fight I have made. I am far from saying oderint dum emerint, but there is a great difference betwixt that and being a mere protégé, a poor broken-down man, who was to be assisted when existing circumstances, that most convenient of all apologies and happiest of all phrases, would permit.

March 21. — Perused an attack on myself, done with as much ability as truth, by no less a man than Joseph Hume, the night-work man of the House of Commons, who lives upon petty abuses, and is a very useful man by so doing. He has had the kindness to say that I am interested in keeping up the taxes; I wish I had anything else to do with them than to pay them. But he lies, and is an ass, and not worth a man's thinking about. Joseph Hume, indeed! — I say Joseph Hum, — and could add a Swiftian rhyme, but forbear.

Busy in unpacking and repacking. I wrote five pages of Woodstock, which work begins

> "To appropinque an end."

March 22. — A letter from Lord Downshire's man of business about funds supposed to belong to my wife, or to the estate of my late brother-in-law. The possessor of the secret wants some reward. If any is granted, it should be a percentage on the net sum received, with the condition no cure — no pay. I expect Lady S., and from Anne's last letter hope to find her better than the first anticipation led me to dread.

Sent off proofs and copy, and shall indulge a little leisure to-day to collect my ideas and stretch my limbs. I am again far before the press.

March 23. — Lady Scott arrived yesterday to dinner. She was better than I expected, but Anne, poor soul, looked very poorly, and had been much

worried with the fatigue and discomfort of the last week. Lady S. takes the digitalis, and, as she thinks, with advantage, though the medicine makes her very sick. Yet, on the whole, things are better than my gloomy apprehensions had anticipated.

I wrote to Lockhart and to Lord Downshire's Agent, — G. Handley, Esq., Pentonville, London.

Took a good brushing walk, but not till I had done a good task.

March 24. — Sent off copy, proofs, *etc.* J.B. clamorous for a motto.

It is foolish to encourage people to expect mottoes and suchlike decoraments. You have no credit for success in finding them, and there is a disgrace in wanting them. It is like being in the habit of showing feats of strength, which you at length gain praise by accomplishing, while some shame occurs in failure.

March 25. — The end winds out well enough. I have almost finished tonight; indeed I might have done so had I been inclined, but I had a walk in a hurricane of snow for two hours and feel a little tired. Miss Margaret Ferguson came to dinner with us.

March 26. — Here is a disagreeable morning, snowing and hailing, with gleams of bright sunshine between, and all the ground white, and all the air frozen. I don't like this jumbling of weather. It is ungenial, and gives chilblains. Besides, with its whiteness, and its coldness, and its glister, and its discomfort, it resembles that most disagreeable of all things, a vain, cold, empty, beautiful woman, who has neither mind nor heart, but only features like a doll. I do not know what is so like this disagreeable day, when the sun is so bright, and yet so uninfluential, that

> "One may gaze upon its beams
> Till he is starved with cold."

No matter, it will serve as well as another day to finish Woodstock. Walked out to the lake, and coquetted with this disagreeable weather, whereby I catch chilblains in my fingers and cold in my head. Fed the swans.

Finished Woodstock, however, cum tota sequela of title-page, introduction, etc., and so, as Dame Fortune says in Quevedo,

"Go wheel, and may the devil drive thee."

March 27. — Another bright cold day. I answered two modest requests from widow ladies. One, whom I had already assisted in some law business, on the footing of her having visited my mother, requested me to write to Mr. Peel, saying, on her authority, that her second son, a youth of infinite merit and accomplishment, was fit for any situation in a public office, and that I requested he might be provided accordingly. Another widowed dame, whose claim is having read Marmion and the Lady of the Lake, besides a promise to read all my other works — Gad, it is a rash engagement! — demands that I shall either pay £200 to get her cub into some place or other, or settle him in a seminary of education. Really this is very much after the fashion of the husbandman of Miguel Turra's requests of Sancho when Governor. "Have you anything else to ask, honest man?" quoth Sancho. But what are the demands of an honest man to those of an honest woman, and she a widow to boot? I do believe your destitute widow, especially if she hath a charge of children, and one or two fit for patronage, is one of the most impudent animals living.

Went to Galashiels and settled the dispute about Sandie's wall.

March 28. — We have now been in solitude for some time — myself nearly totally so, excepting at meals, or on a call as yesterday from Henry and William Scott of Harden. One is tempted to ask himself, knocking at the door of his own heart, Do you love this extreme loneliness? I can answer conscientiously, I do. The love of solitude was with me a passion of early youth; when in my teens, I used to fly from company to indulge in visions and airy castles of my own, the disposal of ideal wealth, and the exercise of imaginary power. This feeling prevailed even till I was eighteen, when love and ambition awakening with other passions threw me more into society, from which I have, however, at times withdrawn myself, and have been always even glad to do so. I have risen from a feast satiated; and unless it be one or two persons of very strong intellect, or whose spirits and good-humour amuse me, I wish neither to see the high, the low, nor the middling class of society. This is a feeling without the least tinge of misanthropy, which I always consider as a kind of blasphemy of a shocking description. If God bears with the very worst of us, we may surely endure

each other. If thrown into society, I always have, and always will endeavour to bring pleasure with me, at least to show willingness to please. But for all this "I had rather live alone," and I wish my appointment, so convenient otherwise, did not require my going to Edinburgh. But this must be, and in my little lodging I will be lonely enough.

Had a very kind letter from Croker disowning the least idea of personal attack in his answer to Malachi.

Reading at intervals a novel called Granby; one of that very difficult class which aspires to describe the actual current of society, whose colours are so evanescent that it is difficult to fix them on the canvas. It is well written, but over-laboured — too much attempt to put the reader exactly up to the thoughts and sentiments of the parties. The women do this better: Edgeworth, Ferrier, Austen have all had their portraits of real society, far superior to anything man, vain man, has produced of the like nature.

March 29. — Worked in the morning. Had two visits from Colonels Russell and Ferguson. Walked from one till halfpast four. A fine, flashy, disagreeable day; snow-clouds sweeping past among sunshine, driving down the valley, and whitening the country behind them.

Mr. Gibson came suddenly in after dinner. Brought very indifferent news from Constable's house. It is not now hoped that they will pay above three or four shillings in the pound. Robinson supposed not to be much better.

Mr. G. goes to London immediately, and is to sell Woodstock to Robinson if he can, otherwise to those who will, John Murray, *etc.* This work may fail, perhaps, though better than some of its predecessors. If so, we must try some new manner. I think I could catch the dogs yet.

A beautiful and perfect lunar rainbow tonight.

March 30. — Mr. Gibson looks unwell, and complains of cold — bitter bad weather for his travelling, and he looks but frail.

These indifferent news he brought me affect me but to a little degree. It is being too confident to hope to ensure success in the long series of successive struggles which lie before me. But somehow, I do fully entertain the hope of doing a good deal.

March 31. —

> “He walked and wrote poor soul, what then?
> Why then, he wrote and walked again.”

But I am begun Nap. Bon. again, which is always a change, because it gives a good deal of reading and research, whereas Woodstock and such like, being extempore from my mother-wit, is a sort of spinning of the brains, of which a man tires. The weather seems milder to-day.

April

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April 1. — Ex uno die disce omnes. Rose at seven or sooner, studied, and wrote till breakfast with Anne, about a quarter before ten. Lady Scott seldom able to rise till twelve or one. Then I write or study again till one. At that hour to-day I drove to Huntly Burn, and walked home by one of the hundred and one pleasing paths which I have made through the woods I have planted — now chatting with Tom Purdie, who carries my plaid, and speaks when he pleases, telling long stories of hits and misses in shooting twenty years back — sometimes chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy — and sometimes attending to the humours of two curious little terriers of the Dandie Dinmont breed, together with a noble wolfhound puppy which Glengarry has given me to replace Maida. This brings me down to the very moment I do tell — the rest is prophetic. I will feel sleepy when this book is locked, and perhaps sleep until Dalgleish brings the dinner summons. Then I will have a chat with Lady S. and Anne; some broth or soup, a slice of plain meat — and man's chief business, in Dr. Johnson's estimation, is briefly despatched. Half an hour with my family, and half an hour's coquetting with a cigar, a tumbler of weak whisky and water, and a novel perhaps, lead on to tea, which sometimes consumes another half hour of chat; then write and read in my own room till ten o'clock at night; a little bread and then a glass of porter, and to bed.

And this, very rarely varied by a visit from some one, is the tenor of my daily life — and a very pleasant one indeed, were it not for apprehensions about Lady S. and poor Johnnie Hugh. The former will, I think, do well — for the latter — I fear — I fear —

April 2. — I am in a wayward mood this morning. I received yesterday the last proof-sheets of Woodstock, and I ought to correct them. Now, this ought sounds as like as possible to must, and must I cannot abide. I would go to Prester John's country of free goodwill, sooner than I would must it to Edinburgh. Yet this is all folly, and silly folly too; and so must shall be for once obeyed after I have thus written myself out of my aversion to its peremptory sound. Corrected the said proofs till twelve o'clock — when I think I will treat resolution, not to a dram, as the drunken fellow said after

he had passed the dramshop, but to a walk, the rather that my eyesight is somewhat uncertain and wavering. I think it must be from the stomach. The whole page waltzes before my eyes. J.B. writes gloomily about Woodstock; but commends the conclusion. I think he is right. Besides, my manner is nearly caught, and, like Captain Bobadil, I have taught nearly a hundred gentlemen to fence very nearly, if not altogether, as well as myself. I will strike out something new.

April 3. — I have from Ballantyne and Gibson the extraordinary and gratifying news that Woodstock is sold for £8228 in all, ready money — a matchless sum for less than three months' work. If Napoleon does as well, or near it, it will put the trust affairs in high flourish. Four or five years of leisure and industry would, with [such] success, amply replace my losses, and put me on a steadier footing than ever. I have a curious fancy: I will go set two or three acorns, and judge by their success in growing whether I will succeed in clearing my way or not. I have a little toothache keeps me from working much to-day, besides I sent off, per Blucher, copy for Napoleon, as well as the d — d proofs.

A blank forenoon! But how could I help it, Madam Duty? I was not lazy; on my soul I was not. I did not cry for half holiday for the sale of Woodstock. But in came Colonel Ferguson with Mrs. Stewart of Blackhill, or hall, or something, and I must show her the garden, pictures, *etc.* This lasts till one; and just as they are at their lunch, and about to go off, guard is relieved by the Laird and Lady Harden, and Miss Eliza Scott — and my dear Chief, whom I love very much, though a little obsidional or so, remains till three. That same crown, composed of the grass which grew on the walls of besieged places, should be offered to visitors who stay above an hour in any eident person's house. Wrote letters this evening.

April 4. — Wrote two pages in the morning. Then went to Ashestiel in the sociable, with Colonel Ferguson. Found my cousin Russell settled kindly to his gardening and his projects. He seems to have brought home with him the enviable talent of being interested and happy in his own place. Ashestiel looks worst, I think, at this period of the year; but is a beautiful place in summer, where I passed nine happy years. Did I ever pass unhappy years anywhere? None that I remember, save those at the High School, which I thoroughly detested on account of the confinement. I disliked serving in my

father's office, too, from the same hatred to restraint. In other respects, I have had unhappy days — unhappy weeks — even, on one or two occasions, unhappy months; but Fortune's finger has never been able to play a dirge on me for a quarter of a year together.

I am sorry to see the Peel-wood, and other natural coppice, decaying and abridged about Ashestiel —

> 'The horrid plough has razed the green,
> Where once my children play'd;
> The axe has fell'd the hawthorn screen,
> The schoolboy's summer shade.'

There was a very romantic pasturage called the Cow-park, which I was particularly attached to, from its wild and sequestered character. Having been part of an old wood which had been cut down, it was full of copse — hazel, and oak, and all sorts of young trees, irregularly scattered over fine pasturage, and affording a hundred intricacies so delicious to the eye and the imagination. But some misjudging friend had cut down and cleared away without mercy, and divided the varied and sylvan scene, which was divided by a little rivulet, into the two most formal things in nature — a thriving plantation, many-angled as usual, and a park laid down in grass; wanting therefore the rich graminivorous variety which Nature gives its carpet, and having instead a braird of six days' growth — lean and hungry growth too — of ryegrass and clover. As for the rill, it stagnates in a deep square ditch, which silences its prattle, and restrains its meanders with a witness. The original scene was, of course, imprinted still deeper on Russell's mind than mine, and I was glad to see he was intensely sorry for the change.

April 5. — Rose late in the morning, past eight, to give the cold and toothache time to make themselves scarce, which they have obligingly done. Yesterday every tooth on the right side of my head was absolutely waltzing. I would have drawn by the half dozen, but country dentists are not to be lippened to. To-day all is quiet, but a little swelling and stiffness in the jaw. Went to Chiefswood at one, and marked with regret forty trees indispensably necessary for paling — much like drawing a tooth; they are wanted and will never be better, but I am avaricious of grown trees, having so few.

Worked a fair task; dined, and read Clapperton's journey and Denham's into Bornou. Very entertaining, and less botheration about mineralogy, botany, and so forth, than usual. Pity Africa picks up so many brave men, however. Work in the evening.

April 6. — Wrote in the morning. Went at one to Huntly Burn, where I had the great pleasure to hear, through a letter from Sir Adam, that Sophia was in health, and Johnnie gaining strength. It is a fine exchange from deep and aching uncertainty on so interesting a subject, to the little spitfire feeling of "Well, but they might have taken the trouble to write"; but so wretched a correspondent as myself has not much to say, so I will just grumble sufficiently to maintain the patriarchal dignity.

I returned in time to work, and to receive a shoal of things from J.B. Among others, a letter from an Irish lady, who, for the beaux yeux, which I shall never look upon, desires I will forthwith send her all the Waverley Novels, which are published, with an order to furnish her with all others in course as they appear, which she assures me will be an era in her life. She may find out some other epocha.

April 7. — Made out my morning's task; at one drove to Chiefswood, and walked home by the Rhymer's Glen, Mar's Lee, and Haxell-Cleugh. Took me three hours. The heath gets somewhat heavier for me every year — but never mind, I like it altogether as well as the day I could tread it best. My plantations are getting all into green leaf, especially the larches, if theirs may be called leaves, which are only a sort of hair, and from the number of birds drawn to these wastes, I may congratulate myself on having literally made the desert to sing. As I returned, there was, in the phraseology of that most precise of prigs in a white collarless coat and chapeau bas, Mister Commissary Ramsay — "a rather dense inspissation of rain." Deil care.

> "Lord, who would live turmoiled in the Court,
> That might enjoy such quiet walks as these?"

Yet misfortune comes our way too. Poor Laidlaw lost a fine prattling child of five years old yesterday.

It is odd enough — Iden, the Kentish Esquire, has just made the ejaculation which I adopted in the last page, when he kills Cade, and posts away up to Court to get the price set upon his head. Here is a letter come

from Lockhart, full of Court news, and all sort of news, — best is his wife is well, and thinks the child gains in health.

Lockhart erroneously supposes that I think of applying to Ministers about Charles, and that notwithstanding Croker's terms of pacification I should find Malachi stick in my way. I would not make such an application for millions; I think if I were to ask patronage it would [not] be through them, for some time at least, and I might have better access.

April 8. — We expect a raid of folks to visit us this morning, whom we must have dined before our misfortunes. Save time, wine, and money, these misfortunes — and so far are convenient things. Besides, there is a dignity about them when they come only like the gout in its mildest shape, to authorise diet and retirement, the nightgown and the velvet shoe; when the one comes to chalkstones, and the other to prison, though, there would be the devil. Or compare the effects of Sieur Gout and absolute poverty upon the stomach — the necessity of a bottle of laudanum in the one case, the want of a morsel of meat in the other.

Laidlaw's infant, which died on Wednesday, is buried to-day. The people coming to visit prevent my going, and I am glad of it. I hate funerals — always did. There is such a mixture of mummery with real grief — the actual mourner perhaps heart-broken, and all the rest making solemn faces, and whispering observations on the weather and public news, and here and there a greedy fellow enjoying the cake and wine. To me it is a farce full of most tragical mirth, and I am not sorry (like Provost Coulter) but glad that I shall not see my own. This is a most unfilial tendency of mine, for my father absolutely loved a funeral; and as he was a man of a fine presence, and looked the mourner well, he was asked to every interment of distinction. He seemed to preserve the list of a whole bead-roll of cousins, merely for the pleasure of being at their funerals, which he was often asked to superintend, and I suspect had sometimes to pay for. He carried me with him as often as he could to these mortuary ceremonies; but feeling I was not, like him, either useful or ornamental, I escaped as often as I could.

I saw the poor child's funeral from a distance. Ah, that Distance! What a magician for conjuring up scenes of joy or sorrow, smoothing all asperities, reconciling all incongruities, veiling all absurdness, softening every coarseness, doubling every effect by the influence of the imagination. A Scottish wedding should be seen at a distance; the gay band of the dancers

just distinguished amid the elderly group of the spectators, — the glass held high, and the distant cheers as it is swallowed, should be only a sketch, not a finished Dutch picture, when it becomes brutal and boorish. Scotch psalmody, too, should be heard from a distance. The grunt and the snuffle, and the whine and the scream, should be all blended in that deep and distant sound, which, rising and falling like the Eolian harp, may have some title to be called the praise of our Maker. Even so the distant funeral: the few mourners on horseback, with their plaids wrapped around them — the father heading the procession as they enter the river, and pointing out the ford by which his darling is to be carried on the last long road — not one of the subordinate figures in discord with the general tone of the incident — seeming just accessories, and no more — this is affecting.

April 9. — I worked at correcting proofs in the morning, and, what is harder, at correcting manuscript, which fags me excessively. I was dead sick of it by two o'clock, the rather as my hand, O revered "Gurnal," be it said between ourselves, gets daily worse.

Lockhart's Review. Don't like his article on Sheridan's life. There is no breadth in it, no general views, the whole flung away in smart but party criticism. Now, no man can take more general and liberal views of literature than J.G.L. But he lets himself too easily into that advocatism of style, which is that of a pleader, not a judge or a critic, and is particularly unsatisfactory to the reader. Lieut.-Col. Ferguson dined here.

April 10. — Sent off proofs and copy galore before breakfast, and might be able to give idleness a day if I liked. But it is as well reading for Boney as for anything else, and I have a humour to make my amusement useful. Then the day is changeable, with gusts of wind, and I believe a start to the garden will be my best out-of-doors exercise. No thorough hill-expedition in this gusty weather.

April 11. — Wrought out my task, although I have been much affected this morning by the Morbus, as I call it. Aching pain in the back, rendering one posture intolerable, fluttering of the heart, idle fears, gloomy thoughts and anxieties, which if not unfounded are at least bootless. I have been out once or twice, but am driven in by the rain. Mercy on us, what poor devils we

are! I shook this affection off, however. Mr. Scrope and Col. Ferguson came to dinner, and we twaddled away the evening well enough.

April 12. — I have finished my task this morning at halfpast eleven — easily and early — and, I think, not amiss. I hope J.B. will make some great points of admiration!!! — otherwise I will be disappointed. If this work answers — if it but answers, it must set us on our legs; I am sure worse trumpery of mine has had a great run. Well, I will console myself and do my best! But fashion changes, and I am getting old, and may become unpopular, but it is time to cry out when I am hurt. I remember with what great difficulty I was brought to think myself something better than common, — and now I will not in mere faintness of heart give up good hopes. So Fortune protect the bold. I have finished the whole introductory sketch of the Revolution — too long for an introduction. But I think I may now go to my solitary walk.

April 13. — On my return from my walk yesterday I learnt with great concern the death of my old friend, Sir Alexander Don. He cannot have been above six-or seven-and-forty. Without being much together, we had, considering our different habits, lived in much friendship, and I sincerely regret his death. His habits were those of a gay man, much connected with the turf; but he possessed strong natural parts, and in particular few men could speak better in public when he chose. He had tact, wit, power of sarcasm, and that indescribable something which marks the gentleman. His manners in society were extremely pleasing, and as he had a taste for literature and the fine arts, there were few more pleasant companions, besides being a highly-spirited, steady, and honourable man. His indolence prevented his turning these good parts towards acquiring the distinction he might have attained. He was among the détenus whom Bonaparte's iniquitous commands confined so long in France; and coming there into possession of a large estate in right of his mother, the heiress of the Glencairn family, he had the means of being very expensive, and probably then acquired those gay habits which rendered him averse to serious business. Being our member for Roxburghshire, his death will make a stir amongst us. I prophesy Harden will be here to talk about starting his son Henry.

Accordingly the Laird and Lady called. I exhorted him to write to Lord Montagu instantly. I do not see what they can do better, and unless some pickthank intervene to insinuate certain irritating suspicions, I suppose Lord M. will make no objection. There can be no objection to Henry Scott for birth, fortune, or political principle; and I do not see where we could get a better representative.

April 14. — Wrote to Lord M. last night. I hope they will keep the peace in the county. I am sure it would be to me a most distressing thing if Buccleuch and Harden were to pull different ways, being so intimate with both families.

I did not write much yesterday, not above two pages and a half. I have begun Boney, though, and c'est toujours quelque chose. This morning I sent off proofs and manuscript. Had a letter from the famous Denis Davidoff, the Black Captain, whose abilities as a partisan were so much distinguished during the retreat from Moscow. If I can but wheedle him out of a few anecdotes, it would be a great haul.

A kind letter from Colin Mack[enzie]; he thinks the Ministry will not push the measure against Scotland. I fear they will; there is usually an obstinacy in weakness. But I will think no more about it. Time draws on. I have been here a month. Another month carries me to be a hermit in the city instead of the country. I could scarce think I had been here a week. I wish I was able, even at great loss, to retire from Edinburgh entirely. Here is no bile, no visits, no routine, and yet on the whole, things are as well perhaps as they are.

April 15. — Received last night letters from Sir John Scott Douglas, and from that daintiest of Dandies, Sir William Elliot of Stobs, canvassing for the county. Young Harry's the lad for me. But will he be the lad for Lord Montagu? — there is the point. I should have given him a hint to attend to Edgerston. Perhaps being at Minto, and not there, may give offence, and a bad report from that quarter would play the devil. It is rather too late to go down and tell them this, and, to say truth, I don't like the air of making myself busy in the matter.

Poor Sir Alexander Don died of a disease in the heart; the body was opened, which was very right. Odd enough, too, to have a man, probably a friend two days before, slashing at one's heart as it were a bullock's. I had a

letter yesterday from John Gibson. The House of Longman and Co. guarantee the sale [of Woodstock] to Hurst, and take the work, if Hurst and Robinson (as is to be feared) can make no play.

Also I made up what was due of my task both for 13th and 14th. So hey for a Swiftianism —

> "I loll in my chair,
> And around me I stare
> With a critical air,
> Like a calf at a fair;
> And, say I, Mrs. Duty,
> Good-morrow to your beauty,
> I kiss your sweet shoe-tie,
> And hope I can suit ye."

Fair words butter no parsnips, says Duty; don't keep talking then, but get to your work again. Here is a day's task before you — the siege of Toulon. Call you that a task? d — — me, I'll write it as fast as Boney carried it on.

April 16. — I am now far ahead with Nap. I wrote a little this morning, but this forenoon I must write letters, a task in which I am far behind.

> "Heaven sure sent letters for some wretch's plague."

Lady Scott seems to make no way, yet can scarce be said to lose any. She suffers much occasionally, especially during the night. Sleeps a great deal when at ease; all symptoms announce water upon the chest. A sad prospect.

In the evening a despatch from Lord Melville, written with all the familiarity of former times, desiring me to ride down and press Mr. Scott of Harden to let Henry stand, and this in Lord Montagu's name as well as his own, so that the two propositions cross each other on the road, and Henry is as much desired by the Buccleuch interest as he desires their support.

Jedburgh, April 17. — Came over to Jedburgh this morning, to breakfast with my good old friend Mr. Shortreed, and had my usual warm reception. Lord Gillies held the Circuit Court, and there was no criminal trial for any offence whatsoever. I have attended these circuits with tolerable regularity since 1792, and though there is seldom much of importance to be done, yet

I never remember before the Porteous roll being quite blank. The judge was presented with a pair of white gloves, in consideration of its being a maiden circuit. Harden came over and talked about his son's preferment, naturally much pleased.

Received £100 from John Lockhart, for review of Pepys; but this is by far too much; £50 is plenty. Still I must impeticos the gratility for the present, — for Whitsunday will find me only with £300 in hand, unless Blackwood settles a few scores of pounds for Malachi.

Wrote a great many letters. Dined with the Judge, where I met the disappointed candidate, Sir John Scott Douglas, who took my excuse like a gentleman. Sir William Elliot, on the other hand, was, being a fine man, very much out of sorts, that having got his own consent, he could not get that of the county. He showed none of this, however, to me.

April 18. — This morning I go down to Kelso from Jedburgh to poor Don's funeral. It is, I suppose, forty years since I saw him first. I was staying at Sydenham, a lad of fourteen, or by 'r Lady some sixteen; and he, a boy of six or seven, was brought to visit me on a pony, a groom holding the leading rein — and now, I, an old grey man, am going to lay him in his grave. Sad work. I detest funerals; there is always a want of consistency; it is a tragedy played by strolling performers, who are more likely to make you laugh than cry. No chance of my being made to laugh to-day. The very road I go is a road of grave recollections. Must write to Charles seriously on the choice of his profession, and I will do it now.

[Abbotsford,] April 19. — Returned last night from the house of death and mourning to my own, now the habitation of sickness and anxious apprehension. Found Lady S. had tried the foxglove in quantity, till it made her so sick she was forced to desist. The result cannot yet be judged. Wrote to Mrs. Thomas Scott to beg her to let her daughter Anne, an uncommonly, sensible, steady, and sweet-tempered girl, come and stay with us a season in our distress, who I trust will come forthwith.

Two melancholy things. Last night I left my pallet in our family apartment, to make way for a female attendant, and removed to a dressing-room adjoining, when to return, or whether ever, God only can tell. Also my servant cut my hair, which used to be poor Charlotte's personal task. I hope she will not observe it.

The funeral yesterday was very mournful; about fifty persons present, and all seemed affected. The domestics in particular were very much so. Sir Alexander was a kind, though an exact master. It was melancholy to see those apartments, where I have so often seen him play the graceful and kind landlord filled with those who were to carry him to his long home.

There was very little talk of the election, at least till the funeral was over.

April 20. — Lady Scott's health in the same harassing state of uncertainty, yet on my side with more of hope than I had two days since.

Another death; Thomas Riddell, younger of Camiston, Sergeant-Major of the Edinburgh Troop in the sunny days of our yeomanry, and a very good fellow.

The day was so tempting that I went out with Tom Purdie to cut some trees, the rather that my task was very well advanced. He led me into the wood, as the blind King of Bohemia was led by his four knights into the thick of the battle at Agincourt or Crecy, and then, like the old King, "I struck good strokes more than one," which is manly exercise.

April 21. — This day I entertained more flattering hopes of Lady Scott's health than late events permitted. I went down to Mertoun with Colonel Ferguson, who returned to dine here, which consumed time so much that I made a short day's work.

Had the grief to find Lady Scott had insisted on coming downstairs and was the worse of it. Also a letter from Lockhart, giving a poor account of the infant. God help us! earth cannot.

April 22. — Lady Scott continues very poorly. Better news of the child.

Wrought a good deal to-day, rather correcting sheets and acquiring information than actually composing, which is the least toilsome of the three.

J.G.L. kindly points out some solecisms in my style, as "amid" for "amidst," "scarce" for "scarcely." "Whose," he says, is the proper genitive of "which" only at such times as "which" retains its quality of impersonification. Well! I will try to remember all this, but after all I write grammar as I speak, to make my meaning known, and a solecism in point of composition, like a Scotch word in speaking, is indifferent to me. I never

learned grammar; and not only Sir Hugh Evans but even Mrs. Quickly might puzzle me about Giney's case and horum harum horum. I believe the Bailiff in The Goodnatured Man is not far wrong when he says, "One man has one way of expressing himself, and another another, and that is all the difference between them." Went to Huntly Burn to-day and looked at the Colonel's projected approach. I am sure if the kind heart can please himself he will please me.

April 23. — A glorious day, bright and brilliant, and, I fancy, mild. Lady Scott is certainly better, and has promised not to attempt quitting her room.

Henry Scott has been here, and his canvass comes on like a moor burning.

April 24. — Good news from Brighton. Sophia is confined; both she and her baby are doing well, and the child's name is announced to be Walter — a favourite name in our family, and I trust of no bad omen. Yet it is no charm for life. Of my father's family I was the second Walter, if not the third. I am glad the name came my way, for it was borne by my father, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather; also by the grandsire of that last-named venerable person who was the first laird of Raeburn.

Hurst and Robinson, the Yorkshire tykes, have failed after all their swaggering, and Longman and Co. take Woodstock. But if Woodstock and Napoleon take with the public I shall care little about their insolvency, and if they do not, I don't think their solvency would have lasted long. Constable is sorely broken down.

> "Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
> That's sorry yet for thee."

His conduct has not been what I deserved at his hand, but, I believe that, walking blindfold himself, he misled me without malice prepense. It is best to think so at least, unless the contrary be demonstrated. To nourish angry passions against a man whom I really liked would be to lay a blister on my own heart.

April 25. — Having fallen behind on the 23d, I wrought pretty hard yesterday; but I had so much reading, and so many proofs to correct, that I did not get over the daily task, so am still a little behind, which I shall soon

make up. I have got Nap., d — n him, into Italy, where with bad eyes and obscure maps, I have a little difficulty in tracing out his victorious chess-play.

Lady Scott was better yesterday, certainly better, and was sound asleep when I looked in this morning. Walked in the afternoon. I looked at a hooded crow building in the thicket with great pleasure. It is a shorter date than my neighbour Torwoodlee thought of, when he told me, as I was bragging a little of my plantations, that it would be long ere crows built in them.

April 26. — Letters from Walter and Lockharts; all well and doing well. Lady S. continues better, so the clouds are breaking up. I made a good day's work yesterday, and sent off proofs, letters, and copy this morning; so, if this fine day holds good, I will take a drive at one.

There is an operation called putting to rights — Scotticè, redding up — which puts me into a fever. I always leave any attempt at it half executed, and so am worse off than before, and have only embroiled the fray. Then my long back aches with stooping into the low drawers of old cabinets, and my neck is strained with staring up to their attics. Then you are sure never to get the thing you want. I am certain they creep about and hide themselves. Tom Moore gave us the insurrection of the papers. That was open war, but this is a system of privy plot and conspiracy, by which those you seek creep out of the way, and those you are not wanting perk themselves in your face again and again, until at last you throw them into some corner in a passion, and then they are the objects of research in their turn. I have read in a French Eastern tale of an enchanted person called L'homme qui cherche, a sort of "Sir Guy the Seeker," always employed in collecting the beads of a chaplet, which, by dint of gramarye, always dispersed themselves when he was about to fix the last upon the string. It was an awful doom; transmogrification into the Laidleyworm of Spindlestaneheugh would have been a blessing in comparison. Now, the explanation of all this is, that I have been all this morning seeking a parcel of sticks of sealing wax which I brought from Edinburgh, and the "Weel Brandt and Vast houd" has either melted without the agency of fire or barricaded itself within the drawers of some cabinet, which has declared itself in a state of insurrection. A choice subject for a journal, but what better have I?

I did not quite finish my task to-day, nay, I only did one third of it. It is so difficult to consult the maps after candles are lighted, or to read the Moniteur, that I was obliged to adjourn. The task is three pages or leaves of my close writing per diem, which corresponds to about a sheet (16 pages) of Woodstock, and about 12 of Bonaparte, which is a more comprehensive page. But I was not idle neither, and wrote some Balaam for Lockhart's Review. Then I was in hand a leaf above the tale, so I am now only a leaf behind it.

April 27. — This is one of those abominable April mornings which deserve the name of Sans Cullotides, as being cold, beggarly, coarse, savage, and intrusive. The earth lies an inch deep with snow, to the confusion of the worshippers of Flora. By the way, Bogie attended his professional dinner and show of flowers at Jedburgh yesterday. Here is a beautiful sequence to their floralia. It is this uncertainty in April, and the descent of snow and frost when one thinks themselves clear of them, and that after fine encouraging weather, that destroys our Scottish fruits and flowers. It is as imprudent to attach yourself to flowers in Scotland as to a caged bird; the cat, sooner or later, snaps up one, and these — Sans Cullotides — annihilate the other. It was but yesterday I was admiring the glorious flourish of the pears and apricots, and now hath come the killing frost.

But let it freeze without, we are comfortable within. Lady Scott continues better, and, we may hope, has got the turn of her disease.

April 28. — Beautiful morning, but ice as thick as pasteboard, too surely showing that the night has made good yesterday's threat. Dalgleish, with his most melancholy face, conveys the most doleful tidings from Bogie. But servants are fond of the woful, it gives such consequence to the person who communicates bad news.

Wrote two letters, and read till twelve, and then for a stout walk among the plantations till four. Found Lady Scott obviously better, I think, than I had left her in the morning. In walking I am like a spavined horse, and heat as I get on. The flourishing plantations around me are a great argument for me to labour hard. "Barbarus has segetes?" I will write my fingerends off first.

April 29. — I was always afraid, privately, that Woodstock would not stand

the test. In that case my fate would have been that of the unfortunate minstrel trumpeter Maclean at the battle of Sheriffmuir —

> "By misfortune he happened to fa', man;
> By saving his neck
> His trumpet did break,
> And came off without music at a', man."

J.B. corroborated my doubts by his raven-like croaking and criticising; but the good fellow writes me this morning that he is written down an ass, and that the approbation is unanimous. It is but Edinburgh, to be sure; but Edinburgh has always been a harder critic than London. It is a great mercy, and gives encouragement for future exertion. Having written two leaves this morning, I think I will turn out to my walk, though two hours earlier than usual. Egad, I could not persuade myself that it was such bad Balaam after all.

April 30. — I corrected this morning a quantity of proofs and copy, and dawdled about a little, the weather of late becoming rather milder, though not much of that. Methinks Duty looks as if she were but half-pleased with me; but would the Pagan bitch have me work on the Sunday?

May

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May 1. — I walked to-day to the western corner of the Chiefswood plantation, and marked out a large additional plantation to be drawn along the face of the hill. It cost me some trouble to carry the boundaries out of the eye, for nothing is so paltry as a plantation of almost any extent if its whole extent lies defined to the eye. By availing myself of the undulations of the ground I think I have avoided this for the present; only when seen from the Eildon Hills the cranks and turns of the enclosure will seem fantastic, at least until the trees get high.

This cost Tom and me three or four hours. Lieut.-Colonel Ferguson joined us as we went home, and dined at Abbotsford.

My cousin, Barbara Scott of Raeburn, came here to see Lady S. I think she was shocked with the melancholy change. She insisted upon walking back to Lessudden House, making her walk 16 or 18 miles, and though the carriage was ordered she would not enter it.

May 2. — Yesterday was a splendid May day — to-day seems inclined to be soft, as we call it; but tant mieux. Yesterday had a twang of frost in it. I must get to work and finish Boaden's Life of Kemble, and Kelly's Reminiscences, for the Quarterly.

I wrote and read for three hours, and then walked, the day being soft and delightful; but alas! all my walks are lonely from the absence of my poor companion. She does not suffer, thank God, but strength must fail at last. Since Sunday there has been a gradual change — very gradual — but, alas! to the worse. My hopes are almost gone. But I am determined to stand this grief as I have done others.

May 3, — Another fine morning. I answered a letter from Mr. Handley, who has taken the pains to rummage the Chancery Records until he has actually discovered the fund due to Lady Scott's mother, £1200; it seems to have been invested in the estates of a Mr. Owen, as it appears for Madame Charpentier's benefit, but, she dying, the fund was lost sight of and got into Chancery, where I suppose it must have accumulated, but I cannot say I understand the matter; at a happier moment the news would have given poor Charlotte much pleasure, but now — it is a day too late.

May 4. — On visiting Lady Scott's sick-room this morning I found her suffering, and I doubt if she knew me. Yet, after breakfast, she seemed serene and composed. The worst is, she will not speak out about the symptoms under which she labours. Sad, sad work; I am under the most melancholy apprehension, for what constitution can hold out under these continued and wasting attacks?

My niece, Anne Scott, a prudent, sensible, and kind young woman, arrived to-day, having come down to assist us in our distress from so far as Cheltenham. This is a great consolation.

May 5. — Haunted by gloomy thoughts; but I corrected proofs from seven to ten, and wrote from halfpast ten to one. My old friend Sir Adam called, and took a long walk with me, which was charity. His gaiety rubbed me up a little. I had also a visit from the Laird and Lady of Harden. Henry Scott carries the county without opposition.

May 6. — The same scene of hopeless (almost) and unavailing anxiety. Still welcoming me with a smile, and asserting she is better. I fear the disease is too deeply entwined with the principles of life. Yet the increase of good weather, especially if it would turn more genial, might, I think, aid her excellent constitution. Still labouring at this Review, without heart or spirits to finish it. I am a tolerable Stoic, but preach to myself in vain.

> "Since these things are necessities,
> Then let us meet them like necessities."

And so we will.

May 7. — Hammered on at the Review till my backbone ached. But I believe it was a nervous affection, for a walk cured it. Sir Adam and the Colonel dined here. So I spent the evening as pleasantly as I well could, considering I am so soon to leave my own house, and go like a stranger to the town of which I have been so long a citizen, and leave my wife lingering, without prospect of recovery, under the charge of two poor girls. Talia cogit dura necessitas.

May 8. — I went over to the election at Jedburgh. There was a numerous

meeting; the Whigs, who did not bring ten men to the meeting, of course took the whole matter under their patronage, which was much of a piece with the Blue Bottle drawing the carriage. I tried to pull up once or twice, but quietly, having no desire to disturb the quiet of the election. To see the difference of modern times! We had a good dinner, and excellent wine; and I had ordered my carriage at halfpast seven, almost ashamed to start so soon. Everybody dispersed at so early an hour, however, that when Henry had left the chair, there was no carriage for me, and Peter proved his accuracy by showing me it was but a quarter-past seven. In the days I remember they would have kept it up till daylight; nor do I think poor Don would have left the chair before midnight. Well, there is a medium. Without being a veteran Vice, a grey Iniquity, like Falstaff, I think an occasional jolly bout, if not carried to excess, improved society; men were put into good humour; when the good wine did its good office, the jest, the song, the speech, had double effect; men were happy for the night, and better friends ever after, because they had been so.

May 9. — My new Liverpool neighbour, Mr. Bainbridge, breakfasts here to-day with some of his family. They wish to try the fishing in Cauldshields Loch, and [there is] promise of a fine soft morning. But the season is too early.

They have had no sport accordingly after trying with Trimmers. Mr. Bainbridge is a good cut of John Bull — plain, sensible, and downright; the maker of his own fortune, and son of his own works.

May 10. — Tomorrow I leave my home. To what scene I may suddenly be recalled, it wrings my heart to think. If she would but be guided by the medical people, and attend rigidly to their orders, something might be hoped, but she is impatient with the protracted suffering, and no wonder. Anne has a severe task to perform, but the assistance of her cousin is a great comfort. Baron Weber, the great composer, wants me (through Lockhart) to compose something to be set to music by him, and sung by Miss Stephens — as if I cared who set or who sung any lines of mine. I have recommended instead Beaumont and Fletcher's unrivalled song in the Nice Valour:

"Hence, all ye vain delights," *etc.*

[Edinburgh], May 11. —

"Der Abschiedstag ist da,
Schwer liegt er auf den Herzen — schwer."

Charlotte was unable to take leave of me, being in a sound sleep, after a very indifferent night. Perhaps it was as well. Emotion might have hurt her; and nothing I could have expressed would have been worth the risk. I have foreseen, for two years and more, that this menaced event could not be far distant. I have seen plainly, within the last two months, that recovery was hopeless. And yet to part with the companion of twenty-nine years when so very ill — that I did not, could not foresee. It withers my heart to think of it, and to recollect that I can hardly hope again to seek confidence and counsel from that ear to which all might be safely confided. But in her present lethargic state, what would my attentions have availed? and Anne has promised close and constant intelligence. I must dine with James Ballantyne to-day en famille. I cannot help it; but would rather be at home and alone. However, I can go out too. I will not yield to the barren sense of hopelessness which struggles to invade me. I passed a pleasant day with honest J.B., which was a great relief from the black dog which would have worried me at home. We were quite alone.

[Edinburgh,] May 12. — Well, here I am in Arden. And I may say with Touchstone, "When I was at home I was in a better place," and yet this is not by any means to be complained of. Good apartments, the people civil and apparently attentive. No appearance of smoke, and absolute warrandice against my dreaded enemies, bugs. I must, when there is occasion, draw to my own Bailie Nicol Jarvie's consolation, "One cannot carry the comforts of the Saut-Market about with one." Were I at ease in mind, I think the body is very well cared for. I have two steady servants, a man and woman, and they seem to set out sensibly enough. Only one lodger in the house, a Mr. Shandy, a clergyman; and despite his name, said to be a quiet one.

May 13. — The projected measure against the Scottish banknotes has been abandoned, the resistance being general. Malachi might clap his wings upon this, but, alas! domestic anxiety has cut his comb.

I think very lightly in general of praise; it costs men nothing, and is usually only lipsalve. They wish to please, and must suppose that flattery is the ready road to the good will of every professor of literature. Some praise,

however, and from some people, does at once delight and strengthen the mind, and I insert in this place the quotation with which Ld. C. Baron Shepherd concluded a letter concerning me to the Chief Commissioner: "Magna etiam illa laus et admirabilis videri solet tulisse casus sapienter adversos, non fractum esse fortunâ, retinuisse in rebus asperis dignitatem." I record these words, not as meriting the high praise they imply, but to remind me that such an opinion being partially entertained of me by a man of a character so eminent, it becomes me to make my conduct approach as much as possible to the standard at which he rates it.

As I must pay back to Terry some cash in London, £170, together with other matters here, I have borrowed from Mr. Alexander Ballantyne the sum of £500, upon a promissory note for £512, 10s. payable 15th November to him or his order. If God should call me before that time, I request my son Walter will, in reverence to my memory, see that Mr. Alexander Ballantyne does not suffer for having obliged me in a sort of exigency — he cannot afford it, and God has given my son the means to repay him.

May 14. — A fair good-morrow to you, Mr. Sun, who are shining so brightly on these dull walls. Methinks you look as if you were looking as bright on the banks of the Tweed; but look where you will, Sir Sun, you look upon sorrow and suffering. Hogg was here yesterday in danger, from having obtained an accommodation of £100 from Mr. Ballantyne, which he is now obliged to repay. I am unable to help the poor fellow, being obliged to borrow myself. But I long ago remonstrated against the transaction at all, and gave him £50 out of my pocket to avoid granting the accommodation, but it did no good.

May 15. — Received the melancholy intelligence that all is over at Abbotsford.

[Abbotsford,] May 16. — She died at nine in the morning, after being very ill for two days, — easy at last.

I arrived here late last night. Anne is worn out, and has had hysterics, which returned on my arrival. Her broken accents were like those of a child, the language, as well as the tones, broken, but in the most gentle voice of submission. "Poor mamma — never return again — 'gone for ever — a better place." Then, when she came to herself, she spoke with sense,

freedom, and strength of mind, till her weakness returned. It would have been inexpressibly moving to me as a stranger — what was it then to the father and the husband? For myself, I scarce know how I feel, sometimes as firm as the Bass Rock, sometimes as weak as the wave that breaks on it.

I am as alert at thinking and deciding as I ever was in my life. Yet, when I contrast what this place now is, with what it has been not long since, I think my heart will break. Lonely, aged, deprived of my family — all but poor Anne, an impoverished and embarrassed man, I am deprived of the sharer of my thoughts and counsels, who could always talk down my sense of the calamitous apprehensions which break the heart that must bear them alone. Even her foibles were of service to me, by giving me things to think of beyond my weary self-reflections.

I have seen her. The figure I beheld is, and is not, my Charlotte — my thirty years' companion. There is the same symmetry of form, though those limbs are rigid which were once so gracefully elastic — but that yellow masque, with pinched features, which seems to mock life rather than emulate it, can it be the face that was once so full of lively expression? I will not look on it again. Anne thinks her little changed, because the latest idea she had formed of her mother is as she appeared under circumstances of sickness and pain. Mine go back to a period of comparative health. If I write long in this way, I shall write down my resolution, which I should rather write up, if I could. I wonder how I shall do with the large portion of thoughts which were hers for thirty years. I suspect they will be hers yet for a long time at least. But I will not blaze cambric and crape in the public eye like a disconsolate widower, that most affected of all characters.

May 17. — -Last night Anne, after conversing with apparent ease, dropped suddenly down as she rose from the supper-table, and lay six or seven minutes as if dead. Clarkson, however, has no fear of these affections.

May 18. — Another day, and a bright one to the external world, again opens on us; the air soft, and the flowers smiling, and the leaves glittering. They cannot refresh her to whom mild weather was a natural enjoyment. Cerements of lead and of wood already hold her; cold earth must have her soon. But it is not my Charlotte, it is not the bride of my youth, the mother of my children, that will be laid among the ruins of Dryburgh, which we have so often visited in gaiety and pastime. No, no. She is sentient and

conscious of my emotions somewhere — somehow; where we cannot tell; how we cannot tell; yet would I not at this moment renounce the mysterious yet certain hope that I shall see her in a better world, for all that this world can give me. The necessity of this separation, — that necessity which rendered it even a relief, — that and patience must be my comfort. I do not experience those paroxysms of grief which others do on the same occasion. I can exert myself and speak even cheerfully with the poor girls. But alone, or if anything touches me — the choking sensation. I have been to her room: there was no voice in it — no stirring; the pressure of the coffin was visible on the bed, but it had been removed elsewhere; all was neat as she loved it, but all was calm — calm as death. I remembered the last sight of her; she raised herself in bed, and tried to turn her eyes after me, and said, with a sort of smile, "You all have such melancholy faces." They were the last words I ever heard her utter, and I hurried away, for she did not seem quite conscious of what she said. When I returned, immediately [before] departing, she was in a deep sleep. It is deeper now. This was but seven days since.

They are arranging the chamber of death; that which was long the apartment of connubial happiness, and of whose arrangements (better than in richer houses) she was so proud. They are treading fast and thick. For weeks you could have heard a footfall. Oh, my God!

May 19. — Anne, poor love, is ill with her exertions and agitation — cannot walk — and is still hysterical, though less so. I advised flesh-brush and tepid bath, which I think will bring her about. We speak freely of her whom we have lost, and mix her name with our ordinary conversation. This is the rule of nature. All primitive people speak of their dead, and I think virtuously and wisely. The idea of blotting the names of those who are gone out of the language and familiar discourse of those to whom they were dearest is one of the rules of ultra-civilisation which, in so many instances, strangle natural feeling by way of avoiding a painful sensation. The Highlanders speak of their dead children as freely as of their living, and mention how poor Colin or Robert would have acted in such or such a situation. It is a generous and manly tone of feeling; and, so far as it may be adopted without affectation or contradicting the general habits of society, I reckon on observing it.

May 20. — Tonight, I trust, will bring Charles or Lockhart, or both; at least I must hear from them. A letter from Violet [Lockhart] gave us the painful intelligence that she had not mentioned to Sophia the dangerous state in which her mother was. Most kindly meant, but certainly not so well judged. I have always thought that truth, even when painful, is a great duty on such occasions, and it is seldom that concealment is justifiable.

Sophia's baby was christened on Sunday, 14th May, at Brighton, by the name of Walter Scott. May God give him life and health to wear it with credit to himself and those belonging to him. Melancholy to think that the next morning after this ceremony deprived him of so near a relation. Sent Mr. Curle £11 to remit Mrs. Bohn, York Street, Covent Garden, for books — I thought I had paid the poor woman before.

May 21. — Our sad preparations for tomorrow continue. A letter from Lockhart; doubtful if Sophia's health or his own state of business will let him be here. If things permit he comes tonight. From Charles not a word; but I think I may expect him. I wish tomorrow were over; not that I fear it, for my nerves are pretty good, but it will be a day of many recollections.

May 22. — Charles arrived last night, much affected of course. Anne had a return of her fainting-fits on seeing him, and again upon seeing Mr. Ramsay, the gentleman who performs the service. I heard him do so with the utmost propriety for my late friend, Lady Alvanley, the arrangement of whose funeral devolved upon me. How little I could guess when, where, and with respect to whom I should next hear those solemn words. Well, I am not apt to shrink from that which is my duty, merely because it is painful; but I wish this day over. A kind of cloud of stupidity hangs about me, as if all were unreal that men seem to be doing and talking about.

May 23. — About an hour before the mournful ceremony of yesterday, Walter arrived, having travelled express from Ireland on receiving the news. He was much affected, poor fellow, and no wonder. Poor Charlotte nursed him, and perhaps for that reason she was ever partial to him. The whole scene floats as a sort of dream before me — the beautiful day, the grey ruins covered and hidden among clouds of foliage and flourish, where the grave, even in the lap of beauty, lay lurking and gaped for its prey. Then the grave

looks, the hasty important bustle of men with spades and mattocks — the train of carriages — the coffin containing the creature that was so long the dearest on earth to me, and whom I was to consign to the very spot which in pleasure-parties we so frequently visited. It seems still as if this could not be really so. But it is so — and duty to God and to my children must teach me patience.

Poor Anne has had longer fits since our arrival from Dryburgh than before, but yesterday was the crisis. She desired to hear prayers read by Mr. Ramsay, who performed the duty in a most solemn manner. But her strength could not carry it through. She fainted before the service was concluded.

May 24. — Slept wretchedly, or rather waked wretchedly, all night, and was very sick and bilious in consequence, and scarce able to hold up my head with pain. A walk, however, with my sons did me a great deal of good; indeed their society is the greatest support the world can afford me. Their ideas of everything are so just and honourable, kind towards their sisters, and affectionate to me, that I must be grateful to God for sparing them to me, and continue to battle with the world for their sakes, if not for my own.

May 25. — I had sound sleep tonight, and waked with little or nothing of the strange, dreamy feeling which made me for some days feel like one bewildered in a country where mist or snow has disguised those features of the landscape which are best known to him.

Walter leaves me to-day; he seems disposed to take interest in country affairs, which will be an immense resource, supposing him to tire of the army in a few years. Charles, he and I, went up to Ashestiel to call upon the Misses Russell, who have kindly promised to see Anne on Tuesday. This evening Walter left us, being anxious to return to his wife as well as to his regiment. We expect he will be here early in autumn, with his household.

May 26. — A rough morning, and makes me think of St. George's Channel, which Walter must cross tonight or tomorrow to get to Athlone. The wind is almost due east, however, and the channel at the narrowest point between Port-Patrick and Donaghadee. His absence is a great blank in our circle, especially, I think, to his sister Anne, to whom he shows invariably much kindness. But indeed they do so without exception each towards the other; and in weal or woe have shown themselves a family of love. No persuasion

could force on Walter any of his poor mother's ornaments for his wife. He undid a reading-glass from the gold chain to which it was suspended, and agreed to give the glass to Jane, but would on no account retain the chain. I will go to town on Monday and resume my labours. Being of a grave nature, they cannot go against the general temper of my feelings, and in other respects the exertion, as far as I am concerned, will do me good; besides, I must reestablish my fortune for the sake of the children, and of my own character. I have not leisure to indulge the disabling and discouraging thoughts that press on me. Were an enemy coming upon my house, would I not do my best to fight, although oppressed in spirits, and shall a similar despondency prevent me from mental exertion? It shall not, by Heaven! This day and tomorrow I give to the currency of the ideas which have of late occupied my mind, and with Monday they shall be mingled at least with other thoughts and cares. Last night Charles and I walked late on the terrace at Kaeside, when the clouds seemed accumulating in the wildest masses both on the Eildon Hills and other mountains in the distance. This rough morning reads the riddle.

Dull, drooping, cheerless has the day been. I cared not to carry my own gloom to the girls, and so sate in my own room, dawdling with old papers, which awakened as many stings as if they had been the nest of fifty scorpions. Then the solitude seemed so absolute — my poor Charlotte would have been in the room half-a-score of times to see if the fire burned, and to ask a hundred kind questions. Well, that is over — and if it cannot be forgotten, must be remembered with patience.

May 27. — A sleepless night. It is time I should be up and be doing, and a sleepless night sometimes furnishes good ideas. Alas! I have no companion now with whom I can communicate to relieve the loneliness of these watches of the night. But I must not fail myself and my family — and the necessity of exertion becomes apparent. I must try a hors d'oeuvre, something that can go on between the necessary intervals of Nap. Mrs. M[urray] K[eith's] Tale of the Deserter, with her interview with the lad's mother, may be made most affecting, but will hardly endure much expansion. The framework may be a Highland tour, under the guardianship of the sort of postilion, whom Mrs. M.K. described to me — a species of conductor who regulated the motions of his company, made their halts, and was their cicerone.

May 28. — I wrote a few pages yesterday, and then walked. I believe the description of the old Scottish lady may do, but the change has been unceasingly rung upon Scottish subjects of late, and it strikes me that the introductory matter may be considered as an imitation of Washington Irving. Yet not so neither. In short, I will go on, to-day make a dozen of close pages ready, and take J.B.'s advice. I intend the work as an olla podrida, into which any species of narrative or discussion may be thrown.

I wrote easily. I think the exertion has done me good. I slept sound last night, and at waking, as is usual with me, I found I had some clear views and thoughts upon the subject of this trifling work. I wonder if others find so strongly as I do the truth of the Latin proverb, Aurora musis amica. If I forget a thing overnight, I am sure to recollect it as my eyes open in the morning. The same if I want an idea, or am encumbered by some difficulty, the moment of waking always supplies the deficiency, or gives me courage to endure the alternative.

May 29. — To-day I leave for Edinburgh this house of sorrow. In the midst of such distress, I have the great pleasure to see Anne regaining her health, and showing both patience and steadiness of mind. God continue this, for my own sake as well as hers. Much of my future comfort must depend upon her.

[Edinburgh,] May 30. — Returned to town last night with Charles. This morning resume ordinary habits of rising early, working in the morning, and attending the Court. All will come easily round. But it is at first as if men looked strange on me, and bit their lip when they wring my hand, and indicated suppressed feelings. It is natural this should be — undoubtedly it has been so with me. Yet it is strange to find one's-self resemble a cloud which darkens gaiety wherever it interposes its chilling shade. Will it be better when, left to my own feelings, I see the whole world pipe and dance around me? I think it will. Thus sympathy intrudes on my private affliction.

I finished correcting the proofs for the Quarterly; it is but a flimsy article, but then the circumstances were most untoward.

This has been a melancholy day, most melancholy. I am afraid poor Charles found me weeping. I do not know what other folks feel, but with me the hysterical passion that impels tears is of terrible violence — a sort of

throttling sensation — then succeeded by a state of dreaming stupidity, in which I ask if my poor Charlotte can actually be dead. I think I feel my loss more than at the first blow.

Poor Charles wishes to come back to study here when his term ends at Oxford. I can see the motive.

May 31. — The melancholy hours of yesterday must not return. To encourage that dreamy state of incapacity is to resign all authority over the mind, and I have been wont to say —

> "My mind to me a kingdom is."

I am rightful monarch; and, God to aid, I will not be dethroned by any rebellious passion that may rear its standard against me. Such are morning thoughts, strong as carle-hemp — says Burns —

> "Come, firm Resolve, take thou the van,
> Thou stalk of carle-hemp in man."

Charles went by the steamboat this morning at six. We parted last night mournfully on both sides. Poor boy, this is his first serious sorrow. Wrote this morning a Memorial on the Claims which Constable's people prefer as to the copyrights of Woodstock and Napoleon.

June

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June 1. — Yesterday I also finished a few trifling memoranda on a book called The Omen, at Blackwood's request. There is something in the work which pleases me, and the style is good, though the story is not artfully conducted. I dined yesterday in family with Skene, and had a visit from Lord Chief-Commissioner; we met as mourners under a common calamity. There is something extremely kind in his disposition.

Sir R. D[undas] offers me three days of the country next week, which tempts me strongly were it but the prospect of seeing Anne. But I think I must resist and say with Tilburina,

> "Duty, I'm all thine own."

If I do this I shall deserve a holiday about the 15th June, and I think it is best to wait till then.

June 2. — A pleasant letter from Sophia, poor girl; all doing well there, for which God be praised.

I wrote a good task yesterday, five pages, which is nearly double the usual stint.

I am settled that I will not go to Abbotsford till tomorrow fortnight.

I might have spared myself the trouble of my self-denial, for go I cannot, Hamilton having a fit of gout.

Gibson seems in high spirits on the views I have given to him on the nature of Constable and Co.'s claim. It amounts to this, that being no longer accountable as publishers, they cannot claim the character of such, or plead upon any claim arising out of the contracts entered into while they held that capacity.

June 3. — I was much disturbed this morning by bile and its consequences, and lost so much sleep that I have been rather late in rising by way of indemnification. I must go to the map and study the Italian campaigns instead of scribbling.

June 4. — I wrote a good task yesterday, and to-day a great one, scarce stirring from the desk the whole day, except a few minutes when Lady Rae called. I was glad to see my wife's old friend, with whom in early life we had so many liaisons. I am not sure it is right to work so hard; but a man must take himself, as well as other people, when he is in the humour. A man will do twice as much at one time and in half the time, and twice as well as he will be able to do at another. People are always crying out about method, and in some respects it is good, and shows to great advantage among men of business, but I doubt if men of method, who can lay aside or take up the pen just at the hour appointed, will ever be better than poor creatures. Lady L[ouisa] S[tuart] used to tell me of Mr. Hoole, the translator of Tasso and Ariosto, and in that capacity a noble transmuter of gold into lead, that he was a clerk in the India House, with long ruffles and a snuff-coloured suit of clothes, who occasionally visited her father [John, Earl of Bute]. She sometimes conversed with him, and was amused to find that he did exactly so many couplets day by day, neither more or less; and habit had made it light to him, however heavy it might seem to the reader.

Well, but if I lay down the pen, as the pain in my breast hints that I should, what am I to do? If I think, why, I shall weep — and that's nonsense; and I have no friend now — none — to receive my tediousness for half-an-hour of the gloaming. Let me be grateful — I have good news from Abbotsford.

June 5. — Though this be Monday, I am not able to feague it away, as Bayes says. Between correcting proofs and writing letters, I have got as yet but two pages written, and that with labour and a sensation of pain in the chest. I may be bringing on some serious disease by working thus hard; if I had once justice done to other folks, I do not much care, only I would not like to suffer long pain. Harden made me a visit. He argued with me that Lord M. affichéd his own importance, too much at the election, and says Henry is anxious about it. I hinted to him the necessity of counterbalancing it the next time, which will be soon.

Thomson also called about the Bannatyne Club.

These two interruptions did me good, though I am still a poor wretch.

After all, I have fagged through six pages; and made poor Wurmser lay down his sword on the glacis of Mantua — and my head aches — my eyes

ache — my back aches — so does my breast — and I am sure my heart aches, and what can Duty ask more?

June 6. — I arose much better this morning, having taken some medicine, which has removed the strange and aching feeling in my back and breast. I believe it is from the diaphragm; it must be looked to, however. I have not yet breakfasted, yet have cleared half my day's work holding it at the ordinary stint.

Worked hard. John Swinton, my kinsman, came to see me, — very kind and affectionate in his manner; my heart always warms to that Swinton connection, so faithful to old Scottish feelings. Harden was also with me. I talked with him about what Lord M. did at the election; I find that he disapproves — I see these visits took place on the 5th.

June 7. — Again a day of hard work, only at halfpast eight I went to the Dean of Faculty's to a consultation about Constable, and met with said Dean and Mr. [J.S.] More and J. Gibson. I find they have as high hope of success as lawyers ought to express; and I think I know how our profession speak when sincere. I cannot interest myself deeply in it. When I had come home from such a business, I used to carry the news to poor Charlotte, who dressed her face in sadness or mirth as she saw the news affect me; this hangs lightly about me. I had almost forgot the appointment, if J.G. had not sent me a card, I passed a piper in the street as I went to the Dean's and could not help giving him a shilling to play Pibroch a Donuil Dhu for luck's sake — what a child I am!

June 8. — Bilious and headache this morning. A dog howl'd all night and left me little sleep. Poor cur! I dare say he had his distresses, as I have mine. I was obliged to make Dalgleish shut the windows when he appeared at halfpast six, as usual, and did not rise till nine, when me voici. I have often deserved a headache in my younger days without having one, and Nature is, I suppose, paying off old scores. Ay, but then the want of the affectionate care that used to be ready, with lowered voice and stealthy pace, to smooth the pillow — and offer condolence and assistance, — gone — gone — for ever — ever — ever. Well, there is another world, and we'll meet free from the mortal sorrows and frailties which beset us here. Amen, so be it. Let me change the topic with hand and head, and the heart must follow.

I think that sitting so many days and working so hard may have brought on this headache. I must inflict a walk on myself to-day. Strange that what is my delight in the country is here a sort of penance! Well, but now I think on it, I will go to the Chief-Baron and try to get his Lordship's opinion about the question with Constable; if I carry it, as there is, I trust, much hope I shall, Mr. Gibson says there will be funds to divide 6s. in the pound, without counting upon getting anything from Constable or Hurst, but sheer hard cash of my own. Such another pull is possible, especially if Boney succeeds, and the rogue had a knack at success. Such another, I say, and we touch ground I believe, for surely Constable, Robinson, etc., must pay something; the struggle is worth waring a headache upon.

I finished five pages to-day, headache, laziness, and all.

June 9. — Corrected a stubborn proof this morning. These battles have been the death of many a man — I think they will be mine. Well but it clears to windward; so we will fag on.

Slept well last night. By the way, how intolerably selfish this Journal makes me seem — so much attention to one's naturals and non-naturals! Lord Mackenzie called, and we had much chat about business. The late regulations for preparing cases in the Outer-House do not work well, and thus our old machinery, which was very indifferent, is succeeded by a kind that will hardly move at all. Mackenzie says his business is trebled, and that he cannot keep it up. I question whether the extreme strictness of rules of court be advisable in practice they are always evaded, upon an equitable showing. I do not, for instance, lodge a paper debito tempore, and for an accident happening, perhaps through the blunder of a Writer's apprentice, I am to lose my cause. The penalty is totally disproportioned to the delict, and the consequence is, that means are found out of evasion by legal fictions and the like. The judges listen to these; they become frequent, and the rule of Court ends by being a scarecrow merely. Formerly, delays of this kind were checked by corresponding amendes. But the Court relaxed this petty fine too often. Had they been more strict, and levied the mulct on the agents, with no recourse upon their clients, the abuse might have been remedied. I fear the present rule is too severe to do much good.

One effect of running causes fast through the Courts below is, that they go by scores to appeal, and Lord Gifford has hitherto decided them with such judgment, and so much rapidity, as to give great satisfaction. The

consequence will in time be, that the Scottish Supreme Court will be in effect situated in London. Then down fall — as national objects of respect and veneration — the Scottish Bench, the Scottish Bar, the Scottish Law herself, and — and — ”there is an end of an auld sang.” Were I as I have been, I would fight knee-deep in blood ere it came to that. But it is a catastrophe which the great course of events brings daily nearer —

“And who can help it, Dick?”

I shall always be proud of Malachi as having headed back the Southron, or helped to do so, in one instance at least.

June 10. — This was an unusual teind-day at Court. In the morning and evening I corrected proofs — four sheets in number; and I wrote my task of three pages and a little more. Three pages a day will come, at Constable’s rate, to about £12,000 to £15,000 per year. They have sent their claim; it does not frighten me a bit.

June 11. — Bad dreams about poor Charlotte. Woke, thinking my old and inseparable friend beside me; and it was only when I was fully awake that I could persuade myself that she was dark, low, and distant, and that my bed was widowed. I believe the phenomena of dreaming are in a great measure occasioned by the double touch, which takes place when one hand is crossed in sleep upon another. Each gives and receives the impression of touch to and from the other, and this complicated sensation our sleeping fancy ascribes to the agency of another being, when it is in fact produced by our own limbs acting on each other. Well, here goes — incumbite remis.

June 12. — Finished volume third of Napoleon. I resumed it on the 1st of June, the earliest period that I could bend my mind to it after my great loss. Since that time I have lived, to be sure, the life of a hermit, except attending the Court five days in the week for about three hours on an average. Except at that time I have been reading or writing on the subject of Boney, and have finished last night, and sent to printer this morning the last sheets of fiftytwo written since 1st June. It is an awful screed; but grief makes me a housekeeper, and to labour is my only resource. Ballantyne thinks well of the work — very well, but I shall [expect] inaccuracies. An’ it were to do again, I would get some one to look it over. But who could that some one

be? Whom is there left of human race that I could hold such close intimacy with? No one. “Tanneguy du Châtel, ou es-tu!”. Worked five pages.

June 13. — I took a walk out last evening after tea, and called on Lord Chief-Commissioner and the Macdonald Buchanans, that kind and friendly clan. The heat is very great, and the wrath of the bugs in proportion. Two hours last night I was kept in an absolute fever. I must make some arrangement for winter. Great pity my old furniture was sold in such a hurry! The wiser way would have been to have let the house furnished. But it’s all one in the Greek.

> “Peccavi, peccavi, dies quidem sine lineâ!” I walked to make calls; got cruelly hot; drank ginger-beer; wrote letters. Then as I was going to dinner, enter a big splay-footed, trifle-headed, old pottering minister, who came to annoy me about a claim which one of his parishioners has to be Earl of Annandale, and which he conceits to be established out of the Border Minstrelsy. He mentioned a curious thing — that three brothers of the Johnstone family, on whose descendants the male representative of these great Border chiefs devolved, were forced to fly to the north in consequence of their feuds with the Maxwells, and agreed to change their names. They slept on the side of the Soutra Hills, and asking a shepherd the name of the place, agreed in future to call themselves Sowtra or Sowter Johnstones. The old pudding-headed man could not comprehend a word I either asked him or told him, and maundered till I wished him in the Annandale beef-stand. Mr. Gibson came in after tea, and we talked business. Then I was lazy and stupid, and dosed over a book instead of writing. So on the whole, Confiteor, confiteor, culpa mea, culpa mea!

June 14. — In the morning I began with a page and a half before breakfast. This is always the best way. You stand like a child going to be bathed, shivering and shaking till the first pitcherful is flung about your ears, and then are as blithe as a water-wagtail. I am just come home from Parliament House; and now, my friend Nap., have at you with a downright blow! Methinks I would fain make peace with my conscience by doing six pages

tonight. Bought a little bit of Gruyère cheese, instead of our domestic choke-dog concern. When did I ever purchase anything for my own eating? But I will say no more of that. And now to the bread-mill.

June 15. — I laboured all the evening, but made little way. There were many books to consult; and so all I could really do was to make out my task of three pages. I will try to make up the deficit of Tuesday to-day and tomorrow. Letters from Walter — all well. A visit yesterday from Charles Sharpe.

June 16. — Yesterday sate in the Court till nearly four. I had, of course, only time for my task. I fear I will have little more to-day, for I have accepted to dine at Hector's. I got, yesterday, a present of two engravings from Sir Henry Raeburn's portrait of me, which (poor fellow!) was the last he ever painted, and certainly not his worst. I had the pleasure to give one to young Mr. Davidoff for his uncle, the celebrated Black Captain of the campaign of 1812. Curious that he should be interested in getting the resemblance of a person whose mode of attaining some distinction has been very different. But I am sensible, that if there be anything good about my poetry or prose either, it is a hurried frankness of composition which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active disposition. I have been no sigher in shades — no writer of

> "Songs and sonnets and rustical roundelays,
> Framed on fancies, and whistled on reeds."

[Abbotsford, Saturday,] June 17. — Left Edinburgh to-day after Parliament House to come [here]. My two girls met me at Torsonce, which was a pleasant surprise, and we returned in the sociable all together. Found everything right and well at Abbotsford under the new regime. I again took possession of the family bedroom and my widowed couch. This was a sore trial, but it was necessary not to blink such a resolution. Indeed, I do not like to have it thought that there is any way in which I can be beaten.

June 18. — This morning wrote till half-twelve — good day's work — at Canongate Chronicles. Methinks I can make this work answer. Then drove to Huntly Burn and called at Chiefswood. Walked home. The country

crying for rain; yet on the whole the weather delicious, dry, and warm, with a fine air of wind. The young woods are rising in a kind of profusion I never saw elsewhere. Let me once clear off these encumbrances, and they shall wave broader and deeper yet. But to attain this I must work.

Wrought very fair accordingly till two; then walked; after dinner out again with the girls. Smoked two cigars, first time these two months.

June 19. — Wrought very fair indeed, and the day being scorching we dined al fresco in the hall among the armour, and went out early in the evening. Walked to the lake and back again by the Marle pool; very delightful evening.

June 20. — This is also a hardworking day. Hot weather is favourable for application, were it not that it makes the composer sleepy. Pray God the reader may not partake the sensation! But days of hard work make short journals. To-day we again dine in the hall, and drive to Ashestiel in the evening pour prendre le frais.

June 21 — We followed the same course we proposed. For a party of pleasure I have attended to business well. Twenty pages of Croftangry, five printed pages each, attest my diligence, and I have had a delightful variation by the company of the two Annes. Regulated my little expenses here.

[Edinburgh,] June 22. — Returned to my Patmos. Heard good news from Lockhart. Wife well, and John Hugh better. He mentions poor Southey testifying much interest for me, even to tears. It is odd — am I so hardhearted a man? I could not have wept for him, though in distress I would have gone any length to serve him. I sometimes think I do not deserve people's good opinion, for certainly my feelings are rather guided by reflection than impulse. But everybody has his own mode of expressing interest, and mine is stoical even in bitterest grief. Agere atque pati, Romanum est. I hope I am not the worse for wanting the tenderness that I see others possess, and which is so amiable. I think it does not cool my wish to be of use where I can. But the truth is, I am better at enduring or acting than at consoling. From childhood's earliest hour my heart rebelled against the influence of external circumstances in myself and others. Non est tanti!

To-day I was detained in the Court from halfpast ten till near four; yet I finished and sent off a packet to Cadell, which will finish onethird of the

Chronicles, vol. 1st.

Henry Scott came in while I was at dinner, and sat while I ate my beefsteak. A gourmand would think me much at a loss, coming back to my ploughman's meal of boiled beef and Scotch broth, from the rather recherché table at Abbotsford, but I have no philosophy in my carelessness on that score. It is natural — though I am no ascetic, as my father was.

June 23. — The heat tremendous, and the drought threatening the hay and barley crop. Got from the Court at half-twelve, and walked to the extremity of Heriot Row to see poor Lady Don; left my card as she does not receive any one. I am glad this painful meeting is adjourned. I received to-day £10 from Blackwood for the article on The Omen. Time was I would not have taken these small tithes of mint and cummin, but scornful dogs will eat dirty puddings, and I, with many depending on me, must do the best I can with my time — God help me!

[Blair-Adam,] June 24. — Left Edinburgh yesterday after the Court, halfpast twelve, and came over here with the Lord Chief-Baron and William Clerk, to spend as usual a day or two at Blair-Adam. In general, this is a very gay affair. We hire a light coach-and-four, and scour the country in every direction in quest of objects of curiosity. But the Lord Chief-Commissioner's family misfortunes and my own make our holiday this year of a more quiet description than usual, and a sensible degree of melancholy hangs on the reunion of our party. It was wise, however, not to omit it, for to slacken your hold on life in any agreeable point of connection is the sooner to reduce yourself to the indifference and passive vegetation of old age.

June 25. — Another melting day; thermometer at 78° even here. 80° was the height yesterday at Edinburgh. If we attempt any active proceeding we dissolve ourselves into a dew. We have lounged away the morning creeping about the place, sitting a great deal, and walking as little as might be on account of the heat.

Blair-Adam has been successively in possession of three generations of persons attached to and skilled in the art of embellishment, and may be fairly taken as a place where art and taste have done a great deal to improve nature. A long ridge of varied ground sloping to the foot of the hill called

Benarty, and which originally was of a bare, mossy, boggy character, has been clothed by the son, father, and grandfather; while the undulations and hollows, which seventy or eighty years since must have looked only like wrinkles in the black morasses, being now drained and limed, are skirted with deep woods, particularly of spruce, which thrives wonderfully, and covered with excellent grass. We drove in the droskie and walked in the evening.

June, 26. — Another day of unmitigated heat; thermometer 82; must be higher in Edinburgh, where I return tonight, when the decline of the sun makes travelling practicable. It will be well for my work to be there — not quite so well for me; there is a difference between the clean, nice arrangement of Blair-Adam and Mrs. Brown's accommodations, though he who is insured against worse has no right to complain of them. But the studious neatness of poor Charlotte has perhaps made me fastidious. She loved to see things clean, even to Oriental scrupulosity. So oddly do our deep recollections of other kinds correspond with the most petty occurrences of our life.

Lord Chief-Baron told us a story of the ruling passion strong in death. A Master in Chancery was on his deathbed — a very wealthy man. Some occasion of great urgency occurred in which it was necessary to make an affidavit, and the attorney, missing one or two other Masters, whom he inquired after, ventured to ask if Mr. — — — would be able to receive the deposition. The proposal seemed to give him momentary strength; his clerk sent for, and the oath taken in due form, the Master was lifted up in bed, and with difficulty subscribed the paper; as he sank down again, he made a signal to his clerk — "Wallace." — "Sir?" — "Your ear — lower — lower. Have you got the half-crown?" He was dead before morning.

[Edinburgh,] June 27. — Returned to Edinburgh late last night, and had a most sweltering night of it. This day also cruel hot. However, I made a task or nearly so, and read a good deal about the Egyptian Expedition. Had comfortable accounts of Anne, and through her of Sophia. Dr. Shaw doubts if anything is actually the matter with poor Johnnie's back. I hope the dear child will escape deformity, and the infirmities attending that helpless state. I have myself been able to fight up very well, notwithstanding my lameness, but it has cost great efforts, and I am besides very strong. Dined

with Colin Mackenzie; a fine family all growing up about him, turning men and women, and treading fast on our heels. Some thunder and showers which I fear will be but partial. Hot — hot — hot.

June, 28. — Another hot morning, and something like an idle day, though I have read a good deal. But I have slept also, corrected proofs, and prepared for a great start, by filling myself with facts and ideas.

June 29. — I walked out for an hour last night, and made one or two calls — the evening was delightful —

> "Day its sultry fires had wasted,
> Calm and cool the moonbeam rose;
> Even a captive's bosom tasted
> Half oblivion of his woes."

I wonder often how Tom Campbell, with so much real genius, has not maintained a greater figure in the public eye than he has done of late. The Magazine seems to have paralysed him. The author, not only of the Pleasures of Hope, but of Hohenlinden, Lochiel, etc., should have been at the very top of the tree. Somehow he wants audacity, fears the public, and, what is worse, fears the shadow of his own reputation. He is a great corrector too, which succeeds as ill in composition as in education. Many a clever boy is flogged into a dunce, and many an original composition corrected into mediocrity. Yet Tom Campbell ought to have done a great deal more. His youthful promise was great. John Leyden introduced me to him. They afterwards quarrelled. When I repeated Hohenlinden to Leyden, he said, "Dash it, man, tell the fellow that I hate him, but, dash him, he has written the finest verses that have been published these fifty years." I did mine errand as faithfully as one of Homer's messengers, and had for answer, "Tell Leyden that I detest him, but I know the value of his critical approbation." This feud was therefore in the way of being taken up. "When Leyden comes back from India," said Tom Campbell, "what cannibals he will have eaten and what tigers he will have torn to pieces!"

Gave a poor poetess £1. Gibson writes me that £2300 is offered for the poor house; it is worth £300 more, but I will not oppose my own opinion, or convenience to good and well-meant counsel: so farewell, poor No. 39. What a portion of my life has been spent there! It has sheltered me from the

prime of life to its decline; and now I must bid goodbye to it. I have bid goodbye to my poor wife, so long its courteous and kind mistress, — and I need not care about the empty rooms; yet it gives me a turn. I have been so long a citizen of Edinburgh, now an indweller only. Never mind; all in the day's work.

J. Ballantyne and B. Cadell dined with me, and, as Pepys would say, all was very handsome. Drank amongst us one bottle of champagne, one of claret, a glass or two of port, and each a tumbler of whisky toddy. J.B. had courage to drink his with hot water; mine was iced.

June 30. — Here is another dreadful warm day, fit for nobody but the flies. And then one is confined to town.

Yesterday I agreed to let Cadell have the new work, edition 1500, he paying all charges, and paying also £500 — two hundred and fifty at Lammas, to pay J. Gibson money advanced on the passage of young Walter, my nephew, to India. It is like a thorn in one's eye this sort of debt, and Gibson is young in business, and somewhat involved in my affairs besides. Our plan is, that this same Miscellany or Chronicle shall be committed quietly to the public, and we hope it will attract attention. If it does not, we must turn public attention to it ourselves. About one half of vol. i. is written, and there is worse abomination, or I mistake the matter.

I was detained in Court till four; dreadfully close, and obliged to drink water for refreshment, which formerly I used to scorn, even on the moors, with a burning August sun, the heat of exercise, and a hundred springs gushing around me.

Corrected proofs, etc., on my return. I think I have conquered the trustees' objections to carry on the small edition of novels. Got Cadell's letter about the Chronicle.

July

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[Edinburgh,] July 1st. — Another sunny day. This threatens absolutely Syrian drought. As the Selkirk election comes on Monday, I go out to-day to Abbotsford, and carry young Davidoff and his tutor with me, to see our quiet way of managing the choice of a national representative.

I wrote a page or two last night slumbrously.

[Abbotsford,] July 2. — Late at Court. Got to Abbotsford last night with Count Davidoff about eight o'clock. I worked a little this morning, then had a long and warm walk. Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton from Chiefswood, the present inhabitants of Lockhart's cottage, dined with us, which made the society pleasant. He is a fine, soldierly-looking man — though affected with paralysis — his wife a sweet good-humoured little woman. He is supposed to be a writer in Blackwood's Magazine. Since we were to lose the Lockharts, we could scarce have had more agreeable folks.

At Selkirk, where Borthwickbrae was elected with the usual unanimity of the Forest freeholders. This was a sight to my young Muscovite. We walked in the evening to the lake.

July 5. — Still very hot, but with thunder showers. Wrote till breakfast, then walked and signed the death-warrant of a number of old firs at Abbotstown. I hope their deaths will prove useful. Their lives are certainly not ornamental. Young Mr. Davidoff entered upon the cause of the late discontents in Russia, which he imputes to a deep-seated Jacobin conspiracy to overthrow the state and empire and establish a government by consuls.

[Edinburgh,] July 6. — Returned last night with my frozen Muscovites to the Capital, and suffered as usual from the incursions of the black horse during the night. It was absolute fever. A bunch of letters, but little interesting. Mr. Barry Cornwall writes to condole with me. I think our acquaintance scarce warranted this; but it is well meant and modestly done. I cannot conceive the idea of forcing myself on strangers in distress, and I have half a mind to turn sharp round on some of my consolers. Came home

from Court. R.P. Gillies called; he is writing a satire. He has a singular talent of aping the measure and tone of Byron, and this poem goes to the tune of Don Juan, but it is the Champagne after it has stood two days with the cork drawn. Thereafter came Charles K. Sharpe and Will Clerk, as Robinson sayeth, to my exceeding refreshment. And last, not least, Mr. Jollie, one of the triumvirs who manage my poor matters. He consents to going on with the small edition of novels, which he did not before comprehend. All this has consumed the day, but we will make up tide-way presently. I must dress to go to Lord Medwyn to dinner, and it is near time.

July 7. — Coming home from Lord Medwyn's last night I fell in with Willie Clerk, and went home to drink a little shrub and water, over which we chatted of old stories until halfpast eleven. This morning I corrected two proofs of C[roftangr]y, which is getting on. But there must be a little check with the throng of business at the close of the session. D — -n the session! I wish it would close its eyes for a century. It is too bad to be kept broiling here; but, on the other hand, we must have the instinctive gratitude of the Laird of M'Intosh, who was for the King that gave M'Intosh half-a-guinea the day and half-a-guinea the morn. So I retract my malediction.

Received from Blackwood to account sales of Malachi £72 with some odd shillings. This was for copies sold to Banks. The cash comes far from ill-timed, having to clear all odds and ends before I leave Edinburgh. This will carry me on tidily till 25th, when precepts become payable. Well! if Malachi did me some mischief, he must also contribute quodam modo to my comfort.

July 8. — Wrote a good task this morning. I may be mistaken; but I do think the tale of Elspat McTavish in my bettermost manner — but J.B. roars for chivalry. He does not quite understand that everything may be overdone in this world, or sufficiently estimate the necessity of novelty. The Highlanders have been off the field now for some time.

Returning from Court, looked into a show of wild beasts, and saw Nero the great lion, whom they had the cruelty to bait with bulldogs, against whom the noble creature disdained to exert his strength. He was lying like a prince in a large cage, where you might be admitted if you wish. I had a month's mind — - but was afraid of the newspapers; I could be afraid of nothing else, for never did a creature seem more gentle and yet majestic —

I longed to caress him. Wallace, the other lion, born in Scotland, seemed much less trustworthy. He handled the dogs as his namesake did the southron.

Enter a confounded Dousterswivel, called Burschal, or some such name, patronised by John Lockhart, teacher of German and learner of English.

He opened the trenches by making me a present of a German work called Der Bibelische Orient, then began to talk of literature at large; and display his own pretensions. Asked my opinion of Gray as a poet, and wished me to subscribe an attestation of his own merits for the purpose of getting him scholars. As I hinted my want of acquaintance with his qualifications, I found I had nearly landed myself in a proof, for he was girding up his loins to repeated thundering translations by himself into German, Hebrew, until, thinking it superfluous to stand on very much ceremony with one who used so little with me, hinted at letters to write, and got him to translate himself elsewhere.

Saw a good house in Brunswick Street, which I liked. This evening supped with Thomas Thomson about the affairs of the Bannatyne. There was the Dean, Will Clerk, John Thomson, young Smythe of Methven; very pleasant.

July 9. — Rather slumbrous to-day from having sat up till twelve last night. We settled, or seemed to settle, on an election for the Bannatyne Club. There are people who would wish to confine it much to one party. But those who were together last night saw it in the true and liberal point of view, as a great national institution, which may do much good in the way of publishing our old records, providing we do not fall into the usual habit of antiquarians, and neglect what is useful for things that are merely curious. Thomson is a host for such an undertaking. I wrote a good day's work at the Canongate matter, notwithstanding the intervention of two naps. I get sleepy oftener than usual. It is the weather I suppose — Naboclish! I am near the end of the first volume, and every step is one out of difficulty.

July 10. — Slept too long this morning. It was eight before I rose — halfpast eight ere I came into the parlour. Terry and J. Ballantyne dined with me yesterday, and I suppose the wassail, though there was little enough of it, had stuck to my pillow.

This morning I was visited by a Mr. Lewis, a smart Cockney, whose object is to amend the handwriting. He uses as a mechanical aid a sort of puzzle of wire and ivory, which is put upon the fingers to keep them in the desired position, like the muzzle on a dog's nose to make him bear himself right in the field. It is ingenious, and may be useful. If the man comes here, as he proposes, in winter, I will take lessons. Bear witness, good reader, that if W.S. writes a cramp hand, as is the case, he is desirous to mend it.

Dined with John Swinton en famille. He told me an odd circumstance. Coming from Berwickshire in the mail coach he met with a passenger who seemed more like a military man than anything else. They talked on all sorts of subjects, at length on politics. Malachi's letters were mentioned, when the stranger observed they were much more seditious than some expressions for which he had three or four years ago been nearly sent to Botany Bay. And perceiving John Swinton surprised at this avowal, he added, "I am Kinloch of Kinloch." This gentleman had got engaged in the radical business (the only real gentleman by the way who did), and harangued the weavers of Dundee with such emphasis that he would have been tried and sent to Botany Bay had he not fled abroad. He was outlawed, and only restored to his status on a composition with Government. It seems to have escaped Mr. Kinloch that the conduct of a man who places a lighted coal in the middle of combustibles, and upon the floor, is a little different from that of one who places the same quantity of burning fuel in a fire-grate!

July 11. — The last day of the session, and as toilsome a one as I ever saw. There were about 100 or 120 cases on the roll, and most of them of an incidental character, which gives us Clerks the greatest trouble, for it is the grasshopper that is a burthen to us. Came home about four, tired and hungry. I wrought little or none; indeed I could not, having books and things to pack. Went in the evening to sup with John Murray, where I met Will Clerk, Thomson, Henderland, and Charles Stuart Blantyre, and had of course a pleasant party. I came late home, though, for me, and was not in bed till past midnight; it would not do for me to do this often.

July 12. — I have the more reason to eschew evening parties that I slept two mornings till past eight; these vigils would soon tell on my utility, as the divines call it, but this is the last day in town, and the world shall be

amended. I have been trying to mediate between the unhappy R.P. G[illies] and his uncle Lord G. The latter talks like a man of sense and a good relation, and would, I think, do something for E.P.G., if he would renounce temporary expedients and bring his affairs to a distinct crisis. But this E.P. will not hear of, but flatters himself with ideas which seem to me quite visionary. I could make nothing of him; but, I conclude, offended him by being of his uncle's opinion rather than his, as to the mode of extricating his affairs.

I am to dine out to-day, and I would fain shirk and stay at home; never, Shylock-like, had I less will to feasting forth, but I must go or be thought sulky. Lord M. and Lady Abercromby called this morning, and a world of people besides, among others honest Mr. Wilson, late of Wilsontown, who took so much care of me at London, sending fresh eggs and all sorts of good things. Well, I have dawdled and written letters sorely against the grain all day. Also I have been down to see Will Allan's picture of the Landing of Queen Mary, which he has begun in a great style; also I have put my letters and papers to rights, which only happens when I am about to move, and now, having nothing left to do, I must go and dress myself.

July 13. — Dined yesterday with Lord Abercromby at a party he gave to Lord Melville and some old friends, who formed the Contemporary Club. Lord M. and I met with considerable feeling on both sides, and all our feuds were forgotten and forgiven; I conclude so at least, because one or two people, whom I know to be sharp observers of the weatherglass on occasion of such squalls, have been earnest with me to meet Lord M. at parties — which I am well assured they would not have been (had I been Horace come to life again) were they not sure the breeze was over. For myself, I am happy that our usual state of friendship should be restored, though I could not have come down proud stomach to make advances, which is, among friends, always the duty of the richer and more powerful of the two.

To-day I leave Mrs. Brown's lodgings. Altogether I cannot complain, but the insects were voracious, even until last night when the turtle-soup and champagne ought to have made me sleep like a top. But I have done a monstrous sight of work here notwithstanding the indolence of this last week, which must and shall be amended.

"So good-by, Mrs. Brown,
I am going out of town,
Over dale, over down,
Where bugs bite not,
Where lodgers fight not,
Where below you chairmen drink not,
Where beside you gutters stink not;
But all is fresh, and clean, and gay,
And merry lambkins sport and play,
And they toss with rakes uncommonly short hay,
Which looks as if it had been sown only the other day,
And where oats are at twentyfive shillings a boll, they say,
But all's one for that, since I must and will away."

July 14, ABBOTSFORD. — Arrived here yesterday before five o'clock. Anybody would think, from the fal-de-ral conclusion of my journal of yesterday, that I left town in a very gay humour — cujus contrarium verum est. But nature has given me a kind of buoyancy, I know not what to call it, that mingles even with my deepest afflictions and most gloomy hours. I have a secret pride — I fancy it will be so most truly termed — which impels me to mix with my distresses strange snatches of mirth "which have no mirth in them." In fact, the journey hither, the absence of the affectionate friend that used to be my companion on the journey, and many mingled thoughts of bitterness, have given me a fit of the bile.

July 15. — This day I did not attempt to work, but spent my time in the morning in making the necessary catalogue and distribution of two or three chests of books which I have got home from the binder, Niece Anne acting as my Amanuensis. In the evening we drove to Huntly Burn, and took tea there. Returning home we escaped a considerable danger. The iron screw bolts of the driving-seat suddenly giving way, the servants were very nearly precipitated upon the backs of the horses. Had it been down hill instead of being on the level, the horses must have taken fright, and the consequences might have been fatal. Indeed, they had almost taken fright as it was, had not Peter Matheson, who, in Mr. Fag's phrase, I take to be, "the discreetest of whips," kept his presence of mind, when losing his equilibrium, so that he managed to keep the horses in hand until we all got out. I must say it is

not the first imminent danger on which I have seen Peter (my Automedon for near twentyfive years) behave with the utmost firmness.

July 16. — Very unsatisfactory to-day. Sleepy, stupid, indolent — finished arranging the books, and after that was totally useless — unless it can be called study that I slumbered for three or four hours over a variorum edition of the Gill's-Hill's tragedy. Admirable recipe for low spirits — for, not to mention the brutality of so extraordinary a murder, it led John Bull into one of his uncommon fits of gambols, until at last he become so maudlin as to weep for the pitiless assassin, Thurtell, and treasure up the leaves and twigs of the hedge and shrubs in the fatal garden as valuable relics — nay, thronged the minor theatres to see the very roan horse and yellow gig in which the body was transported from one place to another. I have not stept over the threshold to-day, so very stupid have I been.

July 17. — Desidiæ longum valedixi. Our time is like our money. When we change a guinea, the shillings escape as things of small account; when we break a day by idleness in the morning, the rest of the hours lose their importance in our eye. I set stoutly to work about seven this morning to Boney —

> And long ere dinner-time, I have
> Full eight close pages wrote;
> What, Duty, hast thou now to crave?
> Well done, Sir Walter Scott!

July 18. — This, as yesterday, has been a day of unremitting labour, though I only got through half the quantity of manuscript, owing to drowsiness, a most disarming annoyance. I walked a little before dinner and after tea, but was unable to go with the girls and Charles to the top of Cauldshiels Hill. I fear my walking powers are diminishing, but why not? They have been wonderfully long efficient, all things considered, only I fear I shall get fat and fall into diseases. Well, things must be as they may. Let us use the time and faculties which God has left us, and trust futurity to his guidance. Amen.

This is the day of St. Boswell's Fair. That watery saint has for once had a dry festival.

July 19. — Wrote a page this morning, but no more. Corrected proofs however, and went to Selkirk to hold Sheriff Court; this consumed the forenoon. Colonel and Miss Ferguson, with Mr. and Mrs. Laidlaw, dined and occupied the evening. The rain seemed to set in this night.

July 20. — To-day rainy. A morning and forenoon of hard work. About five pages, which makes up for yesterday's lee way. I am sadly tired however. But as I go to Mertoun at four, and spend the night there, the exertion was necessary.

July 21. — To Mertoun we went accordingly. Lord and Lady Minto were there, with part of their family, David Haliburton, etc., besides their own large family. So my lodging was a little room which I had not occupied since I was a bachelor, but often before in my frequent intercourse with this kind and hospitable family. Feeling myself returned to that celibacy, which renders many accommodations indifferent which but lately were indispensable, my imagination drew a melancholy contrast between the young man entering the world on fire for fame, and restless in imagining means of coming by it, and the aged widower, blasé on the point of literary reputation, deprived of the social comforts of a married state, and looking back to regret instead of looking forward to hope. This brought bad sleep and unpleasing dreams. But if I cannot hope to be what I have been, I will not, if I can help it, suffer vain repining to make me worse than I may be.

We left Mertoun after breakfast, and the two Annes and I visited Lady Raeburn at Lessudden. My Aunt is now in her ninetieth year — so clean, so nice, so well arranged in every respect, that it makes old age lovely. She talks both of late and former events with perfect possession of her faculties, and has only failed in her limbs. A great deal of kind feeling has survived, in spite of the frost of years.

Home to dinner, and worked all the afternoon among the Moniteurs — to little purpose, for my principal acquisition was a headache. I wrote nothing to-day but part of a trifle for Blackwood.

July 22. — The same severe headache attends my poor pate. But I have worked a good deal this morning, and will do more. I wish to have half the

volume sent into town on Monday if possible. It will be a royal effort, and more than make up for the blanks of this week.

July 23. — I wrote very hard this day, and attained page 40; 45 would be more than half the volume. Colonel Russell came about one, and carried me out a-walking, which I was all the better of. In the evening we expected Terry and his wife, but they did not come, which makes me fear she may be unwell again.

July 24. — A great number of proof-sheets to revise and send off, and after that I took a fancy to give a more full account of the Constitution framed by Sieyès — a complicated and ingenious web; it is but far too fine and critical to be practically useful.

July 25. — Terry and wife arrived yesterday. Both very well. At dinner-time to-day came Dr. Jamieson of the Scottish Dictionary, an excellent good man, and full of auld Scottish cracks, which amuse me well enough, but are caviare to the young people. A little prolix and heavy is the good Doctor; somewhat prosaic, and accustomed to much attention on the Sunday from his congregation, and I hope on the six other days from his family. So he will demand full attention from all and sundry before he begins a story, and once begun there is no chance of his ending.

July 26. — This day went to Selkirk, and held a Court. The Doctor and Terry chose to go with me. Captain and Mrs. Hamilton came to dinner. Desperate warm weather! Little done in the literary way except sending off proofs. Roup of standing corn, etc., went off very indifferently. Letter from Ballantyne wanting me to write about absentees. But I have enough to do without burning my fingers with politics.

July 27. — Up and at it this morning, and finished four pages. An unpleasant letter from London, as if I might be troubled by some of the creditors there, when going to town to get materials for Nap. I have no wish to go, — none at all. I would even like to put off my visit, so far as John Lockhart and my daughter are concerned, and see them when the meeting could be more pleasant. But then, having an offer to see the correspondence from St. Helena, I can make no doubt that I ought to go. However, if it is to

infer any danger to my personal freedom, English wind will not blow on me. It is monstrous hard to prevent me doing what is certainly the best for all parties.

July 28. — I am wellnigh choked with the sulphurous heat of the weather — or I am unwell, for I perspire as if I had been walking hard, and my hand is as nervous as a paralytic's. Read through and corrected St. Ronan's Well. I am no judge, but I think the language of this piece rather good. Then I must allow the fashionable portraits are not the true thing. I am too much out of the way to see and remark the ridiculous in society. The story is terribly contorted and unnatural, and the catastrophe is melancholy, which should always be avoided. No matter; I have corrected it for the press.

The worthy Lexicographer left us to-day. Somewhat ponderous he is, poor soul! but there are excellent things about him.

Action and Reaction — Scots proverb: "the unrest (i.e. pendulum) of a clock goes aye as far the ae gait as the t'other."

Walter's account of his various quarters per last despatch. Query if original: —

> "Loughrea is a blackguard place
> To Gort I give my curse;
> Athlone itself is bad enough,
> But Ballinrobe is worse.
> I cannot tell which is the worst,
> They're all so very bad;
> But of all towns I ever saw,
> Bad luck to Kinnegad."

Old Mr. Haliburton dined with us, also Colonel Russell. What a man for fourscore or thereby is Old Haly — an Indian too. He came home in 1785.

July 29. — Yesterday I wrought little, and light work, almost stifled by the smothering heat. To-day I wrought about half task in the morning, and, as a judgment on me I think for yesterday's sloth, Mr. H. stayed unusually late in the forenoon. He is my friend, my father's friend, and an excellent, sensible man besides; and a man of eighty and upwards may be allowed to talk long, because in the nature of things he cannot have long to talk. If I do

a task to-day, I hope to send a good parcel on Monday and keep tryst pretty well.

July 30. — I did better yesterday than I had hoped for — four instead of three pages, which, considering how my time was cut up by prolonged morning lounging with friend Haly, was pretty fair. I wrote a good task before eleven o'clock, but then my good friends twaddled and dawdled for near two hours before they set off. The time devoted to hospitality, especially to those whom I can reckon upon as sincere good friends, I never grudge, but like to "welcome the coming, speed the parting guest." By my will every guest should part at halfpast ten, or arrange himself to stay for the day.

We had a long walk in a sweltering hot day. Met Mr. Blackwood coming to call, and walked him on with us, so blinked his visit — gratias, domine!! Asked him for breakfast tomorrow to make amends. I rather overwalked myself — the heat considered.

July 31st. — I corrected six sheets and sent them off, with eight leaves of copy, so I keep forward pretty well. Blackwood the bookseller came over from Chiefswood to breakfast, and this kept me idle till eleven o'clock. At twelve I went out with the girls in the sociable, and called on the family at Bemerside, on Dr. and Mrs. Brewster, and Mr. Bainbridge at Gattonside House. It was five ere we got home, so there was a day dished, unless the afternoon does something for us. I am keeping up pretty well, however, and, after all, visitors will come, and calls must be made. I must not let Anne forego the custom of wellbred society.

August

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August 1. — Yesterday evening did nothing for the idlesse of the morning. I was hungry; eat and drank and became drowsy; then I took to arranging the old plays, of which Terry had brought me about a dozen, and dipping into them scrambled through two. One, called Michaelmas Term, full of traits of manners; and another a sort of bouncing tragedy, called the Hector of Germany, or the Palsgrave. The last, worthless in the extreme, is, like many of the plays in the beginning of the seventeenth century, written to a good tune. The dramatic poets of that time seem to have possessed as joint-stock a highly poetical and abstract tone of language, so that the worst of them often remind you of the very best. The audience must have had a much stronger sense of poetry in those days than now, since language was received and applauded at the Fortune or at the Red Bull, which could not now be understood by any general audience in Great Britain. This leads far.

This morning I wrote two hours, then out with Tom Purdie, and gave directions about thinning all the plantations above Abbotsford properly so called. Came in at one o'clock and now set to work. Debout, debout, Lyciscas, debout. Finished four leaves.

August 2. — Well; and to-day I finished before dinner five leaves more, and I would crow a little about it, but here comes Duty like an old housekeeper to an idle chambermaid. Hear her very words: —

DUTY. — Oh! you crow, do you? Pray, can you deny that your sitting so quiet at work was owing to its raining heavily all the forenoon, and indeed till dinner-time, so that nothing would have stirred out that could help it, save a duck or a goose? I trow, if it had been a fine day, by noon there would have been aching of the head, throbbing, shaking, and so forth, to make an apology for going out.

Egomet IPSE. — And whose head ever throbbed to go out when it rained, Mrs. Duty?

DUTY. — Answer not to me with a fool-born jest, as your poor friend Erskine used to say to you when you escaped from his good advice under the fire of some silly pun. You smoke a cigar after dinner, and I never check you — drink tea, too, which is loss of time; and then, instead of writing me

one other page, or correcting those you have written out, you rollick into the woods till you have not a dry thread about you; and here you sit writing down my words in your foolish journal instead of minding my advice.

EGO. — Why, Mrs. Duty, I would as gladly be friends with [you] as Crabbe's tradesman fellow with his conscience; but you should have some consideration with human frailty.

DUTY. — Reckon not on that. But, however, goodnight for the present. I would only recommend to you to think no thoughts in which I am not mingled — to read no books in which I have no concern — to write three sheets of botheration all the six days of the week per diem, and on the seventh to send them to the printer. Thus advising, I heartily bid you farewell.

EGO. — Farewell, madam (exit Duty) and be d — d to ye for an unreasonable bitch! "The devil must be in this greedy gled!" as the Earl of Angus said to his hawk; "will she never be satisfied?" I believe in my soul she is the very hag who haunted the merchant Abudah.

I'll have my great chest upstairs exorcised, but first I'll take a nap till supper, which must take place within ten minutes.

August 3. — Wrote half a task in the morning. From eleven till halfpast eight in Selkirk taking precognitions about a row, and came home famished and tired. Now, Mrs. Duty, do you think there is no other Duty of the family but yourself? Or can the Sheriff-depute neglect his Duty, that the author may mind his? The thing cannot be; the people of Selkirk must have justice as well as the people of England books. So the two Duties may go pull caps about it. My conscience is clear.

August 4. — Wrote to Miss Edgeworth on her sister's marriage, which consumed the better part of the morning. I must read for Marengo. Item, I must look at the pruning. Item, at the otter hunt; but my hope is constant to make up a good day's task notwithstanding. Failed in finding the otter, and was tired and slept, and did but a poor day's work.

August 6. — Wrote to-day a very good day's work. Walked to Chiefswood, and saw old Mrs. Tytler, a friend when life was young. Her husband, Lord Woodhouselee, was a kind, amiable, and accomplished man; and when we lived at Lasswade Cottage, soon after my marriage, we saw a great deal of

the family, who were very kind to us as newly entered on the world. Walked home, and worked in the evening; four leaves finished.

August 7. — My niece Anne leaves us this morning, summoned back from one scene of distress to another. Her uncle, David Macculloch, is extremely ill — a paralytic stroke, I fancy. She is a charming girl, ladylike in thought and action, and very pleasant in society. We are to dine to-day with our neighbours at Gattonside. Meantime I will avail myself of my disposition to labour, and work instead of journalising.

Mr. H. Cranstoun looked in a morning call. He is become extremely deaf. He gave me a letter from the Countess Purgstall, his sister, which I have not the heart to open, so many reproaches I have deserved for not writing. It is a sad thing, though, to task eyes as hard wrought as mine to keep up correspondence. Dined at Gattonside.

August 8. — Wrote my task this morning, and now for walk. Dine to-day at Chiefswood; have company tomorrow. Why, this is dissipation! But no matter, Mrs. Duty, if the task is done. "Ay, but," says she, "you ought to do something extra — provide against a rainy day." Not I, I'll make a rainy day provide against a fair one, Mrs. Duty. I write twice as much in bad weather. Seriously, I write fully as much as I ought. I do not like this dull aching in the chest and the back, and its giving way to exercise shows that it originates in remaining too long in a sitting posture. So I'll take the field, while the day is good.

August 9. — I wrote only two leaves to-day, but with as many additions as might rank for three. I had a long and warm walk. Mrs. Tytler of Woodhouselee, the Hamiltons, and Colonel Ferguson dined here. How many early stories did the old lady's presence recall! She might almost be my mother, yet there we sat, like two people of another generation, talking of things and people the rest knew nothing of. When a certain period of life is survived, the difference of years between the survivors, even when considerable, becomes of much less consequence.

August 10. — Rose early, and wrote hard till two, when I went with Anne to Minto. The place, being new to my companion, gave her much amusement. We found the Scotts of Harden, etc., and had a very pleasant

party. I like Lady M. particularly, but missed my facetious and lively friend, Lady A[nna] M[aria]. It is the fashion for women and silly men to abuse her as a bluestocking. If to have wit, good sense, and good-humour, mixed with a strong power of observing, and an equally strong one of expressing the result, be blue, she shall be as blue as they will. Such cant is the refuge of persons who fear those who they [think] can turn them into ridicule; it is a common trick to revenge supposed raillery with good substantial calumny. Slept at Minto.

August 11. — I was up as usual, and wrote about two leaves, meaning to finish my task at home; but found my Sheriff-substitute here on my return, which took up the evening. But I shall finish the volume on Sunday; that is less than a month after beginning it. The same exertion would bring the book out at Martinmas, but December is a better time.

August 12. — Wrote a little in the morning; then Duty and I have settled that this is to be a kind of holiday, providing the volume be finished tomorrow. I went to breakfast at Chiefswood, and after that affair was happily transacted, I wended me merrily to the Black Cock Stripe, and there caused Tom Purdie and John Swanston cut out a quantity of firs. Got home about two o'clock, and set to correct a set of proofs. James Ballantyne presages well of this work, but is afraid of inaccuracies — so am I — but things must be as they may. There is a kind of glamour about me, which sometimes makes me read dates, etc., in the proof-sheets, not as they actually do stand, but as they ought to stand. I wonder if a pill of holy trefoil would dispel this fascination.

By the way, John Swanston measured a young shoot that was growing remarkably, and found that for three days successively it grew half an inch every day. Fine-Ear used to hear the grass grow — how far off would he have heard this extravagant rapidity of vegetation? The tree is a silver fir or spruce in the patch at the Green-tongue park.

August 13. — Yesterday I was tired of labouring in the rough ground. Well, I must be content to feel my disabilities increase. One sure thing is, that all wise men will soon contrive to lay aside inclination when performance grows toilsome. I have hobbled over many a rough heugh in my day — no wonder if I must sing at last —

"Thus says the auld man to the aik tree,
Sair failed, hinny, since I kenn'd thee."

But here are many a mile of smooth walk, just when I grow unable to face bent and brae, and here is the garden when all fails. To a sailor the length of his quarterdeck is a good space of exercising ground.

I wrote a good task to-day, then walked to the lake, then came back by three o'clock, hungering and thirsting to finish the volume. I have seldom such fits of voluntary industry, so Duty shall have the benefit.

Finished volume iv. this evening — Deo Gratias.

August 14. — This is a morning I have not seen many a day, for it appears to set in for a rainy day. It has not kept its word though. I was seized by a fit of the "clevers," and finished my task by twelve o'clock, and hope to add something in the evening. I was guilty, however, of some waywardness, for I began volume v. of Boney instead of carrying on the Canongate as I proposed. The reason, however, was that I might not forget the information I had acquired about the Treaty of Amiens.

August 15. — The weather seems decidedly broken. Yesterday, indeed, cleared up, but this day seems to persevere in raining. Naboclish! It's a rarity nowadays. I write on, though a little afflicted with the oppression on my chest. Sometimes I think it is something dangerous, but as it always goes away on change of posture, it cannot be speedily so. I want to finish my task, and then goodnight. I will never relax my labour in these affairs, either for fear of pain or love of life. I will die a free man, if hard working will do it. Accordingly, to-day I cleared the ninth leaf, which is the tenth part of a volume, in two days — four and a half leaves a day. Walter and Jane, with Mrs. Jobson, are arrived to interrupt me.

August 16. — God be praised for restoring to me my dear children in good health, which has made me happier than anything that has happened these several months. Walter and Jane appear cordial and happy in each other; the greatest blessing Heaven can bestow on them or me who witness it. If we had Lockhart and Sophia, there would be a meeting of the beings dearest to me in life. Walked to Huntly Burn, where I found a certain lady on a visit — so youthy, so beautiful, so strong in voice — with sense and learning —

above all, so fond of good conversation, that, in compassion to my eyes, ears, and understanding, I bolted in the middle of a tremendous shower of rain, and rather chose to be wet to the skin than to be bethumped with words at that rate. There seemed more than I of the same opinion, for Col Ferguson chose the ducking rather than the conversation. Young Mr. Surtees came this evening.

August 17. — Wrote half a leaf short of my task, having proofs, etc., to correct, and being called early to walk with the ladies. I have gained three leaves in the two following days, so I cannot blame myself. Sat cito si sat bene. Sat boni I am sure — I may say — a truly execrable pun that; hope no one will find it out.

In the evening we had music from the girls, and the voice of the harp and viol were heard in my halls once more, which have been so long deprived of mirth. It is with a mixed sensation I hear these sounds. I look on my children and am happy; and yet every now and then a pang shoots across my heart. It seems so strange that my poor wife should not be there. But enough of this. Colonel Ferguson dined.

August 18. — Again I fell a half page behind, being summoned out too early for my task, but I am still two leaves before on the whole week. It is natural to see as much of these young people as I can. Walter talks of the Ionian Islands. It is an awful distance. A long walk in very warm weather. Music in the evening.

August 19. — This morning wrote none, excepting extracts, etc., being under the necessity of reading and collating a great deal, which lasted till one o'clock or thereabouts, when Dr. and Mrs. Brewster and their young people came to spend a day of happiness at the lake. We were met there by Captain and Mrs. Hamilton and a full party. Since the days of Seged, Emperor of Ethiopia, these days of appointed sport and happiness have seldom answered; but we came off indifferently well. We did not indeed catch much fish; but we lounged about in a delightful day, eat and drank — and the children, who are very fine infantry, were clamorously enjoying themselves. We sounded the loch in two or three different places — the deepest may be sixty feet. I was accustomed to think it much more, but your

deepest pools, like your deepest politicians and philosophers, often turn out more shallow than was expected. The whole party dine with us.

August 20. — Wrote four leaves. The day wet and rainy, though not uniformly so. No temptation, however, to play truant; so this will make some amends for a blank day yesterday. I am far in advance of the press, but it is necessary if I go to Drumlanrig on Wednesday as I intend, and to Lochore next week, which I also meditate. This will be no great interruption, however, if I can keep the Canongate moving, for I shall be more than half a volume in advance with Napoleon.

August 21. — Wrought out my task, though much bothered with a cold in my head and face, how caught I know not. Mrs. Crampton, wife of the Surgeon-General in Ireland, sends to say she is hereabouts, so we ask her. Hospitality must not be neglected, and most hospitable are the Cramptons. All the "calliachs" from Huntly Burn are to be here, and Anne wishes we may have enough of dinner. Naboclish! it is hoped there will be a pièce de résistance.

August 22. — Mrs. and Misses Crampton departed. I was rather sorry to give them such brief entertainment, for they were extremely kind. But going to Eildon Hall to-day, and to Drumlanrig tomorrow, there was nothing more could be done for them. It is raining now "successfully," as old Macfarlane of the Arroquhar used to say. What is the odds? We get a soaking before we cross the Birkendailly — wet against dry, ten to one.

August 23 [Bittock's Bridge]. — Set off cheerily with Walter, Charles, and Surtees in the sociable, to make our trip to Drumlanrig. We breakfasted at Mr. Boyd's, Broadmeadows, and were received with Yarrow hospitality. From thence climbed the Yarrow, and skirted Saint Mary's Lake, and ascended the Birkhill path, under the moist and misty influence of the genius loci. Never mind; my companions were merry and I cheerful. When old people can be with the young without fatiguing them or themselves, their tempers derive the same benefits which some fantastic physicians of old supposed accrued to their constitutions from the breath of the young and healthy. You have not, cannot again have, their gaiety of pleasure in seeing sights, but still it reflects itself upon you, and you are cheered and comforted. Our luncheon eaten in the herd's cottage; but the poor woman

saddened me unawares, by asking for poor Charlotte, whom she had often seen there with me. She put me in mind that I had come twice over those hills and bogs with a wheeled-carriage, before the road, now an excellent one, was made. I knew it was true; but, on my soul, looking where we must have gone, I could hardly believe I had been such a fool. For riding, pass if you will; but to put one's neck in such a venture with a wheeled-carriage was too silly. Here we are, however, at Bittock's Inn for this night.

Drumlanrig, August 24. — This morning lunched at Parkgate under a very heavy shower, and then pushed on to Drumlanrig, where I was pleased to see the old Castle, and old servants solicitous and anxious to be civil. What visions does not this magnificent old house bring back to me! The exterior is much improved since I first knew it. It was then in the state of dilapidation to which it had been abandoned by the celebrated old Q., and was indeed scarce wind and water tight. Then the whole wood had been felled, and the outraged castle stood in the midst of waste and desolation, excepting a few scattered old stumps, not judged worth the cutting. Now, the whole has been, ten or twelve years since, completely replanted, and the scattered seniors look as graceful as fathers surrounded by their children. The face of this immense estate has been scarcely less wonderfully changed. The scrambling tenants, who held a precarious tenure of lease under the Duke of Queensberry, at the risk (as actually took place) of losing their possession at his death, have given room to skilful and labouring men, working their farms regularly, and enjoying comfortable houses and their farms at a fair rent, which is enough to forbid idleness, but not enough to overpower industry.

August 25. — Here are Lord and Lady Home, Charles Douglas, Lord and Lady Charlotte Stopford. I grieve to say the last, though as beautiful as ever, is extremely thin, and looks delicate. The Duke himself has grown up into a graceful and apparently strong young man, and received us most kindly. I think he will be well qualified to sustain his difficult and important task. The heart is excellent, so are the talents, — good sense and knowledge of the world, picked up at one of the great English schools (and it is one of their most important results), will prevent him from being deceived; and with perfect goodnature, he has a natural sense of his own situation, which will keep him from associating with unworthy companions. God bless him!

His father and I loved each other well, and his beautiful mother had as much of the angel as is permitted to walk this earth. I see the balcony from which they welcomed poor Charlotte and me, long ere the ascent was surmounted, streaming out their white handkerchiefs from the battlements. There were four merry people that day — now one sad individual is all that remains. Singula praedantur anni. I had a long walk to-day through the new plantation, the Duchess's Walk by the Nith, *etc.* (formed by Prior's Kitty young and gay); fell in with the ladies, but their donkeys outwalked me — a flock of sheep afterwards outwalked me, and I begin to think, on my conscience, that a snail put in training might soon outwalk me. I must lay the old salve to the old sore, and be thankful for being able to walk at all.

Nothing was written to-day, my writing-desk having been forgot at Parkgate, but Tom Crighton kindly fetched it up to-day, so something more or less may be done tomorrow morning — and now to dress.

[Bittock's Bridge,] August 26. — We took our departure from the friendly halls of Drumlanrig this morning after breakfast and leave-taking. I trust this young nobleman will be

> "A hedge about his friends,
> A hackle to his foes."

I would have him not quite so soft-natured as his grandfather, whose kindness sometimes mastered his excellent understanding. His father had a temper which better lumped with my humour. Enough of ill-nature to keep your goodnature from being abused is no bad ingredient in their disposition who have favours to bestow.

In coming from Parkgate here I intended to accomplish a purpose which I have for some years entertained, of visiting Lochwood, the ancient seat of the Johnstones, of which King James said, when he visited it, that the man who built it must have been a thief in his heart. It rained heavily, however, which prevented my making this excursion, and indeed I rather overwalked myself yesterday, and have occasion for rest.

> "So sit down, Robin, and rest thee."

Abbotsford, August 27. — To-day we journeyed through the hills and

amongst the storms; the weather rather bullying than bad. We viewed the Grey Mare's Tail, and I still felt confident in crawling along the ghastly bank by which you approach the fall. I will certainly get some road of application to Mr. Hope Johnstone, to pray him to make the place accessible. We got home before halfpast five, having travelled forty miles.

Blair-Adam, August 28. — Set off with Walter and Jane at seven o'clock, and reached this place in the middle of dinner-time. By some of my not unusual blunders we had come a day before we were expected. Luckily, in this ceremonious generation, there are still houses where such blunders only cause a little raillery, and Blair-Adam is one of them. My excellent friend is in high health and spirits, to which the presence of Sir Frederick adds not a little. His lady is here — a beautiful woman, whose countenance realises all the poetic dreams of Byron. There is certainly [a] something of full maturity of beauty which seems framed to be adoring and adored, and it is to be found in the full dark eye, luxuriant tresses, and rich complexion of Greece, and not among the pale unripened beauties of the north. What sort of a mind this exquisite casket may contain is not so easily known. She is anxious to please, and willing to be pleased, and, with her striking beauty, cannot fail to succeed.

August 29. — To-day we designed to go to Lochore. But "heigho! the wind and the rain." Besides Mrs. and Admiral Adam, Mrs. Loch, and Miss Adam, I find here Mr. Impey, son of that Sir Elijah celebrated in Indian history. He has himself been in India, but has, with a great deal of sense and observation, much better address than always falls to the share of the Eastern adventurer. The art of quiet and entertaining conversation, which is always easy as well as entertaining, is chiefly known in England. In Scotland we are pedantic and wrangle, or we run away with the harrows on some topic we chance to be discursive upon. In Ireland they have too much vivacity, and are too desirous to make a show, to preserve the golden mean. They are the Gascons of Britain. George Ellis was the best converser I ever knew; his patience and good breeding made me often ashamed of myself going off at score upon some favourite topic. Richard Sharp is so celebrated for this peculiar gift as to be generally called Conversation Sharp. The worst of this talent is that it seems to lack sincerity. You never know what are the real sentiments of a good converser, or at least it is very difficult to

discover to what extent he entertains them. His politeness is inconsistent with energy. For forming a good converser, good taste and extensive information and accomplishment are the principal requisites, to which must be added an easy and elegant delivery and a well-toned voice. I think the higher order of genius is not favourable to this talent.

Mrs. Impey, an intelligent person, likes music, and particularly Scotch airs, which few people play better than Mrs. Lockhart and Miss Louisa Adam. Had a letter from Mr. William Upcott, London Institution, proposing to me to edit an edition of Garrick's Correspondence, which I declined by letter of this day. Thorough decided downfall of rain. Nothing for it but patience and proof-sheets.

August 30. — The weather scarce permitted us more licence than yesterday, yet we went down to Lochore, and Walter and I perambulated the property, and discussed the necessity of a new road from the southwest, also that of planting some willows along the ditches in the low grounds. Returned to Blair-Adam to dinner.

Abbotsford, August 31. — Left Blair at seven in the morning. Transacted business with Cadell and Ballantyne, but our plans will, I think, be stopped or impeded by the operations before the Arbiter, Mr. Irving, who leans more to the side of the opposite [party] than I expected. I have a letter from Gibson, found on my arrival at Abbotsford, which gives rather a gloomy account of that matter. It seems strange that I am to be bound to write for men who have broken every bargain with me.

Arrived at Abbotsford at eight o'clock at night.

September

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September 1. — Awaked with a headache, which the reconsideration of Gibson's news did not improve. We save Bonaparte however, and that is a great thing. I will not be downcast about it, let the worst come that can; but I wish I saw that worst. It is the devil to be struggling forward, like a man in the mire, and making not an inch by your exertions, and such seems to be my fate. Well! I have much to comfort me, and I will take comfort. If there be further wrath to come, I shall be glad that I bear it alone. Poor Charlotte was too much softened by prosperity to look adverse circumstances courageously in the face. Anne is young, and has Sophia and Jane to trust to for assistance.

September 2. — Wrote this morning, but only two pages or thereabouts. At twelve o'clock set out with Anne and Walter to visit at Makerstoun, but the road between Makerstoun and Merton being very bad, we drove, I dare say, thirty miles in going and coming, by a circuitous route, and only got home at halfpast seven at night. Saw Lady Brisbane Makdougall, but not Sir Thomas. Thought of old Sir Henry and his older father Sir George. Received a box of Australian seeds, forwarded by Andrew Murray, now head-gardener to the Governor, whom I detected a clever boy, among my labourers in 1812, and did a little for him. It is pleasant to see men thrive and be grateful at the same time, so good luck to "Andrew Mora," as we called him.

September 3. — Made up my necessary task for yesterday and to-day also, but not more, writing very heavily. Cousin Archie Swinton came to dinner. We had a dish of cousinred of course — and of auld lang syne.

September 4. — Archie Swinton left us this morning early. I wrote from seven to halfpast two; but, partly that I had five proof-sheets to correct, partly that like old John Fraser "I was not very cleever to-day." I made out but a page and a half.

September 5. — Wrote task and half a page more. Terry arrived and

brought with him a Mr. Bruce, from Persia, with an introduction, forsooth, from Mr. Blackwood. I will move a quo warranto against this species of introduction; and the good gentleman is to be here, he informs me, for two days. He is a dark, foreign-looking man, of small stature, and rather blunt manners, which may be easily accounted for by his having been in the East for thirty years. He has a considerable share of information, and made good play after dinner.

September 6. — Walter being to return to Ireland for three weeks set off to-day, and has taken Surtees and Charles with him. I fear this is but a wild plan, but the prospect seemed to make them so happy that I could not find in my heart to say "No" sufficiently peremptorily. So away they all went this morning to be as happy as they can. Youth is a fine carver and gilder. Went down to Huntly Burn, and dawdled about while waiting for the carriage to bring me back. Mr. Bruce and Colonel Ferguson pottered away about Persia and India, and I fell asleep by the fireside. Here is a fine spate of work — a day diddled away, and nothing to show for it! I must write letters now, there is nothing else for it. But — yaw — yaw — I must take a nap first. I had a letter from Jem Ballantyne, plague on him! full of remonstrance, deep and solemn, upon the carelessness of Bonaparte. The rogue is right too. But as to correcting my style to the

> "Jemmy jemmy linkum feedle"

tune of what is called fine writing, I'll be d — — d if I do. Drew £12 in favour of Charles for his Irish jaunt; same time exhorted him to make himself as expensive to Walter, in the way of eating and drinking, as he could. Mr. and Mrs. Impey arrived to dinner.

September 7. — Mr. Bruce, the bastinadoed, left us this morning promising wine from Shiraz and arms from India. From our joint observation he must be a half-caste, probably half an Arab. He told us of his having been taken by pirates in the Arabian Gulf, and having received two thousand bastinadoes on the soles of his feet, after which he was buried in a heap of dung by way of cure. Though the matter was certainly serious enough to the sufferer, yet it excited our suppressed, or scarce suppressed, mirth. Alas! let never traveller tell any distress which borders on the ludicrous if he desires to excite the sympathy of the audience.

Another thing he mentioned was the mode of seasoning timber for shipbuilding in the Arabian Gulf. They bury it in the sand within water-mark, and leave it exposed to the flux and reflux of the tide for six months at least, but often for twelve or eighteen. The tendency to vegetation which produces the dry-rot is thus prevented effectually, and the ships built of this wood last for twenty years.

We drove to Ashestiel in the morning, after I had written a good task, or nearly so (nay, I lie, it wanted half a page), and passed a pleasant day. Terry read Bobadil in the evening, which he has, I think, improved.

September 8. — I have rubbed up, by collation with Mr. Impey, Sir Frederick Adam's idea of the Greeks. He deeply regrets the present war as premature, undertaken before knowledge and rational education had extended themselves sufficiently. The neighbourhood of the Ionian Islands was fast producing civilisation; and as knowledge is power, it is clear that the example of Europeans, and the opportunities of education thereby afforded, must soon have given them an immense superiority over the Turk. This premature war has thrown all back into a state of barbarism. It was precipitated by the agents of Russia. Sir Frederick spoke most highly of Byron, the soundness of his views, the respect in which he was held — his just ideas of the Grecian cause and character, and the practical and rational wishes which he formed for them. Singular that a man whose conduct in his own personal affairs had been anything but practical should be thus able to stand by the helm of a sinking state! Sir Frederick thinks he might have done much for them if he had lived. The rantipole friends of liberty, who go about freeing nations with the same success which Don Quixote had in redressing wrongs, have, of course, blundered everything which they touched. The Impeys left us to-day, and Captain Hugh Scott and his lady arrived. Task is bang-up.

September 9. — I begin to fear Nap. will swell to seven volumes. I have a long letter from James B. threatening me with eight; but that is impossible. The event of his becoming Emperor is the central point of his history. Now I have just attained it, and it is the centre of the third volume. Two volumes and a half may be necessary to complete the whole. Walked with Hugh Scott up the Rhymer's Glen, and round by the lake. Mr. Bainbridge of

Gattonside House dined, also Colonel Ferguson. Was bang up to my task again this day.

September 10. — Corrected proof-sheets in the morning, then immured myself to write, the more willingly that the day seemed showery; but I found myself obliged to read and study the map so much that I did not get over half a sheet written. Walked with Hugh Scott through Haxell Cleuch. Great pleasure to show the young wood to any who understands them well.

September 11. — Jane and her mother go into town this morning, and Anne with them, to look out a lodging for us during the time we must pass in town. It seems strange to have this to do, having had always my father's house or my own to go to. But — Sic transit gloria mundi.

Well, it is halfpast twelve o'clock, and at length having regulated all disappointments as to posthorses, and sent three or four servants three or four miles to remedy blunders, which a little forethought might have prevented, my family and guests are separated —

"Like youthful steers let loose, east, north, and south."

Miss Miln goes to Stirling; the Scotts to Lessudden; Anne and Jane to Edinburgh; and I am left alone. I must needs go up and see some operations about the spring which supplies us with water, though I calculate my presence is not very necessary. So now — to work — to work.

But I reckoned without my host, or, I should rather say, without my guest. Just as I had drawn in my chair, fitted a new "Bramah" on the stick, and was preparing to feague it away, I had a call from the son of an old friend, Mr. Waldie of Henderland. As he left me, enter young Whytbank and Mr. Auriol Hay of the Lyon Office, and we had a long armorial chat together, which lasted for some time — then the library was to be looked at, *etc.* So, when they went away, I had little better to do than to walk up to the spring which they are digging, and to go to my solitary dinner on my return.

September 12. — Notwithstanding what is above said, I made out my task yesterday, or nearly so, by working after dinner. After all, these interruptions are not such bad things; they make a man keen of the work which he is withheld from, and differ in that point much from the indulgence of an indisposition to labour in your own mind, which increases

by indulgence. Les fâcheux seldom interrupt your purpose absolutely and entirely — you stick to it for contradiction's sake.

Well, I visited the spring in the morning, and completed my task afterwards. As I slept for a few minutes in my chair, to which I am more addicted than I could wish, I heard, as I thought, my poor wife call me by the familiar name of fondness which she gave me. My recollections on waking were melancholy enough. These be

> "The airy tongues that syllable men's names."

All, I believe, have some natural desire to consider these unusual impressions as bodements of good or evil to come. But alas! this is a prejudice of our own conceit. They are the empty echoes of what is past, not the foreboding voice of what is to come.

I dined at the Club to-day at Selkirk, and acted as croupier. There were eighteen dined; young men chiefly, and of course young talk. But so it has been, will be, and must be.

September 13. — Wrote my task in the morning, and thereafter had a letter from that sage Privy Councillor and booby of a Baronet, — — . This unutterable idiot proposes to me that I shall propose to the Dowager Duchess of — — , and offers his own right honourable intervention to bring so beautiful a business to bear. I am struck dumb with the assurance of his folly — absolutely mute and speechless — and how to prevent him making me further a fool is not easy, for the wretch has left me no time to assure him of the absurdity of what he proposes; and if he should ever hint at such a piece of d — — d impertinence, what must the lady think of my conceit or of my feelings! I will write to his present quarters, however, that he may, if possible, have warning not to continue this absurdity.

Dined at Major Scott, my cousin's, where was old Lord Buchan. He, too, is a prince of Bores, but age has tamed him a little, and like the giant Pope in the Pilgrim's Progress, he can only sit and grin at Pilgrims as they go past, and is not able to cast a fank over them as formerly. A few quiet puns seem his most formidable infliction nowadays.

September 14. — I should not have forgotten, among the memorabilia of yesterday, that Mr. Nasmyth, the dentist, and his family called, and I showed them the lions, for truly he that has rid a man of the toothache is

well entitled to command a part of his time. Item, two young Frenchmen made their way to our sublime presence in guerdon of a laudatory copy of French verses sent up the evening before, by way of "Open Sesame," I suppose. I have not read them, nor shall I. No man that ever wrote a line despised the pap of praise so heartily as I do. There is nothing I scorn more, except those who think the ordinary sort of praise or censure is matter of the least consequence. People have almost always some private view of distinguishing themselves, or of gratifying their curiosity — some point, in short, to carry, with which you have no relation, when they take the trouble to praise you. In general, it is their purpose to get the person praised to puff away in return. To me their rank praises no more make amends for their bad poetry than tainted butter would pass off stale fish.

September 15. — Many proofs to correct and dates to compare. What signify dates in a true story? I was fidgety after breakfast, owing to perusing some advices from J. Gibson, poor fellow. I will not be discouraged, come of things what will. However, I could not write continuously, but went out by starts, and amused myself by cutting trees in the avenue. Thus I dawdled till Anne and Jane came home with merry faces, and raised my spirits of course. After tea I e'en took heart of grace and finished my task, as I now do this day's journal.

September 16. — Worked hard to-day, and in morning and evening made out five pages and a half, as much perhaps as one should attempt, yet I was not overworked. On the contrary, went out with Tom about one o'clock and cut trees, etc., to clear the avenue; and favour the growth of such trees as are designed for standards. I received visits too — the Laird of Bemerside, who had been for nine years in Italy with his family — also the Laird of Kippielaw. Anne and Jane drove up and called at the Haining.

I expected James Ballantyne to dinner as he proposed, but the worthy typographer appeared not. He is sometimes inaccurate in keeping such appointments, which is not according to the "Academy of compliments." But in the letter which announced his intended visit, he talked of having received himself a visit from the Cholera Morbus. I shall be very sorry if so unwelcome a guest be the cause of the breach of his appointment.

September 17. — Rather surprised with a letter from Lord Melville,

informing me that he and Mr. Peel had put me into the Commission for inquiring into the condition of the Colleges in Scotland. I know little on the subject, but I dare say as much as some of the official persons who are inserted of course. The want of efficient men is the reason alleged. I must of course do my best, though I have little hope of being useful, and the time it will occupy is half ruinous to me, to whom time is everything. Besides, I suppose the honour is partly meant as an act of grace for Malachi. I shall never repent of that escapade, although it offended persons for the time whose good opinion I value. J.B. continues ill at Teviot Grove, as they call it. I am a little anxious about him.

I finished my task and an extra page — hope to do another before supper. Accomplished the said diligent purpose.

September 18. — Rainy and gloomy — that small sifting rain driving on an eastern gale which intermits not. Wrote letters to Lord Melville, etc, and agreed to act under the Commission. Settled to be at Melville Castle, Saturday 24th. I fear this will interfere consumedly with business. I corrected proof-sheets, and wrote a good deal, but intend to spend the rest of the day in reading and making notes. No bricks to be made without straw.

[Jedburgh,] September 19. — Circuit. Went to poor Mr. Shortreed's, and regretted bitterly the distress of the family, though they endeavoured to bear it bravely, and to make my reception as comfortable and even cheerful as possible. My old friend R.S. gave me a ring found in a grave at the Abbey, to be kept in memory of his son. I will certainly preserve it with especial care.

Many trifles at circuit, chiefly owing to the cheap whisky, as they were almost all riots. One case of assault on a deaf and dumb woman. She was herself the chief evidence; but being totally without education, and having, from her situation, very imperfect notions of a Deity, and a future state, no oath could be administered. Mr. Kinniburgh, teacher of the deaf and dumb, was sworn interpreter, together with another person, a neighbour, who knew the accidental or conventional signs which the poor thing had invented for herself, as Mr. K. was supposed to understand the more general or natural signs common to people in such a situation. He went through the task with much address, and it was wonderful to see them make themselves

intelligible to each other by mere pantomime. Still I did [not] consider such evidence as much to be trusted to in a criminal case. Several previous interviews had been necessary between the interpreter and the witness, and this is very much like getting up a story. Some of the signs, brief in themselves, of which Mr. K. gave long interpretations, put me in mind of Lord Burleigh in the Critic: "Did he mean all this by the shake of the head?" "Yes, if he shook his head as I taught him." The man was found not guilty. Mr. K. told us of a pupil of his whom he restored, as it may be said, to humanity, and who told him that his ideas of another world were that some great person in the skies lighted up the sun in the morning as he saw his mother light her fire, and the stars in the evening as she kindled a lamp. He said the witness had ideas of truth and falsehood, which was, I believe, true; and that she had an idea of punishment in a future state, which I doubt. He confessed she could not give any guess at its duration, whether temporary or eternal. I should like to know if Mr. K. is in that respect much wiser than his pupils. Dined, of course, with Lord Mackenzie, the Judge.

September 20. — Waked after a restless night, in which I dreamed of poor Tom Shortreed. Breakfasted with the Rev. Dr. Somerville. This venerable gentleman is one of the oldest of the literary brotherhood — I suppose about eighty-seven, and except a little deafness quite entire. Living all his life in good society as a gentleman born — and having, besides, professional calls to make among the poor — he must know, of course, much that is curious concerning the momentous changes which have passed under his eyes. He talks of them accordingly, and has written something on the subject, but has scarce the force necessary to seize on the most striking points, "palabras, neighbour Verges," — gifts which God gives. The bowl that rolls easiest along the green goes furthest, and has least clay sticking to it. I have often noticed that a kindly, placid good-humour is the companion of longevity, and, I suspect, frequently the leading cause of it. Quick, keen, sharp observation, with the power of contrast and illustration, disturbs this easy current of thought. My good friend, the venerable Doctor, will not, I think, die of that disease.

Called at Nesbit Mill on my cousin Charles. His wife received me better than I deserved, for I have been a sad neglectful visitor. She has a very pleasant countenance.

Some of the Circuit lawyers dined here, namely R. Dundas, Borthwick, the facetious Peter Robertson, Mr. R. Adam Dundas, and with them Henry Scott of Harden.

September 21. — Our party breakfasted late, and I was heavy-headed, and did not rise till eight. Had drank a little more wine than usual, but as our friend Othello says, "that's not much." However, we dawdled about till near noon ere all my guests left me. Then I walked a little and cut some wood. Read afterwards. I can't get on without it. How did I get on before? — that's a secret. Mr. Thomas Tod and his wife came to dine. We talked of old stories and got over a pleasant evening.

September 22. — Still no writing. We have materials to collect. D — -n you, Mother Duty, hold your tongue! I tell you, you know nothing of the matter. Besides, I corrected five sheets. I wish you had to do with some other people, just to teach you the difference. I grant that the day being exquisite I went and thinned out the wood from the north front of the house. Read and noted a great deal.

September 23. — Wrought in the morning, but only at reading and proofs. That cursed battle of Jena is like to cost me more time than it did Bonaparte to gain it. I met Colonel Ferguson about one, to see his dogs run. It is a sport I have loved well, but now, I know not why, I find it little interesting. To be sure I used to gallop, and that I cannot now do. We had good sport, however, and killed five hares. I felt excited during the chase, but the feeling was but momentary. My mind was immediately turned to other remembrances, and to pondering upon the change which had taken place in my own feelings. The day was positively heavenly, and the wild hillside, with our little coursing party, was beautiful to look at. Yet I felt like a man come from the dead, looking with indifference on that which interested him while living. So it must be

> "When once life's day is near the gloaming."

We dined at Huntly Burn. Kind and comfortable as usual.

September 24. — I made a rally to-day and wrote four pages, or nearly. Never stirred abroad the whole day, but was made happy after dinner by the

return of Charles and Surtees full of their Irish jaunt, and happy as young men are with the change of scene. Tomorrow I must go to Melville Castle. I wonder what I can do or say about these Universities. One thing occurs — the distribution of bursaries only ex meritis. That is, I would have the presentations continue in the present patrons, but exact that those presented should be qualified by success in their literary attainments and distinction acquired at school to hold these scholarships. This seems to be following out the idea of the founders, who, doubtless, intended the furthering of good literature. To give education to dull mediocrity is a flinging of the children's bread to dogs — it is sharpening a hatchet on a razor-strop, which renders the strop useless, and does no good to the hatchet. Well, something we will do.

September 25. — Morning spent in making up proofs and copy. Set out for Melville Castle with Jane, who goes on to her mother at Edinburgh.

Found Lord and Lady M. in great distress. Their son Robert is taken ill at a Russian town about 350 miles from Moscow — dangerously ill. The distance increases the extreme distress of the parents, who, however, bore it like themselves. I was glad to spend a day upon the old terms with such old friends, and believe my being with them, even in this moment of painful suspense, as it did not diminish the kindness of my reception, certainly rather seemed to divert them from the cruel subject.

Dr. Nicoll, Principal of St. Andrews, dined — a very gentlemanlike sensible man. We spoke of the visitation, of granting degrees, of public examinations, of abolishing the election of professors by the Senatus Academicus (a most pregnant source of jobs), and much beside — but all desultory — and Lord M. had either nothing particular to say to me, or was too much engrossed with his family distress to enter upon it. He proposes to be here in the end of October.

September 26. — Returned to Abbotsford after breakfast. Here is a cool thing of my friend J.W. C[roker]. The Duke of Clarence, dining at the Pavilion with the King, happened by choice or circumstance to sit lower than usual at the table, and being at that time on bad terms with the Board of Admiralty, took an opportunity to say, that were he king he would do all that away, and assume the office of Lord High Admiral. "Your R.H. may act with great prudence," said C[roker]. "The last monarch who did so was

James II." Presently after H.M. asked what they were talking of. "It's only his R.H. of C," answered C[roker], "who is so condescending as to tell us what he will do when he is king."

A long letter from R.P. Gillies. I wonder how even he could ask me to announce myself as the author of Annotations on German Novels which he is to write.

September 27. — A day of honest labour — but having much to read, proofs to send off, etc., I was only able to execute my task by three o'clock P.M. Then I went to direct the cutting of wood along the road in front of the house. Dined at Chiefswood with Captain and Mrs. Hamilton, Lady Lucy Whitmore, their guest, and neighbours from Gattonside and Huntly Burn.

September 28. — Another hard brush, and finished four pages by twelve o'clock, then drove out to Cowdenknowes, for a morning visit. The house is ancient and curious, though modernised by vile improvements of a modern roof and windows. The inhabited part has over the principal door the letters S.I.H.V.I.H. The first three indicate probably Sir John Hume, but what are we to make of the rest? I will look at them more heedfully one day. There is a large room said to have been built for the reception of Queen Mary; if so, it has been much modernised. The date on the door is 1576, which would [not] bear out the tradition. The last two letters probably signify Lady Hume's name, but what are we to make of the V? Dr. Hume thinks it means Uxor, but why should that word be in Latin and the rest in Scotch?

Returned to dinner, corrected proofs, and hope still to finish another leaf, being in light working humour. Finished the same accordingly.

[Abbotsford,] September 29. — A sort of zeal of working has seized me, which I must avail myself of. No dejection of mind, and no tremor of nerves, for which God be humbly thanked. My spirits are neither low nor high — grave, I think, and quiet — a complete twilight of the mind.

Good news of John Lockhart from Lady Montagu, who most kindly wrote on that interesting topic.

I wrote five pages, nearly a double task, yet wandered for three hours, axe in hand, superintending the thinning of the home planting. That does good too. I feel it give steadiness to my mind. Women, it is said, go mad much seldomer than men. I fancy, if this be true, it is in some degree owing

to the little manual works in which they are constantly employed, which regulate in some degree the current of ideas, as the pendulum regulates the motion of the timepiece. I do not know if this is sense or nonsense, but I am sensible that if I were in solitary confinement, without either the power of taking exercise or employing myself in study, six months would make me a madman or an idiot.

September 30. — Wrote four pages. Honest James Ballantyne came about five. I had been cutting wood for two hours. He brought his child, a remarkably fine boy, wellbred, quiet, and amiable. James and I had a good comfortable chat, the boys being at Gattonside House. I am glad to see him bear up against misfortune like a man. "Bread we shall eat, or white or brown," that's the moral of it, Master Muggins.

October

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October 1. — Wrote my task, then walked from one till halfpast four. Dogs took a hare. They always catch one on Sunday — a Puritan would say the devil was in them. I think I shall get more done this evening. I would fain conclude the volume at the Treaty of Tilsit, which will make it a pretty long one, by the by. J.B. expressed himself much pleased with Nap., which gives me much courage. He is gloomy enough when things are not well. And then I will try something at my Canongate. They talk about the pitcher going to the well; but if it goes not to the well, how shall we get water? It will bring home none when it stands on the shelf, I trow. In literature, as in love, courage is half the battle.

> "The public born to be controlled
> Stoops to the forward and the bold."

October 2. — Wrote my task. Went out at one and wrought in the wood till four. I was made happy by a letter from my nephew, little Walter, as we used to call him, from his age and size, compared to those of his cousin. He has been kindly received at Bombay by the Governor Mountstuart Elphinstone, and by Sir Thomas Bradford. He is taking his ground, I think, prudently, and is likely to get on. Already first Lieutenant of Engineers — that is well to begin with.

Colonel Ferguson, Miss Margaret, and some ladies, friends of theirs, dine, also Mr. and Mrs. Laidlaw, and James Laidlaw, and young Mr. N. Milne.

October 3. — I wrote my task as usual, but, strange to tell, there is a want of paper. I expect some to-day. In the meantime, to avoid all quarrel with Dame Duty, I cut up some other leaves into the usual statutory size. They say of a fowl that if you draw a chalk line on a table, and lay chick-a-diddle down with his bill upon it, the poor thing will imagine himself opposed by an insurmountable barrier, which he will not attempt to cross. Suchlike are onehalf of the obstacles which serve to interrupt our best resolves, and such

is my pretended want of paper. It is like Sterne's want of sous when he went to relieve the Pauvre Honteux.

October 4. — I ought to record with gratitude to God Almighty the continued health of body and mind, which He hath vouchsafed to grant me. I have had of late no accesses either of bile or of nervous affection, and by mixing exercise with literary labour, I have escaped the tremor cordis which on other occasions has annoyed me cruelly. I went to the inspection of the Selkirkshire Yeomanry, by Colonel Thornhill, 7th Hussars. The Colonel is a remarkably fine-looking man, and has a good address. His brow bears token of the fatigues of war. He is a great falconer, and has promised to fly his hawks on Friday for my amusement, and to spend the day at Abbotsford. The young Duke of B. was on the field looking at the corps, most of whom are his tenants. They did very well, and are fine, smart young men, and well mounted. Too few of them though, which is a pity. The exercise is a work which in my time I have loved well.

Finished my task at night.

October 5. — I was thinking this morning that my time glided away in a singularly monotonous manner, like one of those dark grey days which neither promise sunshine nor threaten rain; too melancholy for enjoyment, too tranquil for repining. But this day has brought a change which somewhat shakes my philosophy. I find by a letter from J. Gibson that I may go to London without danger, and if I may, I in a manner must, to examine the papers in the Secretary of State's office about Bon. when at Saint Helena. The opportunity having been offered must be accepted, and yet I had much rather stay at home. Even the prospect of seeing Sophia and Lockhart must be mingled with pain, yet this is foolish too. Lady Hamilton writes me that Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian Minister at Paris, is willing to communicate to me some particulars of Bonaparte's early life. Query — might I not go on there? In for a penny, in for a pound. I intend to take Anne with me, and the pleasure will be great to her, who deserves much at my hand.

October 6. — Charles and his friend Surtees left us this morning.

Went to see Colonel Thornhill's hawks fly. Some part of the amusement is very beautiful, particularly the first flight of the hawks, when they sweep

so beautifully round the company, jingling their bells from time to time, and throwing themselves into the most elegant positions as they gaze about for their prey. But I do not wonder that the impatience of modern times has renounced this expensive and precarious mode of sporting. The hawks are liable to various misfortunes, and are besides addicted to fly away; one of ours was fairly lost for the day, and one or two went off without permission, but returned. We killed a crow and frightened a snipe. There are, however, ladies and gentlemen enough to make a gallant show on the top of Mintlaw Kipps. The falconer made a fine figure — a handsome and active young fellow with the falcon on his wrist. The Colonel was most courteous, and named a hawk after me, which was a compliment. The hawks are not named till they have merited that distinction. I walked about six miles and was not fatigued.

There dined with us Colonel Thornhill, Clifton, young Whytbank, Spencer Stanhope, and his brother, with Miss Tod and my old friend Locker, Secretary to Greenwich Hospital. We did not break up the party till one in the morning, and were very well amused.

October 7. — A weary day of rain. Locker and I chatted from time to time, and I wrought not at Boney, but upon the prose works, of which I will have a volume ready to send in on Monday. I got a letter from John Gibson, with an offer by Longman for Napoleon of ten thousand five hundred guineas, which I have advised them to accept. Also I hear there is some doubt of my getting to London, from the indecision of these foolish Londoners.

I don't care whether I go or no! And yet it is unpleasant to see how one's motions depend on scoundrels like these. Besides, I would like to be there, were it but to see how the cat jumps. One knows nothing of the world, if you are absent from it so long as I have been.

October 8. — Locker left me this morning. He is of opinion the ministry must soon assume another form, but that the Whigs will not come in. Lord Liverpool holds much by Lord Melville — well in point of judgment — and by the Duke of Wellington — still better, but then the Duke is a soldier — a bad education for a statesman in a free country. The Chancellor is also consulted by the Premier on all law affairs. Canning and Huskisson are at the head of the other party, who may be said to have taken the Cabinet by storm, through sheer dint of talent. I should like to see how these

ingredients are working; but by the grace of God, I will take care of putting my finger into the cleft stick.

Locker has promised to get my young cousin Walter Scott on some quarterdeck or other.

Received from Mr. Cadell the second instalment advance of cash on Canongate. It is in English bills and money, in case of my going to town.

October 9. — A gracious letter from Messrs. Abud and Son, bill-brokers, etc.; assure Mr. Gibson that they will institute no legal proceedings against me for four or five weeks. And so I am permitted to spend my money and my leisure to improve the means of paying them their debts, for that is the only use of my present journey. They are Jews: I suppose the devil baits for Jews with a pork griskin. Were I not to exert myself, I wonder where their money is to come from.

A letter from Gillies menacing the world with a foreign miscellany. The plan is a good one, but "he canna haud it," as John Moodie says. He will think all is done when he has got a set of names, and he will find the difficulty consists not in that, but in getting articles. I wrote on the prose works.

Lord and Lady Minto dined and spent the night at Abbotsford.

October 10. — Well, I must prepare for going to London, and perhaps to Paris. The morning frittered away. I slept till eight o'clock, then our guests till twelve; then walked out to direct some alterations on the quarry, which I think may at little expense be rendered a pretty recess. Wordsworth swears by an old quarry, and is in some degree a supreme authority on such points. Rain came on; returned completely wet. I had next the displeasure to find that I had lost the conclusion of vol. v. of Napoleon, seven or eight pages at least, which I shall have to write over again, unless I can find it. Well, as Othello says, "that's not much." My cousin James Scott came to dinner.

I have great unwillingness to set out on this journey; I almost think it ominous; but

> "They that look to freits, my master dear,
> Their freits will follow them."

I will stick to my purpose. Answered a letter from Gillies about establishing a foreign journal; a good plan, but I fear in sorry hands. Of those he names

as his assistants they who can be useful will do little, and the labours of those who are willing to work will rather hold the publication down. I fear it will not do.

I am downhearted about leaving all my things, after I was quietly settled; it is a kind of disrooting that recalls a thousand painful ideas of former happier journeys. And to be at the mercy of these fellows! God help — but rather God bless — man must help himself.

October 11. — We are ingenious self-tormentors. This journey annoys me more than anything of the kind in my life. My wife's figure seems to stand before me, and her voice is in my ears — "Scott, do not go." It half frightens me. Strong throbbing at my heart, and a disposition to be very sick. It is just the effect of so many feelings which had been lulled asleep by the uniformity of my life, but which awaken on any new subject of agitation. Poor, poor Charlotte!! I cannot daub it further. I get incapable of arranging my papers too. I will go out for half-an-hour. God relieve me!

I quelled this hysterica passio by pushing a walk towards Kaeside and back again, but when I returned I still felt uncomfortable, and all the papers I wanted were out of the way, and all those I did not want seemed to place themselves under my fingers; my cash, according to the nature of riches in general, made to itself wings and fled, I verily believe from one hidingplace to another. To appease this insurrection of the papers, I gave up putting my things in order till tomorrow morning.

Dined at Kippielaw with a party of neighbours. They had cigars for me, very politely. But I must break folks off this. I would [not] willingly be like old Dr. Parr, or any such quiz, who has his tastes and whims, forsooth, that must be gratified. So no cigars on the journey.

October 12. — Reduced my rebellious papers to order. Set out after breakfast, and reached Carlisle at eight o'clock at night.

Rokeby Park, October 13. — We were off before seven, and visiting Appleby Castle by the way (a most interesting and curious place), we got to Morritt's about halfpast four, where we had as warm a welcome as one of the warmest hearts in the world could give an old friend. I saw his nephew's wife for the first time, a very pleasing young person. It was great pleasure

to me to see Morritt happy in the midst of his family circle, undisturbed, as heretofore, by the sickness of any dear to him.

On recalling my own recollections during my journey I may note that I found great pleasure in my companion's conversation, as well as in her mode of managing all her little concerns on the road. I am apt to judge of character by good-humour and alacrity in these petty concerns. I think the inconveniences of a journey seem greater to me than formerly; while, on the other hand, the pleasures it affords are rather less. The ascent of Stainmore seemed duller and longer than usual, and Bowes, which used to strike me as a distinguished feature, seemed an ill-formed mass of rubbish, a great deal lower than I had supposed; yet I have seen it twenty times at least. On the other hand, what I lose in my own personal feelings I gain in those of my companion, who shows an intelligent curiosity and interest in what she sees. I enjoy therefore, reflectively, veluti in speculo, the sort of pleasure to which I am now less accessible.

October 14. — Strolled about in the morning with Morritt, and saw his new walk up the Tees, which he is just concocting. Got a pamphlet he has written on the Catholic Question. In 1806 he had other views on that subject, but "live and learn" as they say. One of his squibs against Fox and Grenville's Administration concludes —

> "Though they sleep with the devil, yet theirs is the hope,
> On the scum of old England, to rise with the Pope."

Set off at two, and reached Wetherby to supper and bed.

It was the Corporation of Leeds that by a subscription of £80,000 brought in the anti-Catholic candidate. I remember their subscribing a similar sum to bring in Morritt, if he would have stood.

Saw in Morritt's possession an original miniature of Milton by Cooper — a valuable thing indeed. The pedigree seemed authentic. It was painted for his favourite daughter — had come into possession of some of the Davenants — was then in the Devonshire collection from which it was stolen. Afterwards purchased by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and at his sale by Morritt or his father. The countenance handsome and dignified, with a strong expression of genius, probably the only portrait of Milton taken from the life excepting the drawing from which Faithorne's head is done.

[Grantham,] October 15. — Old England is no changeling. It is long since I travelled this road, having come up to town chiefly by sea of late years, but things seem much the same. One race of red-nosed innkeepers are gone, and their widows, eldest sons, or head-waiters exercise hospitality in their room with the same bustle and importance. Other things seem, externally at least, much the same. The land, however, is much better ploughed; straight ridges everywhere adopted in place of the old circumflex of twenty years ago. Three horses, however, or even four, are often seen in a plough yoked one before the other. Ill habits do not go out at once. We slept at Grantham, where we met with Captain William Lockhart and his lady, bound for London like ourselves.

[Biggleswade,] October 16. — Visited Burleigh this morning; the first time I ever saw that grand place, where there are so many objects of interest and curiosity. The house is magnificent, in the style of James I.'s reign, and consequently in mixed Gothic. Of paintings I know nothing; so shall attempt to say nothing. But whether to connoisseurs, or to an ignorant admirer like myself, the Salvator Mundi, by Carlo Dolci, must seem worth a King's ransom. Lady Exeter, who was at home, had the goodness or curiosity to wish to see us. She is a beauty after my own heart; a great deal of liveliness in the face; an absence alike of form and of affected ease, and really courteous after a genuine and ladylike fashion.

We reached Biggleswade tonight at six, and paused here to wait for the Lockharts. Spent the evening together.

[Pall Mall,] October 17. — Here am I in this capital once more, after an April-weather meeting with my daughter and Lockhart. Too much grief in our first meeting to be joyful; too much pleasure to be distressing — a giddy sensation between the painful and the pleasurable. I will call another subject.

Read over Sir John Chiverton and Brambletye House — novels in what I may surely claim as the style

> "Which I was born to introduce —
> Refined it first, and show'd its use."

They are both clever books; one in imitation of the days of chivalry; the other (by Horace Smith, one of the authors of the Rejected Addresses) dated in the time of the Civil Wars, and introducing historical characters. I read both with great interest during the journey.

I am something like Captain Bobadil who trained up a hundred gentlemen to fight very nearly, if not altogether, as well as myself. And so far I am convinced of this, that I believe were I to publish the Canongate Chronicles without my name (nom de guerre, I mean) the event would be a corollary to the fable of the peasant who made the real pig squeak against the imitator, while the sapient audience hissed the poor grunter as if inferior to the biped in his own language. The peasant could, indeed, confute the long-eared multitude by showing piggy; but were I to fail as a knight with a white and maiden shield, and then vindicate my claim to attention by putting "By the Author of Waverley" in the title, my good friend Publicum would defend itself by stating I had tilted so ill, that my course had not the least resemblance to my former doings, when indisputably I bore away the garland. Therefore I am as firmly and resolutely determined that I will tilt under my own cognisance. The hazard, indeed, remains of being beaten. But there is a prejudice (not an undue one neither) in favour of the original patentee; and Joe Manton's name has borne out many a sorry gun-barrel. More of this tomorrow.

Expense of journey, £4100
Anne, pocket-money, 500
Servants on journey, 200
Cash in purse (silver not reckoned), 200
£5000

This is like to be an expensive journey; but if I can sell an early copy of the work to a French translator, it should bring me home.

Thank God, little Johnnie Hoo, as he calls himself, is looking well, though the poor dear child is kept always in a prostrate posture.

October 18. — I take up again my remarks on imitators. I am sure I mean the gentlemen no wrong by calling them so, and heartily wish they had followed a better model; but it serves to show me veluti in speculo my own errors, or, if you will, those of the style. One advantage, I think, I still have over all of them. They may do their fooling with better grace; but I, like Sir

Andrew Aguecheek, do it more natural. They have to read old books and consult antiquarian collections to get their knowledge; I write because I have long since read such works, and possess, thanks to a strong memory, the information which they have to seek for. This leads to a dragging-in historical details by head and shoulders, so that the interest of the main piece is lost in minute descriptions of events which do not affect its progress. Perhaps I have sinned in this way myself; indeed, I am but too conscious of having considered the plot only as what Bayes calls the means of bringing in fine things; so that in respect to the descriptions, it resembled the string of the showman's box, which he pulls to show in succession Kings, Queens, the Battle of Waterloo, Bonaparte at Saint Helena, Newmarket Races, and White-headed Bob floored by Jemmy from town. All this I may have done, but I have repented of it; and in my better efforts, while I conducted my story through the agency of historical personages, and by connecting it with historical incidents, I have endeavoured to weave them pretty closely together, and in future I will study this more. Must not let the background eclipse the principal figures — the frame overpower the picture.

Another thing in my favour is, that my contemporaries steal too openly. Mr. Smith has inserted in Brambletye House whole pages from Defoe's Fire and Plague of London.

> "Steal! foh! a fico for the phrase —
> Convey, the wise it call!"

When I convey an incident or so, I am at as much pains to avoid detection as if the offence could be indicted in literal fact at the Old Bailey.

But leaving this, hard pressed as I am by these imitators, who must put the thing out of fashion at last, I consider, like a fox at his last shifts, whether there be a way to dodge them, some new device to throw them off, and have a mile or two of free ground, while I have legs and wind left to use it. There is one way to give novelty: to depend for success on the interest of a wellcontrived story. But woe's me! that requires thought, consideration — the writing out a regular plan or plot — above all the adhering to one — which I never can do, for the ideas rise as I write, and bear such a disproportioned extent to that which each occupied at the first concoction, that (cocksnowns!) I shall never be able to take the trouble; and

yet to make the world stare, and gain a new march ahead of them all!!! Well, something we still will do.

> "Liberty's in every blow;
> Let us do or die!"

Poor Rob Burns! to tack thy fine strains of sublime patriotism! Better take Tristram Shandy's vein. Hand me my cap and bells there. So now, I am equipped. I open my raree-show with

> Ma'am, will you walk in, and fal de ral diddle?
> And, sir, will you stalk in, and fal de ral diddle?
> And, miss, will you pop in, and fal de ral diddle?
> And, master, pray hop in, and fal de ral diddle?

Query — How long is it since I heard that strain of dulcet mood, and where or how came I to pick it up? It is not mine, "though by your smiling you seem to say so." Here is a proper morning's work! But I am childish with seeing them all well and happy here; and as I can neither whistle nor sing, I must let the giddy humour run to waste on paper.

Sallied forth in the morning; bought a hat. Met S[ir] W[illiam] K[nighton], from whose discourse I guess that Malachi has done me no prejudice in a certain quarter; with more indications of the times, which I need not set down. Sallied again after breakfast, and visited the Piccadilly ladies. Saw Rogers and Richard Sharp, also good Dr. and Mrs. Hughes, also the Duchess of Buckingham, and Lady Charlotte Bury, with a most beautiful little girl. [Owen] Rees breakfasted, and agreed I should have what the Frenchman has offered for the advantage of translating Napoleon, which, being a hundred guineas, will help my expenses to town and down again.

October 19. — I rose at my usual time, but could not write; so read Southey's History of the Peninsular War. It is very good indeed, — honest English principle in every line; but there are many prejudices, and there is a tendency to augment a work already too long by saying all that can be said of the history of ancient times appertaining to every place mentioned. What care we whether Saragossa be derived from Caesarea Augusta? Could he

have proved it to be Numantium, there would have been a concatenation accordingly.

Breakfasted at Rogers' with Sir Thomas Lawrence; Luttrell, the great London wit; Richard Sharp, *etc.* Sam made us merry with an account of some part of Rose's Ariosto; proposed that the Italian should be printed on the other side for the sake of assisting the indolent reader to understand the English; and complained of his using more than once the phrase of a lady having "voided her saddle," which would certainly sound extraordinary at Apothecaries' Hall. Well, well, Rose carries a dirk too. The morning was too dark for Westminster Abbey, which we had projected.

I went to the Foreign Office, and am put by Mr. Wilmot Horton into the hands of a confidential clerk, Mr. Smith, who promises access to everything. Then saw Croker, who gave me a bundle of documents. Sir George Cockburn promises his despatches and journal. In short, I have ample prospect of materials.

Dined with Mrs. Coutts. Tragi-comic distress of my good friend on the marriage of her presumptive heir with a daughter of Lucien Bonaparte.

October 20. — Commanded down to pass a day at Windsor. This is very kind of His Majesty.

At breakfast, Crofton Croker, author of the Irish Fairy Tales — little as a dwarf, keen-eyed as a hawk, and of very prepossessing manners. Something like Tom Moore. There were also Terry, Allan Cunningham, Newton, and others. Now I must go to work.

Went down to Windsor, or rather to the Lodge in the Forest, which, though ridiculed by connoisseurs, seems to be no bad specimen of a royal retirement, and is delightfully situated. A kind of cottage ornée — too large perhaps for the style — but yet so managed that in the walks you only see parts of it at once, and these well composed and grouping with immense trees. His Majesty received me with the same mixture of kindness and courtesy which has always distinguished his conduct towards me. There was no company beside the royal retinue — Lady C[onyngham], her daughter, and two or three other ladies. After we left table, there was excellent music by the Royal Band, who lay ambushed in a greenhouse adjoining the apartment. The King made me sit beside him and talk a great deal — too much, perhaps — for he has the art of raising one's spirits, and making you forget the retenue which is prudent everywhere, especially at

court. But he converses himself with so much ease and elegance, that you lose thoughts of the prince in admiring the wellbred and accomplished gentleman. He is, in many respects, the model of a British monarch — has little inclination to try experiments on government otherwise than through his ministers — sincerely, I believe, desires the good of his subjects, is kind toward the distressed, and moves and speaks "every inch a king." I am sure such a man is fitter for us than one who would long to head armies, or be perpetually intermeddling with la grande politique. A sort of reserve, which creeps on him daily, and prevents his going to places of public resort, is a disadvantage, and prevents his being so generally popular as is earnestly to be desired. This, I think, was much increased by the behaviour of the rabble in the brutal insanity of the Queen's trial, when John Bull, meaning the best in the world, made such a beastly figure.

October 21. — Walked in the morning with Sir William Knighton, and had much confidential chat, not fit to be here set down, in case of accidents. He undertook most kindly to recommend Charles, when he has taken his degree, to be attached to some of the diplomatic missions, which I think is best for the lad after all. After breakfast went to Windsor Castle, met by appointment my daughters and Lockhart, and examined the improvements going on there under Mr. Wyattville, who appears to possess a great deal of taste and feeling for Gothic architecture. The old apartments, splendid enough in extent and proportion, are paltry in finishing. Instead of being lined with heart of oak, the palace of the British King is hung with paper, painted wainscot colour. There are some fine paintings and some droll ones; among the last are those of divers princes of the House of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, of which Queen Charlotte was descended. They are ill-coloured, orang-outang-looking figures, with black eyes and hook-noses, in old-fashioned uniforms.

We returned to a hasty dinner [in Pall Mall], and then hurried away to see honest Dan Terry's house, called the Adelphi Theatre, where we saw the Pilot, from the American novel of that name. It is extremely popular, the dramatist having seized on the whole story, and turned the odious and ridiculous parts, assigned by the original author to the British, against the Yankees themselves. There is a quiet effrontery in this that is of a rare and peculiar character. The Americans were so much displeased, that they attempted a row — which rendered the piece doubly attractive to the

seamen at Wapping, who came up and crowded the house night after night, to support the honour of the British flag. After all, one must deprecate whatever keeps up illwill betwixt America and the mother country; and we in particular should avoid awakening painful recollections. Our high situation enables us to contemn petty insults and to make advances towards cordiality. I was, however, glad to see honest Dan's theatre as full seemingly as it could hold. The heat was dreadful, and Anne was so very unwell that she was obliged to be carried into Terry's house, — a curious dwelling, no larger than a squirrel's cage, which he has contrived to squeeze out of the vacant spaces of the theatre, and which is accessible by a most complicated combination of staircases and small passages. Here we had rare good porter and oysters after the play, and found Anne much better. She had attempted too much; indeed I myself was much fatigued.

October 22. — This morning Drs. Gooch, Shaw, and Yates breakfasted, and had a consultation about wee Johnnie. They give us great hopes that his health will be established, but the seaside or the country seem indispensable. Mr. Wilmot Horton, Under Secretary of State, also breakfasted. He is full of some new plan of relieving the poor's-rates by encouraging emigration. But John Bull will think this savours of Botany Bay. The attempt to look the poor's-rates in the face is certainly meritorious.

Laboured in writing and marking extracts to be copied from breakfast to dinner, with the exception of an hour spent in telling Johnnie the history of his namesake, Gilpin.

Mr. William and Mrs. Lockhart dined with us. Tom Moore and Sir Thomas Lawrence came in the evening, which made a pleasant soirée. Smoke my French — Egad, it is time to air some of my vocabulary. It is, I find, cursedly musty.

October 23. — Sam Rogers and Moore breakfasted here, and we were very merry fellows. Moore seemed disposed to go to France with us. I visited the Admiralty, and got Sir George Cockburn's journal, which is valuable. Also visited Lady Elizabeth and Sir Charles Stewart. My heart warmed to the former, on account of the old Balcarres connection. Sir Charles and she were very kind and communicative. I foresee I will be embarrassed with more communications than I can well use or trust to, coloured as they must

be by the passions of those who make them. Thus I have a statement from the Duchess d'Escars, to which the Bonapartists would, I dare say, give no credit. If Talleyrand, for example, could be communicative, he must have ten thousand reasons for perverting the truth, and yet a person receiving a direct communication from him would be almost barred from disputing it.

"Sing tantararara, rogues all."

We dined at the Residentiary-house with good Dr. Hughes, Allan Cunningham, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and young Mr. Hughes. Thomas Pringle is returned from the Cape, and called in my absence. He might have done well there, could he have scoured his brain of politics, but he must needs publish a Whig journal at the Cape of Good Hope! He is a worthy creature, but conceited withal — hinc illæ lachrymæ. He brought me some antlers and a skin, in addition to others he had sent to Abbotsford four years since. Crofton Croker made me a present of a small box of curious Irish antiquities containing a gold fibula, *etc. etc.*

October 24 — Laboured in the morning. At breakfast Dr. Holland and Cohen, whom they now call Palgrave, a mutation of names which confused my recollections. Item, Moore. I worked at the Colonial Office pretty hard. Dined with Mr. Wilmot Horton and his beautiful wife, the original of the "She walks in Beauty," etc., of poor Byron.

The conversation is seldom excellent among official people. So many topics are what Otaheitians call taboo. We hunted down a pun or two, which were turned out, like the stag at the Epping Hunt, for the pursuit of all and sundry. Came home early, and was in bed by eleven.

October 25. — Good Mr. Wilson and his wife at breakfast; also Sir Thomas Lawrence. Locker came in afterwards, and made a proposal to me to give up his intended Life of George III. in my favour on cause shown. I declined the proposal, not being of opinion that my genius lies that way, and not relishing hunting in couples. Afterwards went to the Colonial Office, and had Robert Hay's assistance in my inquiries; then to the French Ambassador for my passports. Picked up Sotheby, who endeavoured to saddle me for a review of his polyglot Virgil. I fear I shall scarce convince him that I know nothing of the Latin lingo. Sir R.H. Inglis, Richard Sharp, and other friends

called. We dined at Miss Dumergue's, and spent a part of our soirée at Lydia White's. Tomorrow,

"For France, for France, for it is more than need."

[Calais,] October 26. — Up at five, and in the packet by six. A fine passage — save at the conclusion, while we lay on and off the harbour of Calais. But the tossing made no impression on my companion or me; we ate and drank like dragons the whole way, and were able to manage a good supper and best part of a bottle of Chablis, at the classic Dessein's, who received us with much courtesy.

October 27. — Custom House, etc., detained us till near ten o'clock, so we had time to walk on the Boulevards, and to see the fortifications, which must be very strong, all the country round being flat and marshy. Lost, as all know, by the bloody papist bitch (one must be vernacular when on French ground) Queen Mary, of red-hot memory. I would rather she had burned a score more of bishops. If she had kept it, her sister Bess would sooner have parted with her virginity. Charles I. had no temptation to part with it — it might, indeed, have been shuffled out of our hands during the Civil wars, but Noll would have as soon let monsieur draw one of his grinders; then Charles II. would hardly have dared to sell such an old possession, as he did Dunkirk; and after that the French had little chance till the Revolution. Even then, I think, we could have held a place that could be supplied from our own element, the sea. Cui bono? None, I think, but to plague the rogues. — We dined at Cormont, and being stopped by Mr. Canning having taken up all the posthorses, could only reach Montreuil that night. I should have liked to have seen some more of this place, which is fortified; and as it stands on an elevated and rocky site must present some fine points. But as we came in late and left early, I can only bear witness to good treatment, good supper, good vin de Barsac, and excellent beds.

October 28. — Breakfasted at Abbeville, and saw a very handsome Gothic church, and reached Grandvilliers at night. The house is but secondrate, though lauded by various English travellers for the moderation of its charges, as was recorded in a book presented to us by the landlady. There is no great patriotism in publishing that a traveller thinks the bills moderate; it

serves usually as an intimation to mine host or hostess that John Bull will bear a little more squeezing. I gave my attestation too, however, for the charges of the good lady resembled those elsewhere; and her anxiety to please was extreme. Folks must be harder-hearted than I am to resist the empressement, which may, indeed, be venal, yet has in its expression a touch of cordiality.

[Paris,] October 29. — Breakfasted at Beauvais, and saw its magnificent cathedral — unfinished it has been left, and unfinished it will remain, of course, — the fashion of cathedrals being passed away. But even what exists is inimitable, the choir particularly, and the grand front. Beauvais is called the Pucelle, yet, so far as I can see, she wears no stays — I mean, has no fortifications. On we run, however. Vogue la galère; et voilà nous à Paris, Hotel de Windsor [Rue Rivoli], where we are well lodged. France, so far as I can see, which is very little, has not undergone many changes. The image of war has, indeed, passed away, and we no longer see troops crossing the country in every direction; villages either ruined or hastily fortified; inhabitants sheltered in the woods and caves to escape the rapacity of the soldiers — all this has passed away. The inns are much amended. There is no occasion for that rascally practice of making a bargain — or combien-ing your landlady, before you unharness your horses, which formerly was a matter of necessity. The general taste of the English seems to regulate the travelling — naturally enough, as the hotels, of which there are two or three in each town, chiefly subsist by them. We did not see one French equipage on the road; the natives seem to travel entirely in the Diligence, and doubtless à bon marché; the road was thronged with English.

But in her great features France is the same as ever. An oppressive air of solitude seems to hover over these rich and extended plains, while we are sensible that, whatever is the motive of the desolation, it cannot be sterility. The towns are small, and have a poor appearance, and more frequently exhibit signs of decayed splendour than of thriving and increasing prosperity. The château, the abode of the gentleman, and the villa, the retreat of the thriving négociant, are rarely seen till you come to Beaumont. At this place, which well deserves its name of the fair mount, the prospect improves greatly, and country-seats are seen in abundance; also woods, sometimes deep and extensive, at other times scattered in groves and single trees. Amidst these the oak seldom or never is found; England, lady of the

ocean, seems to claim it exclusively as her own. Neither are there any quantity of firs. Poplars in abundance give a formal air to the landscape. The forests chiefly consist of beeches, with some birches, and the roads are bordered by elms cruelly cropped, pollarded, and switched. The demand for firewood occasions these mutilations. If I could waft by a wish the thinnings of Abbotsford here, it would make a little fortune of itself. But then to switch and mutilate my trees! — not for a thousand francs. Ay, but sour grapes, quoth the fox.

October 30. — Finding ourselves snugly settled in our Hotel, we determined to remain here at fifteen francs per day. We are in the midst of what can be seen, and we are very comfortably fed and lodged.

This morning wet and surly. Sallied, however, by the assistance of a hired coach, and left cards for Count Pozzo di Borgo, Lord Granville, our ambassador, and M. Gallois, author of the History of Venice. Found no one at home, not even the old pirate Galignani, at whose den I ventured to call. Showed my companion the Louvre (which was closed, unluckily), the front of the palace with its courts, and all that splendid quarter which the fame of Paris rests upon in security. We can never do the like in Britain. Royal magnificence can only be displayed by despotic power. In England, were the most splendid street or public building to be erected, the matter must be discussed in Parliament, or perhaps some sturdy cobbler holds out, and refuses to part with his stall, and the whole plan is disconcerted. Long may such impediments exist! But then we should conform to circumstances, and assume in our public works a certain sober simplicity of character, which should point out that they were dictated by utility rather than show. The affectation of an expensive style only places us at a disadvantageous contrast with other nations, and our substitute of brick and plaster for freestone resembles the mean ambition which displays Bristol stones in default of diamonds.

We went to theatre in the evening — Comédie Française the place, Rosemunde the piece. It is the composition of a young man with a promising name — Émile de Bonnechose; the story that of Fair Rosamond. There were some good situations, and the actors in the French taste seemed to me admirable, particularly Mademoiselle Bourgoin. It would be absurd to attempt to criticise what I only half understood; but the piece was well received, and produced a very strong effect. Two or three ladies were

carried out in hysterics; one next to our box was frightfully ill. A Monsieur à belles moustaches — the husband, I trust, though it is likely they were en partie fine — was extremely and affectionately assiduous. She was well worthy of the trouble, being very pretty indeed; the face beautiful, even amidst the involuntary convulsions. The afterpiece was Femme Juge et Partie, with which I was less amused than I had expected, because I found I understood the language less than I did ten or eleven years since. Well, well, I am past the age of mending.

Some of our friends in London had pretended that at Paris I might stand some chance of being encountered by the same sort of tumultuary reception which I met in Ireland; but for this I see no ground. It is a point on which I am totally indifferent. As a literary man I cannot affect to despise public applause; as a private gentleman I have always been embarrassed and displeased with popular clamours, even when in my favour. I know very well the breath of which such shouts are composed, and am sensible those who applaud me to-day would be as ready to toss me tomorrow; and I would not have them think that I put such a value on their favour as would make me for an instant fear their displeasure. Now all this disclamation is sincere, and yet it sounds affected. It puts me in mind of an old woman who, when Carlisle was taken by the Highlanders in 1745, chose to be particularly apprehensive of personal violence, and shut herself up in a closet, in order that she might escape ravishment. But no one came to disturb her solitude, and she began to be sensible that poor Donald was looking out for victuals, or seeking for some small plunder, without bestowing a thought on the fair sex; by and by she popped her head out of her place of refuge with the petty question, "Good folks, can you tell when the ravishing is going to begin?" I am sure I shall neither hide myself to avoid applause, which probably no one will think of conferring, nor have the meanness to do anything which can indicate any desire of ravishment. I have seen, when the late Lord Erskine entered the Edinburgh theatre, papers distributed in the boxes to mendicate a round of applause — the natural reward of a poor player.

October 31. — At breakfast visited by M. Gallois, an elderly Frenchman (always the most agreeable class), full of information, courteous and communicative. He had seen nearly, and remarked deeply, and spoke frankly, though with due caution. He went with us to the Museum, where I

think the Hall of Sculpture continues to be a fine thing; that of Pictures but tolerable, when we reflect upon 1815. A number of great French daubs (comparatively), by David and Gerard, cover the walls once occupied by the Italian chefs-d'oeuvre. Fiat justitia, ruat coelum. We then visited Notre Dame and the Palace of Justice. The latter is accounted the oldest building in Paris, being the work of St. Louis. It is, however, in the interior, adapted to the taste of Louis XIV. We drove over the Pont Neuf, and visited the fine quays, which was all we could make out to-day, as I was afraid to fatigue Anne. When we returned home I found Count Pozzo di Borgo waiting for me, a personable man, inclined to be rather corpulent — handsome features, with all the Corsican fire in his eye. He was quite kind and communicative. Lord Granville had also called, and sent Mr. Jones [his secretary] to invite us to dinner tomorrow. In the evening at the Odéon, where we saw Ivanhoe. It was superbly got up, the Norman soldiers wearing pointed helmets and what resembled much hauberks of mail, which looked very well. The number of the attendants, and the skill with which they were moved and grouped on the stage, were well worthy of notice. It was an opera, and of course the story greatly mangled, and the dialogue in a great part nonsense. Yet it was strange to hear anything like the words which I (then in an agony of pain with spasms in my stomach) dictated to William Laidlaw at Abbotsford, now recited in a foreign tongue, and for the amusement of a strange people. I little thought to have survived the completing of this novel.

November

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November 1. — I suppose the ravishing is going to begin, for we have had the Dames des Halles, with a bouquet like a maypole, and a speech full of honey and oil, which cost me ten francs; also a small worshipper, who would not leave his name, but came seulement pour avoir le plaisir, la félicité *etc. etc.* All this jargon I answer with corresponding blarney of my own, for "have I not licked the black stone of that ancient castle?" As to French, I speak it as it comes, and like Doeg in Absalom and Achitophel —

> " — — dash on through thick and thin,
> Through sense and nonsense, never out nor in."

We went this morning with M. Gallois to the Church of St. Genevieve, and thence to the College Henri IV., where I saw once more my old friend Chevalier. He was unwell, swathed in a turban of nightcaps and a multiplicity of robes de chambre; but he had all the heart and the vivacity of former times. I was truly glad to see the kind old man. We were unlucky in our day for sights, this being a high festival — All Souls' Day. We were not allowed to scale the steeple of St. Genevieve, neither could we see the animals at the Jardin des Plantes, who, though they have no souls, it is supposed, and no interest of course in the devotions of the day, observe it in strict retreat, like the nuns of Kilkenny. I met, however, one lioness walking at large in the Jardin, and was introduced. This was Madame de Souza, the authoress of some wellknown French romances of a very classical character, I am told, for I have never read them. She must have been beautiful, and is still well-looked. She is the mother of the handsome Count de Flahault, and had a very well-looking daughter with her, besides a son or two. She was very agreeable. We are to meet again. The day becoming decidedly rainy, we returned along the Boulevards by the Bridge of Austerlitz, but the weather was so indifferent as to spoil the fine show.

We dined at the Ambassador's — Lord Granville, formerly Lord Leveson Gower. He inhabits the same splendid house which Lord Castlereagh had in 1815, namely, Numero 30, Rue du Fauxbourg St. Honoré. It once belonged to Pauline Borghese, and if its walls could speak,

they might tell us mighty curious stories. Without their having any tongue, they spoke to my feelings "with most miraculous organ." In these halls I had often seen and conversed familiarly with many of the great and powerful, who won the world by their swords, and divided it by their counsel.

Here I saw very much of poor Lord Castlereagh — a man of sense, presence of mind, courage, and fortitude, which carried him through many an affair of critical moment, when finer talents might have stuck in the mire. He had been, I think, indifferently educated, and his mode of speaking being far from logical or correct, he was sometimes in danger of becoming almost ridiculous, in spite of his lofty presence, which had all the grace of the Seymours, and his determined courage. But then he was always up to the occasion, and upon important matters was an orator to convince, if not to delight, his hearers. He is gone, and my friend Stanhope also, whose kindness this town so strongly recalls. It is remarkable they were the only persons of sense and credibility who both attested supernatural appearances on their own evidence, and both died in the same melancholy manner. I shall always tremble when any friend of mine becomes visionary.

I have seen in these rooms the Emperor Alexander, Platoff, Schwarzenberg, old Blucher, Fouché, and many a maréchal whose truncheon had guided armies — all now at peace, without subjects, without dominion, and where their past life, perhaps, seems but the recollection of a feverish dream. What a group would this band have made in the gloomy regions described in the Odyssey! But to lesser things. We were most kindly received by Lord and Lady Granville, and met many friends, some of them having been guests at Abbotsford; among these were Lords Ashley and Morpeth — there were also Charles Ellis (Lord Seaford now), cum plurimis aliis. Anne saw for the first time an entertainment à la mode de France, where the gentlemen left the parlour with the ladies. In diplomatic houses it is a good way of preventing political discussion, which John Bull is always apt to introduce with the second bottle. We left early, and came home at ten, much pleased with Lord and Lady Granville's kindness, though it was to be expected, as our recommendations came from Windsor.

November 2. — Another gloomy day — a pize upon it! — and we have settled to go to Saint Cloud, and dine, if possible, with the Drummonds at

Auteuil. Besides, I expect poor W.R. S[pencer] to breakfast. There is another thought which depresses me.

Well — but let us jot down a little politics, as my book has a pretty firm lock. The Whigs may say what they please, but I think the Bourbons will stand. Gallois, no great Royalist, says that the Duke of Orleans lives on the best terms with the reigning family, which is wise on his part, for the golden fruit may ripen and fall of itself, but it would be dangerous to

> "Lend the crowd his arm to shake the tree."

The army, which was Bonaparte's strength, is now very much changed by the gradual influence of time, which has removed many, and made invalids of many more. The citizens are neutral, and if the King will govern according to the Charte, and, what is still more, according to the habits of the people, he will sit firm enough, and the constitution will gradually attain more and more reverence as age gives it authority, and distinguishes it from those temporary and ephemeral governments, which seemed only set up to be pulled down. The most dangerous point in the present state of France is that of religion. It is, no doubt, excellent in the Bourbons to desire to make France a religious country; but they begin, I think, at the wrong end. To press the observances and ritual of religion on those who are not influenced by its doctrines is planting the growing tree with its head downwards. Rites are sanctified by belief; but belief can never arise out of an enforced observance of ceremonies; it only makes men detest what is imposed on them by compulsion. Then these Jesuits, who constitute emphatically an imperium in imperio, labouring first for the benefit of their own order, and next for that of the Roman See — what is it but the introduction into France of a foreign influence, whose interest may often run counter to the general welfare of the kingdom?

We have enough of ravishment. M. Meurice writes me that he is ready to hang himself that we did not find accommodation at his hotel; and Madame Mirbel came almost on her knees to have permission to take my portrait. I was cruel; but, seeing her weeping-ripe, consented she should come tomorrow and work while I wrote. A Russian Princess Galitzin, too, demands to see me in the heroic vein; "Elle vouloit traverser les mers pour aller voir S.W.S.," and offers me a rendezvous at my hotel. This is precious tomfoolery; however, it is better than being neglected like a fallen sky-rocket, which seemed like to be my fate last year.

We went to Saint Cloud with my old friend Mr. Drummond, now at a pretty maison de campagne at Auteuil. Saint Cloud, besides its unequalled views, is rich in remembrances. I did not fail to revisit the Orangerie, out of which Bon. expelled the Council of [Five Hundred]. I thought I saw the scoundrels jumping the windows, with the bayonets at their rumps. What a pity the house was not two stories high! I asked the Swiss some questions on the locale, which he answered with becoming caution, saying, however, that "he was not present at the time." There are also new remembrances. A separate garden, laid out as a playground for the royal children, is called Il Trocadero, from the siege of Cadiz . But the Bourbons should not take military ground — it is firing a pop-gun in answer to a battery of cannon.

All within the house is changed. Every trace of Nap. or his reign totally done away, as if traced in sand over which the tide has passed. Moreau and Pichegru's portraits hang in the royal antechamber. The former has a mean look; the latter has been a strong and stern-looking man. I looked at him, and thought of his death-struggles. In the guardroom were the heroes of La Vendée — Charette with his white bonnet, the two La Rochejacqueleins, Lescure, in an attitude of prayer, Stofflet, the gamekeeper, with others.

We dined at Auteuil. Mrs. Drummond, formerly the beautiful Cecilia Telfer, has lost her looks, but kept her kind heart. On our return, went to the Italian opera, and saw Figaro. Anne liked the music; to me it was all caviare. A Mr. — — — dined with us; sensible, liberal in his politics, but well informed and candid.

November 3. — Sat to Mad. Mirbel — Spencer at breakfast. Went out and had a long interview with Marshal Macdonald, the purport of which I have put down elsewhere. Visited Princess Galitzin, and also Cooper, the American novelist. This man, who has shown so much genius, has a good deal of the manner, or want of manner, peculiar to his countrymen. He proposed to me a mode of publishing in America by entering the book as [the] property of a citizen. I will think of this. Every little helps, as the tod says, when, *etc.* At night at the Theatre de Madame, where we saw two petit pieces, Le Mariage de Raison, and Le plus beau jour de ma vie — both excellently played. Afterwards at Lady Granville's rout, which was as splendid as any I ever saw — and I have seen beaucoup dans ce genre. A great number of ladies of the first rank were present, and if honeyed words from pretty lips could surfeit, I had enough of them. One can swallow a

great deal of whipped cream, to be sure, and it does not hurt an old stomach.

November 4. — Anne goes to sit to Mad. Mirbel. I called after ten, Mr. Cooper and Gallois having breakfasted with me. The former seems quite serious in desiring the American attempt. I must, however, take care not to give such a monopoly as to prevent the American public from receiving the works at the prices they are accustomed to. I think I may as well try if the thing can be done.

After ten I went with Anne to the Tuileries, where we saw the royal family pass through the Glass Gallery as they went to Chapel. We were very much looked at in our turn, and the King, on passing out, did me the honour to say a few civil words, which produced a great sensation. Mad. la Dauphine and Mad. de Berri curtsied, smiled, and looked extremely gracious; and smiles, bows, and curtsies rained on us like odours, from all the courtiers and court ladies of the train. We were conducted by an officer of the Royal Gardes du Corps to a convenient place in chapel, where we had the pleasure of hearing the grand mass performed with excellent music.

I had a perfect view of the King and royal family. The King is the same in age as I knew him in youth at Holyrood House — debonair and courteous in the highest degree. Mad. Dauphine resembles very much the prints of Marie Antoinette, in the profile especially. She is not, however, beautiful, her features being too strong, but they announce a great deal of character, and the princess whom Bonaparte used to call the man of the family. She seemed very attentive to her devotions. The Duchess of Berri seemed less immersed in the ceremony, and yawned once or twice. She is a lively-looking blonde — looks as if she were good-humoured and happy, by no means pretty, and has a cast with her eyes; splendidly adorned with diamonds, however. After this gave Mad. Mirbel a sitting, where I encountered le général, her uncle, who was chef de l'état major to Bonaparte. He was very communicative, and seemed an interesting person, by no means over much prepossessed in favour of his late master, whom he judged impartially, though with affection.

We came home and dined in quiet, having refused all temptations to go out in the evening; this on Anne's account as well as my own. It is not quite gospel, though Solomon says it — the eye can be tired with seeing, whatever he may allege in the contrary. And then there are so many

compliments. I wish for a little of the old Scotch causticity. I am something like the bee that sips treacle.

November 5. — I believe I must give up my Journal till I leave Paris. The French are literally outrageous in their civilities — bounce in at all hours, and drive one half mad with compliments. I am ungracious not to be so entirely thankful as I ought to this kind and merry people. We breakfasted with Mad. Mirbel, where were the Dukes of FitzJames, and, I think, Duras, goodly company — but all's one for that. I made rather an impatient sitter, wishing to talk much more than was agreeable to Madame. Afterwards we went to the Champs Elysées, where a balloon was let off, and all sorts of frolics performed for the benefit of the bons gens de Paris — besides stuffing them with victuals. I wonder how such a civic festival would go off in London or Edinburgh, or especially in Dublin. To be sure, they would not introduce their shillelahs! But in the classic taste of the French, there were no such gladiatorial doings. To be sure, they have a natural good-humour and gaiety which inclines them to be pleased with themselves, and everything about them.

We dined at the Ambassador's, where was a large party, Lord Morpeth, the Duke of Devonshire, and others — all were very kind. Pozzo di Borgo there, and disposed to be communicative. A large soirée. Home at eleven. These hours are early, however.

November 6. — Cooper came to breakfast, but we were obsédés partout. Such a number of Frenchmen bounced in successively, and exploded, I mean discharged, their compliments, that I could hardly find an opportunity to speak a word, or entertain Mr. Cooper at all. After this we sat again for our portraits. Mad. Mirbel took care not to have any one to divert my attention, but I contrived to amuse myself with some masons finishing a façade opposite to me, who placed their stones, not like Inigo Jones, but in the most lubberly way in the world, with the help of a large wheel, and the application of strength of hand. John Smith of Darnick, and two of his men, would have done more with a block and pulley than the whole score of them. The French seem far behind in machinery. — We are almost eaten up with kindness, but that will have its end. I have had to parry several presents of busts, and so forth. The funny thing was the airs of my little

friend. We had a most affectionate parting — wet, wet cheeks on the lady's side. The pebble-hearted cur shed as few tears as Crab of dogged memory.

Went to Galignani's, where the brothers, after some palaver, offered me £105 for the sheets of Napoleon, to be reprinted at Paris in English. I told them I would think of it. I suppose Treuttel and Wurtz had apprehended something of this kind, for they write me that they had made a bargain with my publisher (Cadell, I suppose) for the publishing of my book in all sorts of ways. I must look into this.

Dined with Marshal Macdonald and a splendid party; amongst others, Marshal Marmont — middle size, stout-made, dark complexion, and looks sensible. The French hate him much for his conduct in 1814, but it is only making him the scapegoat. Also, I saw *Mons.* de Molé, but especially the Marquis de Lauriston, who received me most kindly. He is personally like my cousin Colonel Russell. I learned that his brother, Louis Law, my old friend, was alive, and the father of a large family. I was most kindly treated, and had my vanity much flattered by the men who had acted such important parts talking to me in the most frank manner.

In the evening to Princess Galitzin, where were a whole covey of Princesses of Russia arrayed in tartan! with music and singing to boot. The person in whom I was most interested was Mad. de Boufflers, upwards of eighty, very polite, very pleasant, and with all the agrémens of a French Court lady of the time of Mad. Sévigné, or of the correspondent rather of Horace Walpole. Cooper was there, so the Scotch and American lions took the field together. — Home, and settled our affairs to depart.

November 7. — Off at seven; breakfasted at Beaumont, and pushed on to Airaines. This being a forced march, we had bad lodgings, wet wood, uncomfortable supper, damp beds, and an extravagant charge. I was never colder in my life than when I waked with the sheets clinging round me like a shroud.

November 8. — We started at six in the morning, having no need to be called twice, so heartily was I weary of my comfortless couch. Breakfasted at Abbeville; then pushed on to Boulogne, expecting to find the packet ready to start next morning, and so to have had the advantage of the easterly tide. But, lo ye! the packet was not to sail till next day. So after shrugging our shoulders — being the solace à la mode de France — and recruiting

ourselves with a pullet and a bottle of Chablis à la mode d'Angleterre, we set off for Calais after supper, and it was betwixt three and four in the morning before we got to Dessein's, when the house was full, or reported to be so. We could only get two wretched brick-paved garrets, as cold and moist as those of Airaines, instead of the comforts which we were received with at our arrival. But I was better prepared. Stripped off the sheets, and lay down in my dressing-gown, and so roughed it out — tant bien que mal.

November 9. — At four in the morning we were called; at six we got on board the packet, where I found a sensible and conversible man — a very pleasant circumstance. The day was raw and cold, the wind and tide surly and contrary, the passage slow, and Anne, contrary to her wont, excessively sick. We had little trouble at the Custom House, thanks to the secretary of the Embassy, Mr. Jones, who gave me a letter to Mr. Ward. [At Dover] Mr. Ward came with the Lieutenant-Governor of the castle, and wished us to visit that ancient fortress. I regretted much that our time was short, and the weather did not admit of our seeing views, so we could only thank the gentlemen in declining their civility.

The castle, partly ruinous, seems to have been very fine. The Cliff, to which Shakespeare gave his immortal name, is, as all the world knows, a great deal lower than his description implies. Our Dover friends, justly jealous of the reputation of their cliff, impute this diminution of its consequence to its having fallen in repeatedly since the poet's time. I think it more likely that the imagination of Shakespeare, writing perhaps at a period long after he may have seen the rock, had described it such as he conceived it to have been. Besides, Shakespeare was born in a flat country, and Dover Cliff is at least lofty enough to have suggested the exaggerated features to his fancy. At all events, it has maintained its reputation better than the Tarpeian Rock; — no man could leap from it and live.

Left Dover after a hot luncheon about four o'clock, and reached London at halfpast three in the morning. So adieu to la belle France, and welcome merry England.

[Pall Mall,] November 10. — Ere I leave la belle France, however, it is fit I should express my gratitude for the unwontedly kind reception which I met with at all hands. It would be an unworthy piece of affectation did I not allow that I have been pleased — highly pleased — to find a species of

literature intended only for my own country has met such an extensive and favourable reception in a foreign land where there was so much a priori to oppose its progress.

For my work I think I have done a good deal; but, above all, I have been confirmed strongly in the impressions I had previously formed of the character of Nap., and may attempt to draw him with a firmer hand.

The succession of new people and unusual incidents has had a favourable effect [on my mind], which was becoming rutted like an ill-kept highway. My thoughts have for some time flowed in another and pleasanter channel than through the melancholy course into which my solitary and deprived state had long driven them, and which gave often pain to be endured without complaint, and without sympathy. "For this relief," as Francisco says in Hamlet, "much thanks."

To-day I visited the public offices, and prosecuted my researches. Left inquiries for the Duke of York, who has recovered from a most desperate state. His legs had been threatened with mortification; but he was saved by a critical discharge; also visited the Duke of Wellington, Lord Melville, and others, besides the ladies in Piccadilly. Dined and spent the evening quietly in Pall Mall.

November 11. — Croker came to breakfast, and we were soon after joined by Theodore Hook, alias "John Bull"; he has got as fat as the actual monarch of the herd. Lockhart sat still with us, and we had, as Gil Blas says, a delicious morning, spent in abusing our neighbours, at which my three neighbours are no novices any more than I am myself, though (like Puss in Boots, who only caught mice for his amusement) I am only a chamber counsel in matters of scandal. The fact is, I have refrained, as much as human frailty will permit, from all satirical composition. Here is an ample subject for a little black-balling in the case of Joseph Hume, the great Æconomist, who has [managed] the Greek loan so egregiously. I do not lack personal provocation (see 13th March last), yet I won't attack him — at present at least — but qu'il se garde de moi:

> "I'm not a king, nor nae sic thing,
> My word it may not stand;
> And Joseph may a buffet bide,
> Come he beneath my brand."

At dinner we had a little blow-out on Sophia's part: Lord Dudley, Mr. Hay, Under Secretary of State, [Sir Thomas Lawrence, etc.] Mistress (as she now calls herself) Joanna Baillie, and her sister, came in the evening. The whole went off pleasantly.

November 12. — Went to sit to Sir T.L. to finish the picture for his Majesty, which every one says is a very fine one. I think so myself; and wonder how Sir Thomas has made so much out of an old weatherbeaten block. But I believe the hard features of old Dons like myself are more within the compass of the artist's skill than the lovely face and delicate complexion of females. Came home after a heavy shower. I had a long conversation about — — — with Lockhart. All that was whispered is true — a sign how much better our domestics are acquainted with the private affairs of our neighbours than we are. A dreadful tale of incest and seduction, and nearly of blood also — horrible beyond expression in its complications and events — "And yet the end is not;" — and this man was amiable, and seemed the soul of honour — laughed, too, and was the soul of society. It is a mercy our own thoughts are concealed from each other. Oh! if, at our social table, we could see what passes in each bosom around, we would seek dens and caverns to shun human society! To see the projector trembling for his falling speculations; the voluptuary rueing the event of his debauchery; the miser wearing out his soul for the loss of a guinea — all — all bent upon vain hopes and vainer regrets — we should not need to go to the hall of the Caliph Vathek to see men's hearts broiling under their black veils. Lord keep us from all temptation, for we cannot be our own shepherd!

We dined to-day at Lady Stafford's [at West-hill]. Lord S. looks very poorly, but better than I expected. No company, excepting Sam Rogers and Mr. Grenville, — the latter is better known by the name of Tom Grenville — a very amiable and accomplished man, whom I knew better about twenty years since. Age has touched him, as it has doubtless affected me. The great lady received us with the most cordial kindness, and expressed herself, I am sure, sincerely, desirous to be of service to Sophia.

November 13. — I consider Charles's business as settled by a private intimation which I had to that effect from Sir W.K.; so I need negotiate no further, but wait the event. Breakfasted at home, and somebody with us, but

the whirl of visits so great that I have already forgot the party. Lockhart and I dined at an official person's, where there was a little too much of that sort of flippant wit, or rather smartness, which becomes the parochial Joe Miller of boards and offices. You must not be grave, because it might lead to improper discussions; and to laugh without a joke is a hard task. Your professed wags are treasures to this species of company. Gil Blas was right in censuring the literary society of his friend Fabricio; but nevertheless one or two of the mess would greatly have improved the conversation of his Commis.

Went to poor Lydia White's, and found her extended on a couch, frightfully swelled, unable to stir, rouged, jesting, and dying. She has a good heart, and is really a clever creature, but unhappily, or rather happily, she has set up the whole staff of her rest in keeping literary society about her. The world has not neglected her. It is not always so bad as it is called. She can always make up her soirée, and generally has some people of real talent and distinction. She is wealthy, to be sure, and gives petit dinners, but not in a style to carry the point à force d'argent. In her case the world is goodnatured, and perhaps it is more frequently so than is generally supposed.

November 14. — We breakfasted at honest Allan Cunningham's — honest Allan — a leal and true Scotsman of the old cast. A man of genius, besides, who only requires the tact of knowing when and where to stop, to attain the universal praise which ought to follow it. I look upon the alteration of "It's hame and it's hame," and "A wet sheet and a flowing sea," as among the best songs going. His prose has often admirable passages; but he is obscure, and overlays his meaning, which will not do now-a-days, when he who runs must read.

Dined at Croker's, at Kensington, with his family, the Speaker, and the facetious Theodore Hook.

We came away rather early, that Anne and I might visit Mrs. Arbuthnot to meet the Duke of Wellington. In all my life I never saw him better. He has a dozen of campaigns in his body — and tough ones. Anne was delighted with the frank manners of this unequalled pride of British war, and me he received with all his usual kindness. He talked away about Bonaparte, Russia, and France.

November 15. — At breakfast a conclave of medical men about poor little Johnnie Lockhart. They give good words, but I cannot help fearing the thing is very precarious, and I feel a miserable anticipation of what the parents are to undergo. It is wrong, however, to despair. I was myself a very weak child, and certainly am one of the strongest men of my age in point of constitution. Sophia and Anne went to the Tower, I to the Colonial Office, where I laboured hard.

Dined with the Duke of Wellington. Anne with me, who could not look enough at the vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre. The party were Mr. and Mrs. Peel, and Mr. and Mrs. Arbuthnot, Vesey Fitzgerald, Bankes, and Croker, with Lady Bathurst and Lady Georgina. One gentleman took much of the conversation, and gave us, with unnecessary emphasis, and at superfluous length, his opinion of a late gambling transaction. This spoiled the evening. I am sorry for the occurrence though, for Lord — is fetlock deep in it, and it looks like a vile bog. This misfortune, with the foolish incident at — — — , will not be suffered to fall to the ground, but will be used as a counterpoise to the Greek loan. Peel asked me, in private, my opinion of three candidates for the Scotch gown, and I gave it him candidly. We will see if it has weight.

I begin to tire of my gaieties; and the late hours and constant feasting disagree with me. I wish for a sheep's head and whisky toddy against all the French cookery and champagne in the world.

Well, I suppose I might have been a Judge of Session this term — attained, in short, the grand goal proposed to the ambition of a Scottish lawyer. It is better, however, as it is, while, at least, I can maintain my literary reputation.

I had some conversation to-day with Messrs. Longman and Co. They agreed to my deriving what advantage I could in America, and that very willingly.

November 16. — Breakfasted with Rogers, with my daughters and Lockhart. R. was exceedingly entertaining, in his dry, quiet, sarcastic manner. At eleven to the Duke of Wellington, who gave me a bundle of remarks on Bonaparte's Russian campaign, written in his carriage during his late mission to St. Petersburg. It is furiously scrawled, and the Russian names hard to distinguish, but it shall do me yeoman's service. Then went

to Pentonville, to old Mr. Handley, a solicitor of the old school, and manager of the Devonshire property. Had an account of the claim arising on the estate of one Mrs. Owen, due to the representatives of my poor wife's mother. He was desperately excursive, and spoke almost for an hour, but the prospect of £4000 to my children made me a patient auditor. Thence I passed to the Colonial Office, where I concluded my extracts. [Lockhart and I] dined with Croker at the Admiralty au grand couvert. No less than five Cabinet Ministers were present — Canning, Huskisson, Melville, [Peel,] and Wellington, with sub-secretaries by the bushel. The cheer was excellent, but the presence of too many men of distinguished rank and power always freezes the conversation. Each lamp shines brightest when placed by itself; when too close, they neutralise each other.

November 17. — My morning here began with the arrival of Bahauder Jah; soon after Mr. Wright; then I was called out to James Scott the young painter. I greatly fear this modest and amiable creature is throwing away his time. Next came an animal who is hunting out a fortune in Chancery, which has lain perdu for thirty years. The fellow, who is in figure and manner the very essence of the creature called a sloth, has attached himself to this pursuit with the steadiness of a well-scented beagle. I believe he will actually get the prize.

Sir John Malcolm acknowledges and recommends my Persian visitor Bruce.

Saw the Duke of York. The change on H.R.H. is most wonderful. From a big, burly, stout man, with a thick and sometimes an inarticulate mode of speaking, he has sunk into a thin-faced, slender-looking old man, who seems diminished in his very size. I could hardly believe I saw the same person, though I was received with his usual kindness. He speaks much more distinctly than formerly; his complexion is clearer; in short, H.R.H. seems, on the whole, more healthy after this crisis than when in the stall-fed state, for such it seemed to be, in which I remember him. God grant it! his life is of infinite value to the King and country — it is a breakwater behind the throne.

November 18. — Was introduced by Rogers to Mad. D'Arblay, the celebrated authoress of Evelina and Cecilia, — an elderly lady, with no remains of personal beauty, but with a gentle manner and a pleasing

expression of countenance. She told me she had wished to see two persons — myself, of course, being one; the other George Canning. This was really a compliment to be pleased with — a nice little handsome pat of butter made up by a neat-handed Phillis of a dairymaid, instead of the grease, fit only for cart-wheels, which one is dosed with by the pound. Mad. D'Arblay told us the common story of Dr. Burney, her father, having brought home her own first work, and recommended it to her perusal, was erroneous. Her father was in the secret of Evelina being printed. But the following circumstances may have given rise to the story: — Dr. Burney was at Streatham soon after the publication, where he found Mrs. Thrale recovering from her confinement, low at the moment, and out of spirits. While they were talking together, Johnson, who sat beside in a kind of reverie, suddenly broke out, "You should read this new work, madam — you should read Evelina; every one says it is excellent, and they are right." The delighted father obtained a commission from Mrs. Thrale to purchase his daughter's work, and retired the happiest of men. Mad. D'Arblay said she was wild with joy at this decisive evidence of her literary success, and that she could only give vent to her rapture by dancing and skipping round a mulberry-tree in the garden. She was very young at this time. I trust I shall see this lady again. She has simple and apparently amiable manners, with quick feelings.

Dined at Mr. Peel's with Lord Liverpool, Duke of Wellington, Croker, Bankes, *etc*. The conversation very good — Peel taking the lead in his own house, which he will not do elsewhere. We canvassed the memorable criminal case of Ashford, Peel almost convinced of the man's innocence. Should have been at the play, but sat too late at Mr. Peel's.

So ends my campaign among these magnificoes and potent signiors, with whom I have found, as usual, the warmest acceptation. I wish I could turn a little of my popularity amongst them to Lockhart's advantage, who cannot bustle for himself. He is out of spirits just now, and views things au noir. I fear Johnnie's precarious state is the cause.

I finished my sittings to Lawrence, and am heartily sorry there should be another picture of me except that which he has finished. The person is remarkably like, and conveys the idea of the stout blunt carle that cares for few things, and fears nothing. He has represented the author as in the act of composition, yet has effectually discharged all affectation from the manner and attitude. He seems pleased with it himself. He dined with us at Peel's

yesterday, where, by the way, we saw the celebrated Chapeau de Paille, which is not a Chapeau de Paille at all.

November 19. — Saw this morning Duke of Wellington and Duke of York; the former so communicative that I regretted extremely the length of time, but have agreed on a correspondence with him. Trop d'honneur pour moi. The Duke of York saw me by appointment. He seems still mending, and spoke of state affairs as a high Tory. Were his health good, his spirit is as strong as ever. H.R.H. has a devout horror of the liberals. Having the Duke of Wellington, the Chancellor, and (perhaps) a still greater person on his side, he might make a great fight when they split, as split they will. But Canning, Huskisson, and a mitigated party of Liberaux will probably beat them. Canning's will and eloquence are almost irresistible. But then the Church, justly alarmed for their property, which is plainly struck at, and the bulk of the landed interest, will scarce brook a mild infusion of Whiggery into the Administration. Well, time will show.

We visited our friends Peel, Lord Gwydyr, Arbuthnot, etc., and left our tickets of adieu. In no instance, during my former visits to London, did I ever meet with such general attention and respect on all sides.

Lady Louisa Stuart dined — also Wright and Mr. and Mrs. Christie. Dr. and Mrs. Hughes came in the evening; so ended pleasantly our last night in London.

[Oxford,] November 20. — Left London after a comfortable breakfast, and an adieu to the Lockhart family. If I had had but comfortable hopes of their poor, pale, prostrate child, so clever and so interesting, I should have parted easily on this occasion, but these misgivings overcloud the prospect. We reached Oxford by six o'clock, and found Charles and his friend young Surtees waiting for us, with a good fire in the chimney, and a good dinner ready to be placed on the table. We had struggled through a cold, sulky, drizzly day, which deprived of all charms even the beautiful country near Henley. So we came from cold and darkness into light and warmth and society. N.B. — We had neither daylight nor moonlight to see the view of Oxford from the Maudlin Bridge, which I used to think one of the most beautiful in the world.

Upon finance I must note that the expense of travelling has mounted high. I am too old to rough it, and scrub it, nor could I have saved fifty

pounds by doing so. I have gained, however, in health, spirits, in a new stock of ideas, new combinations, and new views. My self-consequence is raised, I hope not unduly, by the many flattering circumstances attending my reception in the two capitals, and I feel confident in proportion. In Scotland I shall find time for labour and for economy.

[Cheltenham,] November 21. — Breakfasted with Charles in his chambers [at Brasenose], where he had everything very neat. How pleasant it is for a father to sit at his child's board! It is like an aged man reclining under the shadow of the oak which he has planted. My poor plant has some storms to undergo, but were this expedition conducive to no more than his entrance into life under suitable auspices, I should consider the toil and the expense well bestowed. We then sallied out to see the lions — guides being Charles, and friend Surtees, Mr. John Hughes, young Mackenzie (Fitz-Colin), and a young companion or two of Charles's. Remembering the ecstatic feelings with which I visited Oxford more than twentyfive years since, I was surprised at the comparative indifference with which I revisited the same scenes. Reginald Heber, then composing his Prize Poem, and imping his wings for a long flight of honourable distinction, is now dead in a foreign land — Hodgson and other able men all entombed. The towers and halls remain, but the voices which fill them are of modern days. Besides, the eye becomes satiated with sights, as the full soul loathes the honeycomb. I admired indeed, but my admiration was void of the enthusiasm which I formerly felt. I remember particularly having felt, while in the Bodleian, like the Persian magician who visited the enchanted library in the bowels of the mountain, and willingly suffered himself to be enclosed in its recesses, while less eager sages retired in alarm. Now I had some base thoughts concerning luncheon, which was most munificently supplied by Surtees [at his rooms in University College], with the aid of the best ale I ever drank in my life, the real wine of Ceres, and worth that of Bacchus. Dr. Jenkyns, the vice-chancellor, did me the honour to call, but I saw him not. I called on Charles Douglas at All-Souls, and had a chat of an hour with him.

Before three set out for Cheltenham, a long and uninteresting drive, which we achieved by nine o'clock. My sister-in-law [Mrs. Thomas Scott] and her daughter instantly came to the hotel, and seem in excellent health and spirits.

November 22. — Breakfasted and dined with Mrs. Scott, and leaving Cheltenham at seven, pushed on to Worcester to sleep.

November 23. — Breakfasted at Birmingham, and slept at Macclesfield. As we came in between ten and eleven, the people of the inn expressed surprise at our travelling so late, as the general distress of the manufacturers has rendered many of the lower class desperately outrageous. The inn was guarded by a special watchman, who alarmed us by giving his signal of turn out, but it proved to be a poor deserter who had taken refuge among the carriages, and who was reclaimed by his sergeant. The people talk gloomily of winter, when the distress of the poor will be increased.

November 24. — Breakfasted at Manchester. Ere we left, the senior churchwarden came to offer us his services, to show us the town, principal manufactures, *etc.* We declined his polite offer, pleading haste. I found his opinion about the state of trade more agreeable than I had ventured to expect. He said times were mending gradually but steadily, and that the poor-rates were decreasing, of which none can be so good a judge as the churchwarden. Some months back the people had been in great discontent on account of the power engines, which they conceived diminished the demand for operative labour. There was no politics in their discontent, however, and at present it was diminishing. We again pressed on — and by dint of exertion reached Kendal to sleep; thus getting out of the region of the stern, sullen, unwashed artificers, whom you see lounging sulkily along the streets of the towns in Lancashire, cursing, it would seem by their looks, the stop of trade which gives them leisure, and the laws which prevent them employing their spare time. God's justice is requiting, and will yet further requite those who have blown up this country into a state of unsubstantial opulence, at the expense of the health and morals of the lower classes.

November 25. — Took two pair of horses over the Shap Fells, which are covered with snow, and by dint of exertion reached Penrith to breakfast. Then rolled on till we found our own horses at Hawick, and returned to our own home at Abbotsford about three in the morning. It is well we made a forced march of about one hundred miles, for I think the snow would have stopped us had we lingered.

[Abbotsford,] November 26. — Consulting my purse, found my good £60 diminished to Quarter less Ten. In purse £8. Naturally reflected how much expense has increased since I first travelled. My uncle's servant, during the jaunts we made together while I was a boy, used to have his option of a shilling per diem for board wages, and usually preferred it to having his charges borne. A servant nowadays, to be comfortable on the road, should have 4s. or 4s. 6d. board wages, which before 1790 would have maintained his master. But if this be pitiful, it is still more so to find the alteration in my own temper. When young, on returning from such a trip as I have just had, my mind would have loved to dwell on all I had seen that was rich and rare, or have been placing, perhaps in order, the various additions with which I had supplied my stock of information — and now, like a stupid boy blundering over an arithmetical question half obliterated on his slate, I go stumbling on upon the audit of pounds, shillings, and pence. Why, the increase of charge I complain of must continue so long as the value of the thing represented by cash continues to rise, or as the value of the thing representing continues to decrease — let the economists settle which is the right way of expressing the process when groats turn plenty and eggs grow dear —

> "And so 'twill be when I am gone,
> The increasing charge will still go on,
> And other bards shall climb these hills,
> And curse your charge, dear evening bills."

Well, the skirmish has cost me £200. I wished for information — and I have had to pay for it. The information is got, the money is spent, and so this is the only mode of accounting amongst friends.

I have packed my books, etc., to go by cart to Edinburgh tomorrow. I idled away the rest of the day, happy to find myself at home, which is home, though never so homely. And mine is not so homely neither; on the contrary, I have seen in my travels none I liked so well — fantastic in architecture and decoration if you please — but no real comfort sacrificed to fantasy. "Ever gramercy my own purse," saith the song; "Ever gramercy my own house," quoth I.

November 27. — We set off after breakfast, but on reaching Fushie Bridge

at three, found ourselves obliged to wait for horses, all being gone to the smithy to be roughshod in this snowy weather. So we stayed dinner, and Peter, coming up with his horses, bowled us into town about eight. Walter came and supped with us, which diverted some heavy thoughts. It is impossible not to compare this return to Edinburgh with others in more happy times. But we should rather recollect under what distress of mind I took up my lodgings in Mrs. Brown's last summer, and then the balance weighs deeply on the favourable side. This house is comfortable and convenient.

[Edinburgh,] November 28. — Went to Court and resumed old habits. Dined with Walter and Jane at Mrs. Jobson's. When we returned were astonished at the news of — — 's death, and the manner of it; a quieter, more inoffensive, mild, and staid mind I never knew. He was free from all these sinkings of the imagination which render those who are liable to them the victims of occasional low spirits. All belonging to this gifted, as it is called, but often unhappy, class, must have felt at times that, but for the dictates of religion, or the natural recoil of the mind from the idea of dissolution, there have been times when they would have been willing to throw away life as a child does a broken toy. But poor — — — was none of these: he was happy in his domestic relations; and on the very day on which the rash deed was committed was to have embarked for rejoining his wife and child, whom I so lately saw anxious to impart to him their improved prospects.

O Lord, what are we — lords of nature? Why, a tile drops from a housetop, which an elephant would not feel more than the fall of a sheet of pasteboard, and there lies his lordship. Or something of inconceivably minute origin, the pressure of a bone, or the inflammation of a particle of the brain takes place, and the emblem of the Deity destroys himself or some one else. We hold our health and our reason on terms slighter than one would desire were it in their choice to hold an Irish cabin.

November 29. — Awaked from horrid dreams to reconsideration of the sad reality; he was such a kind, obliging, assiduous creature. I thought he came to my bedside to expostulate with me how I could believe such a scandal, and I thought I detected that it was but a spirit who spoke, by the paleness

of his look and the blood flowing from his cravat. I had the nightmare in short, and no wonder.

I felt stupefied all this day, but wrote the necessary letters notwithstanding. Walter, Jane, and Mrs. Jobson dined with us — but I could not gather my spirits. But it is nonsense, and contrary to my system, which is of the stoic school, and I think pretty well maintained. It is the only philosophy I know or can practise, but it cannot always keep the helm.

November 30. — I went to the Court, and on my return set in order a sheet or two of copy. We came back about two — the new form of hearing counsel makes our sederunt a long one. Dined alone, and worked in the evening.

December

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December 1. — The Court again very long in its sitting, and I obliged to remain till the last. This is the more troublesome, as in winter, with my wornout eyes, I cannot write so well by candlelight. Naboclish! when I am quite blind, goodnight to you, as the one-eyed fellow said when a tennis ball knocked out his remaining luminary. My short residue of time before dinner was much cut up by calls — all old friends, too, and men whom I love; but this makes the loss of time more galling, that one cannot and dare not growl at those on whom it has been bestowed. However, I made out two hours better than I expected. I am now once more at my oar, and I will row hard.

December 2. — Returned early from Court, but made some calls by the way. Dined alone with Anne, and meant to have worked, but — I don't know how — this horrid story stuck by me, so I e'en read Boutourlin's account of the Moscow campaign to eschew the foul fiend.

December 3. — Wrote five pages before dinner. Sir Thomas Brisbane and Sir William Arbuthnot called, also John A. Murray. William dined with us, all vivid with his Italian ideas, only Jane besides. Made out five pages, I think, or nearly.

December 4. — Much colded, which is no usual complaint of mine, but worked about five leaves, so I am quite up with my task-work and better. But my books from Abbotsford have not arrived. Dined with the Royal Society Club — about thirty members present — too many for company. After coffee, the Society were like Mungo in The Padlock. I listened, without understanding a single word, to two scientific papers; one about the tail of a comet, and the other about a chucky-stone; besides hearing Basil Hall describe, and seeing him exhibit, a new azimuth. I have half a mind to cut the whole concern; and yet the situation is honourable, and, as Bob Acres says, one should think of their honour. We took possession of our new rooms on the Mound, which are very handsome and gentlemanlike.

December 5. — Annoyed with the cold and its consequences all night, and

wish I could shirk the Court this morning. But it must not be. Was kept late, and my cold increased. I have had a regular attack of this for many years past whenever I return to the sedentary life and heated rooms of Edinburgh, which are so different from the open air and constant exercise of the country. Odd enough that during cold weather and cold nocturnal journeys the cold never touched me, yet I am no sooner settled in comfortable quarters and warm well-aired couches, but la voilà. I made a shift to finish my task, however, and even a leaf more, so we are bang up. We dined and supped alone, and I went to bed early.

December 6. — A bad and disturbed night with fever, headache, and some touch of cholera morbus, which greatly disturbed my slumbers. But I fancy Nature was scouring the gun after her own fashion. I slept little till morning, and then lay abed, contrary to my wont, until halfpast nine o'clock, when I came down to breakfast. Went to Court, and returned time enough to write about five leaves. Dined at Skene's, where we met Lord Elgin and Mr. Stewart, a son of Sir M. Shaw Stewart, whom I knew and liked, poor man. Talked among other things and persons of Sir J. Campbell of Ardkinglas, who is now here. He is happy in escaping from his notorious title of Callander of Craigforth. In my youth he was a black-leg and swindler of the first water, and like Pistol did

> "Somewhat lean to cut-purse of quick hand."

He was obliged to give up his estate to his son Colonel Callander, a gentleman of honour, and as Dad went to the Continent in the midst of the French Revolution, he is understood to have gone through many scenes. At one time, Lord Elgin assured us, he seized upon the island of Zante, as he pretended, by direct authority from the English Government, and reigned there very quietly for some months, until, to appease the jealousy of the Turks, Lord Elgin despatched a frigate to dethrone the new sovereign. Afterwards he traversed India in the dress of a fakir. He is now eighty and upwards.

I should like to see what age and adventures have done upon him. I recollect him a very handsome, plausible man. Of all good breeding, that of a swindler (of good education, be it understood) is the most perfect.

December 7. — Again a very disturbed night, scarce sleeping an hour, yet

well when I rose in the morning. I did not do above a leaf to-day, because I had much to read. But I am up to onefourth of the volume, of 400 pages, which I began on the first December current; the 31st must and shall see the end of vol. vi. We dined alone. I had a book sent me by a very clever woman, in defence of what she calls the rights of her sex. Clever, though. I hope she will publish it.

December 8. — Another restless and deplorable Knight — night I should say — faith, either spelling will suit. Returned early, but much done up with my complaint and want of sleep last night. I wrought however, but with two or three long interruptions, my drowsiness being irresistible. Went to dine with John Murray, where met his brother Henderland, Jeffrey, Harry Cockburn, Rutherfurd, and others of that file. Very pleasant — capital good cheer and excellent wine — much laugh and fun.

December 9. — I do not know why it is that when I am with a party of my Opposition friends, the day is often merrier than when with our own set. Is it because they are cleverer? Jeffrey and Harry Cockburn are, to be sure, very extraordinary men, yet it is not owing to that entirely. I believe both parties meet with the feeling of something like novelty. We have not worn out our jests in daily contact. There is also a disposition on such occasions to be courteous, and of course to be pleased. Wrought all day, but rather dawdled, being abominably drowsy. I fancy it is bile, a visitor I have not had this long time.

December 10. — An uncomfortable and sleepless night; and the lime water assigned to cure me seems far less pleasant, and about as inefficacious as lime punch would be in the circumstances. I felt main stupid the whole forenoon, and though I wrote my task, yet it was with great intervals of drowsiness and fatigue which made me, as we Scots says, dover away in my armchair. Walter and Jane came to dinner, also my Coz Colonel Russell, and above and attour James Ballantyne, poor fellow. We had a quiet and social evening, I acting on prescription. Well, I have seen the day — but no matter.

December 11. — Slept indifferent well with a feverish halo about me, but no great return of my complaint. It paid it off this morning, however, but the

difference was of such consequence that I made an ample day's work, getting over six pages, besides what I may do. On this, the 11th December, I shall have more than onethird of vol. vi. finished, which was begun on the first of this current month. Dined quiet and at home. I must take no more frisks till this fit is over.

> "When once life's day draws near the gloaming,
> Then farewell careless social roaming;
> And farewell cheerful tankards foaming,
> And social noise;
> And farewell dear deluding woman,
> The joy of joys!"

Long life to thy fame and peace to thy soul, Rob Burns! When I want to express a sentiment which I feel strongly, I find the phrase in Shakespeare — or thee. The blockheads talk of my being like Shakespeare — not fit to tie his brogues.

December 12. — Did not go to the Parliament House, but drove with Walter to Dalkeith, where we missed the Duke, and found Mr. Blakeney. One thing I saw there which pleased me much, and that was my own picture, painted twenty years ago by Raeburn for Constable, and which was to have been brought to sale among the rest of the wreck, hanging quietly up in the dining-room at Dalkeith. I do not care much about these things, yet it would have been annoying to have been knocked down to the best bidder even in effigy; and I am obliged to the friendship and delicacy which placed the portrait where it now is. Dined at Archie Swinton's, with all the cousins of that honest clan, and met Lord Cringletie, his wife, and others. Finished my task this day.

December 13. — Went to the Court this morning early, and remained till past three. Then attended a meeting of the Edinburgh Academy Directors on account of some discussion about flogging. I am an enemy to corporal punishment, but there are many boys who will not attend without it. It is an instant and irresistible motive, and I love boys' heads too much to spoil them at the expense of their opposite extremity. Then, when children feel an emancipation on this point, we may justly fear they will loosen the bonds of discipline altogether. The master, I fear, must be something of a despot at

the risk of his becoming something like a tyrant. He governs subjects whose keen sense of the present is not easily ruled by any considerations that are not pressing and immediate. I was indifferently well beaten at school; but I am now quite certain that twice as much discipline would have been well bestowed.

Dined at home with Walter and Jane; they with Anne went out in the evening, I remained, but not I fear to work much. I feel sorely fagged. I am sadly fagged. Then I cannot get — — 's fate out of my head. I see that kind, social, beneficent face never turned to me without respect and complacence, and — I see it in the agonies of death. This is childish; I tell myself so, and I trust the feeling to no one else. But here it goes down like the murderer who could not cease painting the ideal vision of the man he had murdered, and who he supposed haunted him. A thousand fearful images and dire suggestions glance along the mind when it is moody and discontented with itself. Command them to stand and show themselves, and you presently assert the power of reason over imagination. But if by any strange alterations in one's nervous system you lost for a moment the talisman which controls these fiends, would they not terrify into obedience with their mandates, rather than we would dare longer to endure their presence?

December 14. — Annoyed with this cursed complaint, though I live like a hermit on pulse and water. Bothered, too, with the Court, which leaves me little room for proof-sheets, and none for copy. They sat to-day till past two, so before I had walked home, and called for half an hour on the Chief Commissioner, the work part of the day was gone; and then my lassitude — I say lassitude — not indolence — is so great that it costs me an hour's nap after I come home. We dined to-day with R. Dundas of Arniston — Anne and I. There was a small cabal about Cheape's election for Professor of Civil Law, which it is thought we can carry for him. He deserves support, having been very indifferently used in the affair of the Beacon, where certain high Tories showed a great desire to leave him to the mercy of the enemy; as Feeble says, "I will never bear a base mind." We drank some "victorious Burgundy," contrary to all prescription.

December 15. — Egad! I think I am rather better for my good cheer! I have passed one quiet night at least, and that is something gained. A glass of

good wine is a gracious creature, and reconciles poor mortality to itself, and that is what few things can do.

Our election went off very decently; no discussions or aggravating speeches. Sir John Jackass seconded the Whig's nominee. So much they will submit to to get a vote. The numbers stood — Cheape, 138; Bell, 132. Majority, 6 — mighty hard run. The Tory interest was weak among the old stagers, where I remember it so strong, but preferment, country residence, etc., has thinned them. Then it was strong in the younger classes. The new Dean, James Moncreiff, presided with strict propriety and impartiality. Walter and Jane dined with us.

December 16. — Another bad night. I remember I used to think a slight illness was a luxurious thing. My pillow was then softened by the hand of affection, and all the little cares which were put in exercise to soothe the languor or pain were more flattering and pleasing than the consequences of the illness were disagreeable. It was a new sense to be watched and attended, and I used to think that the Malade imaginaire gained something by his humour. It is different in the latter stages. The old postchaise gets more shattered and out of order at every turn; windows will not be pulled up; doors refuse to open, or being open will not shut again — which last is rather my case. There is some new subject of complaint every moment; your sicknesses come thicker and thicker; your comforting or sympathising friends fewer and fewer; for why should they sorrow for the course of nature? The recollection of youth, health, and uninterrupted powers of activity, neither improved nor enjoyed, is a poor strain of comfort. The best is, the long halt will arrive at last, and cure all.

We had a long sitting in the Court. Came home through a cold easterly rain without a greatcoat, and was well wet. A goodly medicine for my aching bones. Dined at Mr. Adam Wilson's, and had some good singing in the evening. Saw Dr. Stokoe, who attended Boney in Saint Helena, a plain, sensible sort of man.

December 17. — This was a day of labour, agreeably varied by a pain which rendered it scarce possible to sit upright. My Journal is getting a vile chirurgical aspect.

I begin to be afraid of the odd consequences complaints in the post equitem are said to produce. Walter and Jane dined. Mrs. Skene came in the

evening.

December 18. — Almost sick with pain, and it stops everything. I shall tire of my Journal if it is to contain nothing but biles and plasters and unguents. In my better days I had stories to tell; but death has closed the long dark avenue upon loves and friendships; and I can only look at them as through the grated door of a long burial-place filled with monuments of those who were once dear to me, with no insincere wish that it may open for me at no distant period, provided such be the will of God. My pains were those of the heart, and had something flattering in their character; if in the head, it was from the blow of a bludgeon gallantly received and well paid back.

I went to the meeting of the Commissioners; there was none to-day. The carriage had set me down; so I walked from the college in one of the sourest and most unsocial days which I ever felt. Why should I have liked this? I do not know; it is my dogged humour to yield little to external circumstances. Sent an excuse to the Royal Society, however.

December 19. — Went to Court. No, I lie; I had business there. Wrote a task; no more; could not. Went out to Dalkeith, and dined with the Duke. It delights me to hear this hopeful young nobleman talk with sense and firmness about his plans for improving his estate, and employing the poor. If God and the world spare him, he will be far known as a true Scots lord.

December 20. — Being a Teind day, I had a little repose. We dined at Hector Macdonald's with William Clerk and some youngsters. Highland hospitality as usual. I got some work done to-day.

December 21. — In the house till two o'clock nearly. Came home, corrected proof-sheets, etc., mechanically. All well, would the machine but keep in order, but "The spinning wheel is auld and stiff."

I think I shall not live to the usual verge of human existence. I shall never see the threescore and ten, and shall be summed up at a discount. No help for it, and no matter either.

December 22. — Poor old Honour and Glory dead — once Lord Moira, more lately Lord Hastings. He was a man of very considerable talents, but had an overmastering degree of vanity of the grossest kind. It followed of

course that he was gullible. In fact the propensity was like a ring in his nose into which any rogue might put a string. He had a high reputation for war, but it was after the pettifogging hostilities in America where he had done some clever things. He died, having the credit, or rather having had the credit, to leave more debt than any man since Caesar's time. £1,200,000 is said to be the least. There was a time that I knew him well, and regretted the foibles which mingled with his character, so as to make his noble qualities sometimes questionable, sometimes ridiculous. He was always kind to me. Poor Plantagenet! Young Percival went out to dine at Dalkeith with me.

December 24. — To add to my other grievances I have this day a proper fit of rheumatism in my best knee. I pushed to Abbotsford, however, after the Court rose, though compelled to howl for pain as they helped me out of the carriage.

[Abbotsford,] December 25. — By dint of abstinence and opodeldoc I passed a better night than I could have hoped for; but took up my lodging in the chapel room, as it is called, for going upstairs was impossible.

To-day I have been a mere wretch. I lay in bed till past eleven, thinking to get rid of the rheumatism; then I walked as far as Turnagain with much pain, and since that time I have just roasted myself like a potato by the fireside in my study, slumbering away my precious time, and unable to keep my eyes open or my mind intent on anything, if I would have given my life for it. I seemed to sleep tolerably, too, last night, but I suppose Nature had not her dues properly paid; neither has she for some time.

I saw the filling up of the quarry on the terrace walk, and was pleased. Anne and I dined at Mertoun, as has been my old wont and use as Christmas day comes about. We were late in setting out, and I have rarely seen so dark a night. The mist rolled like volumes of smoke on the road before us.

December 26. — Returned to Abbotsford this morning. I heard it reported that Lord B. is very ill. If that be true it affords ground for hope that Sir John — — — is not immortal. Both great bores. But the Earl has something of wild cleverness, far exceeding the ponderous stupidity of the Cavaliero Jackasso.

December 27. — Still weak with this wasting illness, but it is clearly going off. Time it should, quoth Sancho. I began my work again, which had slumbered betwixt pain and weakness. In fact I could not write or compose at all.

December 28. — Stuck to my work. Mr. Scrope came to dinner, and remained next day. We were expecting young Percival and his wife, once my favourite and beautiful Nancy M'Leod, and still a very fine woman; but they came not.

In bounced G. T[homson], alarmed by an anonymous letter, which acquainted him that thirty tents full of Catholics were coming to celebrate high mass in the Abbey church; and to consult me on such a precious document he came prancing about seven at night. I hope to get him a kirk before he makes any extraordinary explosion of simplicity.

December 29. — Mr. and Mrs. Percival came to-day. He is son of the late lamented statesman, equally distinguished by talents and integrity. The son is a clever young man, and has read a good deal; pleasant, too, in society; but tampers with phrenology, which is unworthy of his father's son. There is a certain kind of cleverish men, either half educated or cock-brained by nature, who are attached to that same turnipology. I am sorry this gentleman should take such whims — sorry even for his name's sake. Walter and Jane arrived; so our Christmas party thickens. Sir Adam and Colonel Ferguson dined.

December 30. — Wrote and wrought hard, then went out a drive with Mr. and Mrs. Percival; and went round by the lake. If my days of good fortune should ever return I will lay out some pretty rides at Abbotsford.

Last day of an eventful year; much evil and some good; but especially the courage to endure what Fortune sends without becoming a pipe for her fingers.

It is not the last day of the year, but tomorrow being Sunday we hold our festival of neighbours to-day instead. The Fergusons came en masse, and we had all the usual appliances of mirth and good cheer. Yet our party, like the chariot-wheels of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, dragged heavily.

Some of the party grow old and infirm; others thought of the absence of the hostess, whose reception of her guests was always kind. We did as well as we could, however.

> "It's useless to murmur and pout —
> There's no good in making ado;
> 'Tis well the old year is out,
> And time to begin a new."

December 31. — It must be allowed that the regular recurrence of annual festivals among the same individuals has, as life advances, something in it that is melancholy. We meet on such occasions like the survivors of some perilous expedition, wounded and weakened ourselves, and looking through the diminished ranks of those who remain, while we think of those who are no more. Or they are like the feasts of the Caribs, in which they held that the pale and speechless phantoms of the deceased appeared and mingled with the living. Yet where shall we fly from vain repining? Or why should we give up the comfort of seeing our friends, because they can no longer be to us, or we to them, what we once were to each other?

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January 1. — God make this a happy year to the King and country, and to all honest men!

I went with all our family to-day to dine as usual at the kind house of Huntly Burn; but the same cloud which hung over us on Saturday still had its influence. The effect of grief upon [those] who, like myself and Sir A.F., are highly susceptible of humour, has, I think, been finely touched by Wordsworth in the character of the merry village teacher Matthew, whom Jeffrey profanely calls the hysterical schoolmaster. But, with my friend Jeffrey's pardon, I think he loves to see imagination best when it is bitted and managed and ridden upon, the grand pas. He does not make allowance for starts and sallies and bounds when Pegasus is beautiful to behold, though sometimes perilous to his rider. Not that I think the amiable bard of Rydal shows judgment in choosing such subjects as the popular mind cannot sympathise in. It is unwise and unjust to himself. I do not compare myself, in point of imagination, with Wordsworth — far from it; for [his] is naturally exquisite, and highly cultivated by constant exercise. But I can see as many castles in the clouds as any man, as many genii in the curling smoke of a steam engine, as perfect a Persepolis in the embers of a seacoal fire. My life has been spent in such daydreams. But I cry no roast-meat. There are times a man should remember what Rousseau used to say: Tais-toi, Jean-Jacques, car on ne t'entend pas!

January 2. — I had resolved to mark down no more griefs and groans, but I must needs briefly state that I am nailed to my chair like the unhappy Theseus. The rheumatism, exasperated by my sortie of yesterday, has seized on my only serviceable knee — and I am, by Proserpine, motionless as an anvil. Leeches and embrocations are all I have for it. Diable! there was a twinge. The Russells and Fergusons here; but I was fairly driven off the pit after dinner, and compelled to retreat to my own bed, there to howl till morning like a dog in his solitary cabin.

January 3. — Mending slowly. Two things are comfortable — 1st, I lose no good weather out of doors, for the ground is covered with snow; 2d,

That, by exerting a little stoicism, I can make my illness promote the advance of Nap. As I can scarcely stand, however, I am terribly awkward at consulting books, maps, *etc.* The work grows under my hand, however; vol. vi. [Napoleon] will be finished this week, I believe. Russells being still with us, I was able by dint of handing and chairing to get to the dining-room and the drawingroom in the evening.

Talking of Wordsworth, he told Anne and me a story, the object of which was to show that Crabbe had not imagination. He, Sir George Beaumont, and Wordsworth were sitting together in Murray the bookseller's back-room. Sir George, after sealing a letter, blew out the candle, which had enabled him to do so, and, exchanging a look with Wordsworth, began to admire in silence the undulating thread of smoke which slowly arose from the expiring wick, when Crabbe put on the extinguisher. Anne laughed at the instance, and inquired if the taper was wax, and being answered in the negative, seemed to think that there was no call on Mr. Crabbe to sacrifice his sense of smell to their admiration of beautiful and evanescent forms. In two other men I should have said "this is affectations," with Sir Hugh Evans; but Sir George is the man in the world most void of affectation; and then he is an exquisite painter, and no doubt saw where the incident would have succeeded in painting. The error is not in you yourself receiving deep impressions from slight hints, but in supposing that precisely the same sort of impression must arise in the mind of men otherwise of kindred feeling, or that the commonplace folks of the world can derive such inductions at any time or under any circumstances.

January 4. — My enemy gained some strength during the watches of the night, but has again succumbed under scalding fomentations of camomile flowers. I still keep my state, for my knee, though it has ceased to pain me, is very feeble. We began to fill the ice-house to-day. Dine alone — en famille, that is, Jane, Anne, Walter, and I. Why, this makes up for aiches, as poor John Kemble used to call them. After tea I broke off work, and read my young folks the farce of the Critic, and "merry folks were we."

January 5. — I waked, or aked if you please, for five or six hours I think, then fevered a little. I am better though, God be thanked, and can now shuffle about and help myself to what I want without ringing every quarter of an hour. It is a fine clear sunny day; I should like to go out, but flannel

and poultices cry nay. So I drudge away with the assisting of Pelet, who has a real French head, believing all he desires should be true, and affirming all he wishes should be believed. Skenes (Mr. and Mrs., with Miss Jardine) arrived about six o'clock. Skene very rheumatic, as well as I am.

January 6. — Worked till dusk, but not with much effect; my head and mind not clear somehow. W. Laidlaw at dinner. In the evening read Foote's farce of the Commissary, said to have been levelled at Sir Lawrence Dundas; but Sir Lawrence was a man of family. Walter and Jane dined at Mertoun.

January 7. — Wrought till twelve, then sallied and walked with Skene for two miles; home and corrected proofs, and to a large amount. Mr. Scrope and George Thomson dined.

January 8. — Slept well last night in consequence I think of my walk, which I will, God willing, repeat to-day. I wrote some letters too long delayed, and sent off my packets to J.B. Letter from C. Sharpe very pressing. I should employ my interest at Windsor to oppose the alterations on the town of Edinburgh. "One word from you, and all that." I don't think I shall speak that word though. I hate the alterations, that is certain; but then ne accesseris in consilium nisi vocatus, — what is the use of my volunteering an opinion? Again, the value of many people's property may depend on this plan going forward. Have I a right from mere views of amenity to interfere with those serious interests? I something doubt it. Then I have always said that I never meddle in such work, and ought I sotto voce now to begin it? By my faith I won't; there are enough to state the case besides me.

The young Duke of B. came in to bid us goodbye, as he is going off to England. God bless him! He is a hawk of a good nest. Afterwards I walked to the Welsh pool, Skene declining to go, for I

> " — — — not over stout of limb,
> Seem stronger of the two."

January 9. — This morning received the long-expected news of the Duke of York's death. I am sorry both on public and private accounts. His R.H.

was, while he occupied the situation of next in the royal succession, a Breakwater behind the throne. I fear his brother of Clarence's opinions may be different, and that he will hoist a standard under which will rendezvous men of desperate hopes and evil designs. I am sorry, too, on my own account. The Duke of York was uniformly kind to me, and though I never tasked his friendship deeply, yet I find a powerful friend is gone. His virtues were honour, good sense, integrity; and by exertion of these qualities he raised the British army from a very low ebb to be the pride and dread of Europe. His errors were those of a sanguine and social temper; he could not resist the temptation of deep play, which was fatally allied with a disposition to the bottle. This last is incident to his complaint, which vinous influence soothes for the time, while it insidiously increases it in the end.

Here blows a gale of wind. I was to go to Galashiels to settle some foolish lawsuit, and afterwards to have been with Mr. Kerr of Kippilaw to treat about a march-dike. I shall content myself with the first duty, for this day does not suit Bowden-moor.

Went over to Galashiels like the devil in a gale of wind, and found a writer contesting with half-a-dozen unwashed artificers the possession of a piece of ground the size and shape of a three-cornered pocket-handkerchief. Tried to "gar them gree," and if I succeed, I shall think I deserve something better than the touch of rheumatism, which is like to be my only reward.

Scotts of Harden and John Pringle of Clifton dined, and we got on very well.

January 10. — Enter rheumatism, and takes me by the knee. So much for playing the peacemaker in a shower of rain. Nothing for it but patience, cataplasm of camomile, and labour in my own room the whole day till dinner-time — then company and reading in the evening.

January 11. — Ditto repeated. I should have thought I would have made more of these solitary days than I find I can do. A morning, or two or three hours before dinner, have often done more efficient work than six or seven of these hours of languor, I cannot say of illness, can produce. A bow that is slackly strung will never send an arrow very far. Heavy snow. We are engaged at Mr. Scrope's, but I think I shall not be able to go. I remained at home accordingly, and, having nothing else to do, worked hard and effectively. I believe my sluggishness was partly owing to the gnawing

rheumatic pain in my knee, for after all I am of opinion pain is an evil, let Stoics say what they will. Thank God, it is an evil which is mending with me.

January 12. — All this day occupied with camomile poultices and pen and ink. It is now four o'clock, and I have written yesterday and to-day ten of my pages — that is, one-tenth of one of these large volumes — moreover, I have corrected three proof-sheets. I wish it may not prove fool's haste, yet I take as much pains too as is in my nature.

January 13. — The Fergusons, with my neighbours Mr. Scrope and Mr. Bainbridge and young Hume, eat a haunch of venison from Drummond Castle, and seemed happy. We had music and a little dancing, and enjoyed in others the buoyancy of spirit that we no longer possess ourselves. Yet I do not think the young people of this age so gay as we were. There is a turn for persiflage, a fear of ridicule among them, which stifles the honest emotions of gaiety and lightness of spirit; and people, when they give in the least to the expansion of their natural feelings, are always kept under by the fear of becoming ludicrous. To restrain your feelings and check your enthusiasm in the cause even of pleasure is now a rule among people of fashion, as much as it used to be among philosophers.

January 14. — Well — my holidays are out — and I may count my gains and losses as honest Robinson Crusoe used to balance his accounts of good and evil.

I have not been able, during three weeks, to stir above once or twice from the house. But then I have executed a great deal of work, which would be otherwise unfinished.

Again I have sustained long and sleepless nights and much pain. True; but no one is the worse of the thoughts which arise in the watches of the night; and for pain, the complaint which brought on this rheumatism was not so painful perhaps, but was infinitely more disagreeable and depressing.

Something there has been of dulness in our little reunions of society which did not use to cloud them. But I have seen all my own old and kind friends, with my dear children (Charles alone excepted); and if we did not rejoice with perfect joy, it was overshadowed from the same sense of regret.

Again, this new disorder seems a presage of the advance of age with its infirmities. But age is but the cypress avenue which terminates in the tomb, where the weary are at rest.

I have been putting my things to rights to go off tomorrow. Though I always wonder why it should be so, I feel a dislike to order and to task-work of all kinds — a predominating foible in my disposition. I do not mean that it influences me in morals; for even in youth I had a disgust at gross irregularities of any kind, and such as I ran into were more from compliance with others and a sort of false shame, than any pleasure I sought or found in dissipation. But what I mean is a detestation of precise order in petty matters — in reading or answering letters, in keeping my papers arranged and in order, and so on. Weber, and then Gordon, used to keep my things in some order — now they are verging to utter confusion. And then I have let my cash run ahead since I came from the Continent — I must slump the matter as I can.

[Shandwick Place,] January 15. — Off we came, and despite of rheumatism I got through the journey comfortably. Greeted on my arrival by a number of small accounts whistling like grapeshot; they are of no great avail, and incurred, I see, chiefly during the time of illness. But I believe it will take me some hard work till I pay them, and how to get the time to work? It will be hard purchased if, as I think not unlikely, this bitch of a rheumatism should once more pin me to my chair. Coming through Galashiels, we met the Laird of Torwoodlee, who, on hearing how long I had been confined, asked how I bore it, observing that he had once in his life (Torwoodlee must be between sixty and seventy) been confined for five days to the house, and was like to hang himself. I regret God's free air as much as any man, but I could amuse myself were it in the Bastile.

January 16. — Went to Court, and returned through a curious atmosphere, half mist, half rain, famous for rheumatic joints. Yet I felt no increase of my plaguey malady, but, on the contrary, am rather better. I had need, otherwise a pair of crutches for life were my prettiest help.

Walter dined with us to-day, Jane remaining with her mother. The good affectionate creatures leave us tomorrow. God send them a quick passage through the Irish Channel! They go to Gort, where Walter's troop is lying — a long journey for winter days.

January 17. — Another proper day of mist, sleet, and rain, through which I navigated homeward. I imagine the distance to be a mile and a half. It is a good thing to secure as much exercise.

I observed in the papers my old friend Gifford's funeral. He was a man of rare attainments and many excellent qualities. The translation of Juvenal is one of the best versions ever made of a classical author, and his satire of the Baviad and Maeviad squabashed at one blow a set of coxcombs who might have humbugged the world long enough.

As a commentator he was capital, could he but have suppressed his rancour against those who had preceded him in the task, but a misconstruction or misinterpretation, nay, the misplacing of a comma, was in Gifford's eyes a crime worthy of the most severe animadversion. The same fault of extreme severity went through his critical labours, and in general he flagellated with so little pity, that people lost their sense of the criminal's guilt in dislike of the savage pleasure which the executioner seemed to take in inflicting the punishment.

This lack of temper probably arose from indifferent health, for he was very valetudinary, and realised two verses, wherein he says fortune assigned him —

> " — — — One eye not over good,
> Two sides that to their cost have stood
> A ten years' hectic cough,
> Aches, stitches, all the various ills
> That swell the dev'lish doctor's bills,
> And sweep poor mortals off."

But he might also justly claim, as his gift, the moral qualities expressed in the next fine stanza —

> " — — — A soul
> That spurns the crowd's malign control,
> A firm contempt of wrong:
> Spirits above afflictions' power,
> And skill to soothe the lingering hour
> With no inglorious song."

January 18. — To go on with my subject — Gifford was a little man, dumpled up together, and so ill-made as to seem almost deformed, but with a singular expression of talent in his countenance. Though so little of an athlete, he nevertheless beat off Dr. Wolcot, when that celebrated person, the most unsparing calumniator of his time, chose to be offended with Gifford for satirising him in his turn. Peter Pindar made a most vehement attack, but Gifford had the best of the affray, and remained, I think, in triumphant possession of the field of action, and of the assailant's cane. Gifford had one singular custom. He used always to have a duenna of a housekeeper to sit in his study with him while he wrote. This female companion died when I was in London, and his distress was extreme. I afterwards heard he got her place supplied. I believe there was no scandal in all this.

This is another vile day of darkness and rain, with a heavy yellow mist that might become Charing Cross — one of the benefits of our extended city; for that in our atmosphere was unknown till the extent of the buildings below Queen Street. M'Culloch of Ardwell called.

Wrought chiefly on a critique of Mrs. Charlotte Smith's novels, and proofs.

January 19. — Uncle Adam, vide Inheritance, who retired last year from an official situation at the age of eighty-four, although subject to fits of giddiness, and although carefully watched by his accomplished daughter, is still in the habit of walking by himself if he can by possibility make an escape. The other day, in one of these excursions, he fell against a lamp-post, cut himself much, bled a good deal, and was carried home by two gentlemen. What said old Rugged-and-Tough? Why, that his fall against the post was the luckiest thing could have befallen him, for the bleeding was exactly the remedy for his disorder.

"Lo! stout hearts of men!"

Called on said "uncle," also on David Hume, Lord Chief-Commissioner, Will Clerk, Mrs. Jobson, and others. My knee made no allowance for my politeness, but has begun to swell again, and to burn like a scorpion's bite.

January 20. — Scarce slept all night; scarce able to stand or move this

morning; almost an absolute fixture.

> "A sleepless knight,
> A weary knight,
> God be the guide."

This is at the Court a blank day, being that of the poor Duke of York's funeral. I can sit at home, luckily, and fag hard.

And so I have, pretty well; six leaves written, and four or five proof-sheets corrected. Cadell came to breakfast, and proposes an eighth volume for Napoleon. I told him he might write to Longman for their opinion. Seven is an awkward number, and will extremely cramp the work. Eight, too, would go into six octavos, should it ever be called for in that shape. But it shall be as they list to have it.

January 21. — A long day of some pain relieved by labour. Dr. Ross came in and recommended some stuff, which did little good. I would like ill to lose the use of my precious limbs. Meanwhile, Patience, cousin, and shuffle the cards.

Missie dined with us to-day — an honest Scotch lass, ladylike and frank. I finished about six leaves, doing indeed little else.

January 22. — Work, varied with camomile; we get on, though. A visit from Basil Hall, with Mr. Audubon the ornithologist, who has followed that pursuit by many a long wandering in the American forests. He is an American by naturalisation, a Frenchman by birth; but less of a Frenchman than I have ever seen — no dash, or glimmer, or shine about him, but great simplicity of manners and behaviour; slight in person, and plainly dressed; wears long hair, which time has not yet tinged; his countenance acute, handsome, and interesting, but still simplicity is the predominant characteristic. I wish I had gone to see his drawings; but I had heard so much about them that I resolved not to see them — "a crazy way of mine, your honour." — Five more leaves finished.

January 23. — I have got a piece of armour, a knee-cap of chamois leather, which I think does my unlucky rheumatism some good. I begin, too, to sleep at night, which is a great comfort. Spent this day completely in labour;

only betwixt dinner and tea, while husbanding a tumbler of whisky and water, I read the new novel, Elizabeth de Bruce — part of it, that is.

January 24. — Visit from Mr. Audubon, who brings some of his birds. The drawings are of the first order — the attitudes of the birds of the most animated character, and the situations appropriate; one of a snake attacking a bird's nest, while the birds (the parents) peck at the reptile's eyes — they usually, in the longrun, destroy him, says the naturalist. The feathers of these gay little sylphs, most of them from the Southern States, are most brilliant, and are represented with what, were it [not] connected with so much spirit in the attitude, I would call a laborious degree of execution. This extreme correctness is of the utmost consequence to the naturalist, [but] as I think (having no knowledge of virtu), rather gives a stiffness to the drawings. This sojourner in the desert had been in the woods for months together. He preferred associating with the Indians to the company of the Back Settlers; very justly, I daresay, for a civilised man of the lower order — that is, the dregs of civilisation — when thrust back on the savage state becomes worse than a savage. They are Wordsworth's adventurer,

> "Deliberate and undeceived
> The wild men's vices who received,
> And gave them back his own."

The Indians, he says, are dying fast; they seem to pine and die whenever the white population approaches them. The Shawanese, who amounted, Mr. Audubon says, to some thousands within his memory, are almost extinct, and so are various other tribes. Mr. Audubon could never hear any tradition about the mammoth, though he made anxious inquiries. He gives no countenance to the idea that the Red Indians were ever a more civilised people than at this day, or that a more civilised people had preceded them in North America. He refers the bricks, etc., occasionally found, and appealed to in support of this opinion, to the earlier settlers, — or, where kettles and other utensils may have been found, to the early trade between the Indians and the Spaniards.

John Russell and Leonard Horner came to consult me about the propriety and possibility of retaining the northern pronunciation of the Latin in the new Edinburgh Academy. I will think of it until tomorrow, being no

great judge. We had our solitary dinner; indeed, it is only remarkable nowadays when we have a guest.

January 25. — Thought during the watches of the night and a part of the morning about the question of Latin pronunciation, and came to the following conclusions. That the mode of pronunciation approved by Buchanan and by Milton, and practised by all nations, excepting the English, assimilated in sound, too, to the Spanish, Italian, and other languages derived from the Latin, is certainly the best, and is likewise useful as facilitating the acquisition of sounds which the Englishman attempts in vain. Accordingly I wish the cockneyfied pedant who first disturbed it by reading Emo for Amo, and quy for qui, had choked in the attempt. But the question is, whether a youth who has been taught in a manner different from that used all over England will be heard, if he presumes to use his Latin at the bar or the senate; and if he is to be unintelligible or ludicrous, the question [arises] whether his education is not imperfect under one important view. I am very unwilling to sacrifice our sumpsimus to their old mumpsimus — still more to humble ourselves before the Saxons while we can keep an inch of the Scottish flag flying. But this is a question which must be decided not on partialities or prejudices.

I got early from the Court to-day, and settled myself to work hard.

January 26. — My rheumatism is almost gone. I can walk without Major Weir, which is the name Anne gives my cane, because it is so often out of the way that it is suspected, like the staff of that famous wizard, to be capable of locomotion. Went to Court, and tarried till three o'clock, after which transacted business with Mr. Gibson and Dr. Inglis as one of Miss Hume's trustees. Then was introduced to young Mr. Rennie, or he to me, by [Sir] James Hall, a genteel-looking young man, and speaks well. He was called into public notice by having, many years before, made a draught of a plan of his father's for London Bridge. It was sought for when the building was really about to take place, and the assistance which young Mr. Rennie gave to render it useful raised his character so high, that his brother and he are now in firstrate practice as civil engineers.

January 27. — Read Elizabeth de Bruce; it is very clever, but does not show much originality. The characters, though very entertaining, are in the

manner of other authors, and the finished and filled up portraits of which the sketches are to be found elsewhere. One is too apt to feel on such occasions the pettish resentment that you might entertain against one who had poached on your manor. But the case is quite different, and a claim set up on having been the first who betook himself to the illustration of some particular class of characters, or department of life, is no more a right of monopoly than that asserted by the old buccaneers by setting up a wooden cross, and killing an Indian or two on some new discovered island. If they can make anything of their first discovery, the better luck theirs; if not, let others come, penetrate further into the country, write descriptions, make drawings or settlements at their pleasure.

We were kept in Parliament House till three. Called to return thanks to Mr. Menzies of Pitfoddels, who lent some pamphlets about the unhappy Duke d'Enghien. Read in the evening Boutourlin and Ségur, to prepare for my Russian campaign.

January 28. — Continued my reading with the commentary of the D. of W. If his broad shoulders cannot carry me through, the devil must be in the dice. Longman and Company agree to the eight volumes. It will make the value of the book more than £12,000. Wrought indifferent hard.

January 29. — Mr. Gibson breakfasted with Dr. Marshman, the head of the missionaries at Serampore, a great Oriental scholar. He is a thin, dark-featured, middle-sized man, about fifty or upwards, his eye acute, his hair just beginning to have a touch of the grey. He spoke well and sensibly, and seemed liberal in his ideas. He was clearly of opinion that general information must go hand in hand, or even ought to precede religious instruction. Thinks the influence of European manners is gradually making changes in India. The natives, so far as their religion will allow them, are become fond of Europeans, and invite them to their great festivals. He has a conceit that the Afghans are the remains of the Ten Tribes. I cannot find he has a better reason than their own tradition, which calls them Ben-Israel, and says they are not Ben-Judah. They have Jewish rites and ceremonies, but so have all Mahometans; neither could I understand that their language has anything peculiar. The worship of Bhoodah he conceives to have [been] an original, or rather the original, of Hindu religion, until the Brahmins introduced the doctrines respecting caste and other peculiarities. But it

would require strong proof to show that the superstition of caste could be introduced into a country which had been long peopled, and where society had long existed without such restriction. It is more like to be adopted in the early history of a tribe, when there are but few individuals, the descent of whom is accurately preserved. How could the castes be distinguished or told off in a populous nation? Dr. Marshman was an old friend of poor John Leyden.

January 30. — Blank day at Court, being the Martyrdom. Wrought hard at Bon. all day, though I had settled otherwise. I ought to have been at an article for John Lockhart, and one for poor Gillies; but there is something irresistible in contradiction, even when it consists in doing a thing equally laborious, but not the thing you are especially called upon to do. It is a kind of cheating the devil, which a self-willed monster like me is particularly addicted to. Not to make myself worse than I am though, I was full of information about the Russian campaign, which might evaporate unless used, like lime, as soon after it was wrought up as possible. About three, Pitfoddels called. A bauld crack that auld papist body, and well informed. We got on religion. He is very angry with the Irish demagogues, and a sound well-thinking man. Heard of Walter and Jane; all well, God be praised!

> By a letter from Gibson I see the gross proceeds of
> Bonaparte, at eight volumes, are £12,600 0 0
> Discount, five months, 210 0 0
> £12,390 0 0

I question if more was ever made by a single work, or by a single author's labours, in the same time. But whether it is deserved or not is the question.

January 31. — Young Murray, son of Mr. M., in Albemarle Street, breakfasted with me. English boys have this advantage, that they are wellbred, and can converse when ours are regular-built cubs. I am not sure if it is an advantage in the longrun. It is a temptation to premature display.

Wet to the skin coming from the Court. Called on Skene, to give him, for the Antiquarian Society, a heart, human apparently, stuck full of pins. It was found lying opposite to the threshold of an old tenement, in [Dalkeith], a little below the surface; it is in perfect preservation. Dined at the

Bannatyne Club, where I am chairman. We admitted a batch of new members, chiefly noblemen and men connected with the public offices and records in London, such as Palgrave, Petrie, *etc.* We drank to our old Scottish heroes, poets, historians, and printers, and were funny enough, though, like Shylock, I had no will to go abroad. I was supported by Lord Minto and Lord Eldin.

February

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February 1. — I feel a return of the cursed rheumatism. How could it miss, with my wetting? Also feverish, and a slight headache. So much for claret and champagne. I begin to be quite unfit for a good fellow. Like Mother Cole in the Minor, a thimbleful upsets me, — I mean, annoys my stomach, for my brains do not suffer. Well, I have had my time of these merry doings.

> "The haunch of the deer, and the wine's red dye,
> Never bard loved them better than I."

But it was for the sake of sociality; never either for the flask or the venison. That must end — is ended. The evening sky of life does not reflect those brilliant flashes of light that shot across its morning and noon. Yet I thank God it is neither gloomy nor disconsolately lowering; a sober twilight — that is all.

I am in great hopes that the Bannatyne Club, by the assistance of Thomson's wisdom, industry, and accuracy, will be something far superior to the Dilettanti model on which it started. The Historie of K. James VI., Melville's Memoirs, and other works, executed or in hand, are decided boons to Scottish history and literature.

February 2. — In confirmation of that which is above stated, I see in Thorpe's sale-catalogue a set of the Bannatyne books, lacking five, priced £25. Had a dry walk from the Court by way of dainty, and made it a long one. Anne went at night to Lady Minto's.

Hear of Miss White's death. Poor Lydia! she had a party at dinner on the Friday before, and had written with her own hand invitations for another party. Twenty years ago she used to tease me with her youthful affectations — her dressing like the Queen of Chimney-sweeps on May-day morning, and sometimes with rather a free turn in conversation, when she let her wit run wild. But she was a woman of much wit, and had a feeling and kind heart. She made her point good, a bas-bleu in London to a point not easily attained, and contrived to have every evening a very good literary mêlée, and little dinners which were very entertaining. She had also the newest

lions upon town. In a word, she was not and would not be forgotten, even when disease obliged her, as it did for years, to confine herself to her couch; and the world, much abused for hardheartedness, was kind in her case — so she lived in the society she liked. No great expenditure was necessary for this. She had an easy fortune, but not more. Poor Lydia! I saw the Duke of York and her in London, when Death, it seems, was brandishing his dart over them.

"The view o't gave them little fright."

Did not get quite a day's work finished to-day, thanks to my walk.

February 3. — There is nought but care on every hand. James Hogg writes that he is to lose his farm, on which he laid out, or rather threw away, the profit of all his publications.

Then Terry has been pressed by Gibson for my debt to him. That I may get managed.

I sometimes doubt if I am in what the good people call the right way. Not to sing my own praises, I have been willing always to do my friends what good was in my power, and have not shunned personal responsibility. But then that was in money matters, to which I am naturally indifferent, unless when the consequences press on me. But then I am a bad comforter in case of inevitable calamity; and feeling proudly able to endure in my own case, I cannot sympathise with those whose nerves are of a feebler texture.

Dined at Jeffrey's, with Lord and Lady Minto, John Murray and his lady, a Mr. Featherstone, an Americo-Yorkshireman, and some others. Mrs. Murray is a very amiable person, and seems highly accomplished; plays most brilliantly.

February 4. — R.R. These two letters, you must understand, do not signify, as in Bibliomania phrase, a double degree of rarity, but, chirurgically, a double degree of rheumatism. The wine gets to weak places, Ross says. I have a letter from no less a person than that pink of booksellers, Sir Richard Phillips, who, it seems, has been ruined, and as he sees me floating down the same dark tide, sings out his nos poma natamus.

February 5. — R. One R. will do to-day. If this cursed rheumatism gives way to February weather, I will allow she has some right to be called a

spring month, to which otherwise her pretensions are slender. I worked this morning till two o'clock, and visited Mr. Grant's pictures, who has them upon sale. They seem, to my inexperienced eye, genuine, or at least, good paintings. But I fear picture-buying, like horse-jockeyship, is a profession a gentleman cannot make much of without laying aside some of his attributes. The pictures are too high-priced, I should think, for this market. There is a very knowing catalogue by Frank Grant himself. Next went to see a show of wild beasts; it was a fine one. I think they keep them much cleaner than formerly, when the strong smell generally gave me a headache for the day. The creatures are also much tamer, which I impute to more knowledge of their habits and kind treatment. A lion and tigress went through their exercise like poodles — jumping, standing, and lying down at the word of command. This is rather degrading. I would have the Lord Chancellor of Beasts good-humoured, not jocose. I treated the elephant, who was a noble fellow, to a shilling's worth of cakes. I wish I could have enlarged the space in which so much bulk and wisdom is confined. He kept swinging his head from side to side, looking as if he marvelled why all the fools that gaped at him were at liberty, and he cooped up in the cage.

Dined at the Royal Society Club — about thirty present. Went to the Society in the evening, and heard an essay by Peter Tytler on the first encourager of Greek learning in England.

February 6. — Was at Court till two; afterwards wrote a good deal, which has become a habit with me. Dined at Sir John Hay's, where met the Advocate and a pleasant party. There had been a Justiciary trial yesterday, in which something curious had occurred. A woman of rather the better class, a farmer's wife, had been tried on the 5th for poisoning her maidservant. There seems to have been little doubt of her guilt, but the motive was peculiar. The unfortunate girl had an intrigue with her son, which this Mrs. Smith (I think that is the name) was desirous to conceal, from some ill-advised puritanic notions, and also for fear of her husband. She could find no better way of hiding the shame than giving the girl (with her own knowledge and consent, I believe) potions to cause abortion, which she afterwards changed for arsenic, as the more effectual silencing medicine. In the course of the trial one of the jury fell down in an epileptic fit, and on his recovery was far too much disordered to permit the trial to proceed. With only fourteen jurymen it was impossible to go on. But the

Advocate, Sir William Rae, says she shall be tried anew, since she has not tholed an assize. Sic Paulus ait — et recte quidem. But, having been half tried, I think she should have some benefit of it, as far as saving her life, if convicted on the second indictment. The Advocate declares, however, she shall be hanged, as certainly she deserves. But it looks something like hanging up a man who has been recovered by the surgeons, which has always been accounted harsh justice.

February 7. — Wrote six leaves to-day, and am tired — that's all.

February 8. — I lost much time to-day. I got from the Court about halfpast twelve, therefore might have reckoned on four hours, or three at least, before dinner. But I had to call on Dr. Shortt at two, which made me lounge till that hour came. Then I missed him, and, too tired to return, went to see the exhibition, where Skene was hanging up the pictures, and would not let me in. Then to the Oil Gas Company, who propose to send up counsel to support their new bill. As I thought the choice unadvisedly made, I fairly opposed the mission, which, I suppose, will give much offence; but I have no notion of being shamefaced in doing my duty, and I do not think I should permit forward persons to press into situations for which their vanity alone renders them competent. Had many proof-sheets to correct in the evening.

February 9. — We had a long day of it at Court, but I whipped you off half-a-dozen of letters, for, as my cases stood last on the roll, I could do what I liked in the interim. This carried me on till two o'clock. Called on Baron Hume, and found him, as usual, in high spirits, notwithstanding his late illness. Then crept home — my rheumatism much better, though. Corrected lives of Lord Somerville and the King [George III.] for the Prose Works, which took a long time; but I had the whole evening to myself, as Anne dined with the Swintons, and went to a ball at the Justice-Clerk's. N.B. — It is the first and only ball which has been given this season — a sign the times are pinching.

February 10. — I got a present of Lord Francis Gower's printed but unpublished Tale of the Mill. It is a fine tale of terror in itself, and very happily brought out. He has certainly a true taste for poetry. I do not know why, but from my childhood I have seen something fearful, or melancholy

at least, about a mill. Whether I had been frightened at the machinery when very young, of which I think I have some shadowy recollection — whether I had heard the stories of the miller of Thirlestane and similar molendinar tragedies, I cannot tell; but not even recollection of the Lass of Patie's Mill, or the Miller of Mansfield, or he who "dwelt on the river Dee," have ever got over my inclination to connect gloom with a mill, especially when sun is setting. So I entered into the spirit of the terror with which Lord Francis has invested his haunted spot. I dine with the Solicitor to-day, so quoad labour 'tis a blank. But then tomorrow is a new day.

"Tomorrow to fresh meads and pastures new."

February 11. — Wrought a good deal in the morning, and landed Boney at Smolensk. But I have him to bring off again; and, moreover, I must collate the authorities on the movements of the secondary armies of Witgenstein and the Admiral with the break-tooth name. Dined with Lord Minto, where I met Thomson, Cranstoun, and other gay folks. These dinner parties narrow my working hours; yet they must sometimes be, or one would fall out of the line of society, and go to leeward entirely, which is not right to venture. This is the high time for parties in Edinburgh; no wonder one cannot keep clear.

February 12. — I was obliged to read instead of writing, and the infernal Russian names, which everybody spells ad libitum, makes it difficult to trace the operations on a better map than mine. I called to-day on Dr. Shortt, principal surgeon at Saint Helena, and who presided at the opening of Bonaparte's body. He mentions as certain the falsehood of a number of the assertions concerning his usage, the unhealthy state of the island, and so forth. I have jotted down his evidence elsewhere. I could not write when I came home. Nervous a little, I think, and not yet up to the motions of Tchitchagoff, as I must be before I can write. Will [Clerk] and Sir A. Ferguson dine here to-day — the first time any one has had that honour for long enough, unless at Abbotsford. The good Lord Chief-Commissioner invited himself, and I asked his son, Admiral Adam. Col. Ferguson is of the party.

February 13. — The dining parties come thick, and interfere with work

extremely. I am, however, beforehand very far. Yet, as James B. says — the tortoise comes up with the hare. So Puss must make a new start; but not this week. Went to see the exhibition — certainly a good one for Scotland — and less trash than I have seen at Somerset-House (begging pardon of the pockpuddings). There is a beautiful thing by Landseer — a Highlander and two staghounds engaged with a deer. Very spirited, indeed. I forgot my rheumatism, and could have wished myself of the party. There were many fine folks, and there was a collation, chocolate, and so forth. We dine at Sir H. Jardine's, with Lord Ch.-Com., Lord Chief-Baron, *etc.*

February 14. — "Death's gi'en the art an unco devel." Sir George Beaumont's dead; by far the most sensible and pleasing man I ever knew; kind, too, in his nature, and generous; gentle in society, and of those mild manners which tend to soften the causticity of the general London [tone] of persiflage and personal satire. As an amateur, he was a painter of the very highest rank. Though I know nothing of the matter, yet I should hold him a perfect critic on painting, for he always made his criticisms intelligible, and used no slang. I am very sorry, as much as is in my nature to be, for one whom I could see but seldom. He was the great friend of Wordsworth, and understood his poetry, which is a rare thing, for it is more easy to see his peculiarities than to feel his great merit, or follow his abstract ideas. I dined to-day at Lord Ch.-Commissioner's — Lord Minto, and Lord Ch.-Baron, also Harden. Little done to-day.

February 15. — Rheumatism returns with the snow. I had thoughts of going to Abbotsford on Saturday, but if this lasts, it will not do; and, sooth to speak, it ought not to do; though it would do me much pleasure if it would do.

I have a letter from Baron Von Goethe, which I must have read to me; for though I know German, I have forgot their written hand. I make it a rule seldom to read, and never to answer, foreign letters from literary folks. It leads to nothing but the battledore and shuttlecock intercourse of compliments, as light as cork and feathers. But Goethe is different, and a wonderful fellow, the Ariosto at once, and almost the Voltaire of Germany. Who could have told me thirty years ago I should correspond, and be on something like an equal footing, with the author of Goetz? Ay, and who could have told me fifty things else that have befallen me?

February 16. — R. Still snow; and, alas! no time for work, so hard am I fagged by the Court and the good company of Edinburgh. I almost wish my rheumatics were bad enough to give me an apology for staying a week at home. But we have Sunday and Monday clear. If not better, I will cribb off Tuesday; and Wednesday is Teind day. We dined to-day with Mr. Borthwick, younger of Crookston.

February 17. — James Ferguson ill of the rheumatism in head and neck, and Hector B. Macdonald in neck and shoulders. I wonder, as Commodore Trunnion says, what the blackguard hell's-baby has to say to the Clerks of Session. Went to the Second Division to assist Hector. N.B. — Don't like it half so well as my own, for the speeches are much longer. Home at dinner, and wrought in the evening.

February 18. — Very cold weather. I am rather glad I am not in the country. What says Dean Swift —

> "When frost and snow come both together,
> Then sit by the fire and save shoe leather."

Wrought all morning and finished five pages. Missie dined with us.

February 19. — As well I give up Abbotsford, for Hamilton is laid up with the gout. The snow, too, continues, with a hard frost. I have seen the day I would have liked it all the better. I read and wrote at the bitter account of the French retreat from Moscow, in 1812, till the little room and coal fire seemed snug by comparison. I felt cold in its rigour in my childhood and boyhood, but not since. In youth and advanced life we get less sensible to it, but I remember thinking it worse than hunger. Uninterrupted to-day, and did eight leaves.

February 20. — At Court, and waited to see the poisoning woman. She is clearly guilty, but as one or two witnesses said the poor wench hinted an intention to poison herself, the jury gave that bastard verdict, Not proven. I hate that Caledonian medium quid. One who is not proven guilty is innocent in the eye of law. It was a face to do or die, or perhaps to do to die. Thin features, which had been handsome, a flashing eye, an acute and

aquiline nose, lips much marked, as arguing decision, and, I think, bad temper — they were thin, and habitually compressed, rather turned down at the corners, as one of a rather melancholy disposition. There was an awful crowd; but, sitting within the bar, I had the pleasure of seeing much at my ease; the constables knocking the other folks about, which was of course very entertaining.

Lord Liverpool is ill of an apoplexy. I am sorry for it. He will be missed. Who will be got for Premier? Not B — — certainly; he wants weight. If Peel would consent to be made a peer, he would do better; but I doubt his ambition will prefer the House of Commons. Wrought a a good deal.

February 21. — Being the vacant Wednesday I wrote all the morning. Had an answer from D. of W., unsuccessful in getting young Skene put upon the engineer list; he is too old. Went out at two with Anne, and visited the exhibition; also called on the Mansfield family and on Sydney Smith. Jeffrey unwell from pleading so long and late for the poisoning woman. He has saved her throat and taken a quinsey in his own. Adam Ferguson has had a fall with his horse.

February 22. — Was at Court till two, then lounged till Will Murray came to speak about a dinner for the Theatrical Fund, in order to make some arrangements. There are 300 tickets given out. I fear it will be uncomfortable; and whatever the stoics may say, a bad dinner throws cold water on the charity. I have agreed to preside, a situation in which I have been rather felicitous, not by much superiority of wit or wisdom, far less of eloquence; but by two or three simple rules which I put down here for the benefit of posterity.

1st. Always hurry the bottle round for five or six rounds without prosing yourself or permitting others to prose. A slight fillip of wine inclines people to be pleased, and removes the nervousness which prevents men from speaking — disposes them, in short, to be amusing and to be amused.

2d. Push on, keep moving, as Punch says. Do not think of saying fine things — nobody cares for them any more than for fine music, which is often too liberally bestowed on such occasions. Speak at all ventures, and attempt the mot pour rire. You will find people satisfied with wonderfully indifferent jokes if you can but hit the taste of the company, which depends

much on its character. Even a very high party, primed with all the cold irony and non est tanti feelings, or no feelings, of fashionable folks, may be stormed by a jovial, rough, round, and ready preses. Choose your texts with discretion, the sermon may be as you like. If a drunkard or an ass breaks in with anything out of joint, if you can parry it with a jest, good and well — if not, do not exert your serious authority, unless it is something very bad. The authority even of a chairman ought to be very cautiously exercised. With patience you will have the support of every one.

When you have drunk a few glasses to play the good fellow, and banish modesty if you are unlucky enough, to have such a troublesome companion, then beware of the cup too much. Nothing is so ridiculous as a drunken preses.

Lastly. Always speak short, and Skeoch doch na skiel — cut a tale with a drink.

> "This is the purpose and intent
> Of gude Schir Walter's testament."

We dined to-day at Mrs. Dundas of Arniston, Dowager.

February 24. — I carried my own instructions into effect the best I could, and if our jests were not good, our laugh was abundant. I think I will hardly take the chair again when the company is so miscellaneous; though they all behaved perfectly well. Meadowbank taxed me with the novels, and to end that farce at once I pleaded guilty, so that splore is ended. As to the collection, it was much cry and little woo', as the deil said when he shore the sow. Only £280 from 300 people, but many were to send money tomorrow. They did not open books, which was impolitic, but circulated a box, where people might put in what they pleased — and some gave shillings, which gives but a poor idea of the company. Yet there were many respectable people and handsome donations. But this fashion of not letting your right hand see what your left hand doeth is no good mode of raising a round sum. Your penny-pig collections don't succeed. I got away at ten at night. The performers performed very like gentlemen, especially Will Murray. They attended as stewards with white rods, and never thought of sitting down till after dinner, taking care that the company was attended to.

February 25. — Very bad report of the speeches in the papers. We dined at

Jeffrey's with Sydney Smith — funny and goodnatured as usual. One of his daughters is very pretty indeed; both are well-mannered, agreeable, and sing well. The party was pleasant.

February 26. — At home, and settled to work; but I know not why I was out of spirits — quite Laird of Humdudgeon, and did all I could to shake it off, and could not. James Ballantyne dined with me.

February 27. — Humdudgeonish still; hang it, what fools we are! I worked, but coldly and ill. Yet something is done. I wonder if other people have these strange alternations of industry and incapacity. I am sure I do not indulge myself in fancies, but it is accompanied with great drowsiness — bile, I suppose, and terribly jaded spirits. I received to-day Dr. Shortt and Major Crocket, who was orderly-officer on Boney at the time of his death.

February 28. — Sir Adam breakfasted. One of the few old friends left out of the number of my youthful companions. In youth we have many companions, few friends perhaps; in age companionship is ended, except rarely, and by appointment. Old men, by a kind of instinct, seek younger companions who listen to their stories, honour their grey hairs while present, and mimic and laugh at them when their backs are turned. At least that was the way in our day, and I warrant our chicks of the present day crow to the same tune. Of all the friends that I have left I have none who has any decided attachment to literature. So either I must talk on that subject to young people — in other words, turn proser, or I must turn tea-table talker and converse with ladies. I am too old and too proud for either character, so I'll live alone and be contented. Lockhart's departure for London was a loss to me in this way. Came home late from the Court, but worked tightly in the evening. I think discontinuing smoking, as I have done for these two months past, leaves me less muzzy after dinner. At any rate, it breaks a custom — I despise custom.

March

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March 1. — At Court until two — wrote letters under cover of the lawyers' long speeches, so paid up some of my correspondents, which I seldom do upon any other occasion. I sometimes let letters lie for days unopened, as if that would postpone the necessity of answering them. Here I am at home, and to work we go — not for the first time to-day, for I wrought hard before breakfast. So glides away Thursday 1st. By the by, it is the anniversary of Bosworth Field. In former days Richard III. was always acted at London on this day; now the custom, I fancy, is disused. Walpole's Historic Doubts threw a mist about this reign. It is very odd to see how his mind dwells upon it at first as the mere sport of imagination, till at length they become such Delilahs of his imagination that he deems it far worse than infidelity to doubt his Doubts. After all, the popular tradition is so very strong and pointed concerning the character of Richard, that it is I think in vain to doubt the general truth of the outline. Shakespeare, we may be sure, wrote his drama in the tone that was to suit the popular belief, although where that did Richard wrong, his powerful scene was sure to augment the impression. There was an action and a reaction.

March 2. — Clerk walked home with me from the Court. I was scarce able to keep up with him; could once have done it well enough. Funny thing at the Theatre. Among the discourse in "High Life below Stairs," one of the ladies' ladies asks who wrote Shakespeare. One says, "Ben Jonson," another, "Finis." "No," said Will Murray, "it is Sir Walter Scott; he confessed it at a public meeting the other day."

March 3. — Very severe weather, came home covered with snow. White as a frosted-plum-cake, by jingo! No matter; I am not sorry to find I can stand a brush of weather yet; I like to see Arthur's Seat and the stern old Castle with their white watch-cloaks on. But, as Byron said to Moore, "d — -n it, Tom, don't be poetical." I settled to Boney, and wrote right long and well.

March 4. — I sat in by the chimney-neuk with no chance of interruption, and "feagued it away." Sir Adam came, and had half an hour's chat and

laugh. My jaws ought to be sore, if the unwontedness of the motion could do it. But I have little to laugh at but myself, and my own bizarreries are more like to make me cry. Wrought hard, though — there's sense in that.

March 5. — Our young men of first fashion, in whom tranquillity is the prime merit, a sort of quietism of foppery, if one can use the expression, have one capital name for a fellow that outrés and outroars the fashion, a sort of high-buck as they were called in my days. They hold him a vulgarian, and call him a tiger. Mr. Gibson came in, and we talked over my affairs; very little to the purpose I doubt. Dined at home with Anne as usual, and despatched half-a-dozen Selkirk processes; among others one which savours of Hamesucken. I think to-day I have finished a quarter of vol. viii., and last. Shall I be happy when it is done? — Umph! I think not.

March 6. — A long seat at Court, and an early dinner, as we went to the play. John Kemble's brother acted Benedick. He is a fine-looking man, and a good actor, but not superior. He reminds you eternally that he is acting; and he had got, as the devil directed it, hold of my favourite Benedick, for which he has no power. He had not the slightest idea of the part, particularly of the manner in which Benedick should conduct himself in the quarrelling scene with the Prince and Claudio, in which his character rises almost to the dignity of tragedy. The laying aside his light and fantastic humour, and showing himself the man of feeling and honour, was finely marked of yore by old Tom King. I remember particularly the high strain of grave moral feeling which he threw upon the words — "in a false quarrel there is no true valour" — which, spoken as he did, checked the very brutal levity of the Prince and Claudio. There were two farces; one I wished to see, and that being the last, was obliged to tarry for it. Perhaps the headache I contracted made me a severe critic on Cramond Brig, a little piece ascribed to Lockhart. Perhaps I am unjust, but I cannot think it his; there are so few good things in it, and so much prosing transferred from that mine of marrowless morality called the Miller of Mansfield. Yet it pleases.

March 7. — We are kept working hard during the expiring days of the Session, but this being a blank day I wrote hard till dressing time, when I went to Will Clerk's to dinner. As a bachelor, and keeping a small establishment, he does not do these things often, but they are proportionally

pleasant when they come round. He had trusted Sir Adam to bespeak his dinner, who did it con amore; so we had excellent cheer, and the wines were various and capital. As I before hinted, it is not every day that M'Nab mounts on horseback, and so our landlord had a little of that solicitude that the party should go off well, which is very flattering to the guests. We had a very pleasant evening. The Chief-Commissioner was there, Admiral Adam, Jo. Murray, and Thomson, *etc. etc.* Sir Adam predominating at the head, and dancing what he calls his "merry andrada" in great style. In short, we really laughed, and real laughter is a thing as rare as real tears. I must say, too, there was a heart, — a kindly feeling prevailed over the party. Can London give such a dinner? It may, but I never saw one; they are too cold and critical to be so easily pleased. In the evening I went with some others to see the exhibition lit up for a promenade, where there were all the fashionable folks about town; the appearance of the rooms was very gay indeed.

March 8. — It snowed all night, which must render the roads impassable, and will detain me here till Monday. Hard work at Court, as Hammie is done up with the gout. We dine with Lord Corehouse — that's not true by the by, for I have mistaken the day. It's tomorrow we dine there. Wrought, but not too hard.

March 9. — An idle morning. Dalgleish being set to pack my books. Wrote notes upon a Mr. Kinloch's Collection of Scottish Ballads, which I communicated to the young author in the Court this present morning. We were detained till halfpast three o'clock, so when I came home I was fatigued and slept. I walk slow, heavily, and with pain; but perhaps the good weather may banish the Fiend of the joints. At any rate, impatience will do nae good at a', man. Letter from Charles for £50. Silver and gold have I none; but that which I have I will give unto him. We dined at the Cranstouns, — I beg his pardon, Lord Corehouse; Ferguson, Thomson, Will Clerk, etc., were there, also the Smiths and John Murray, so we had a pleasant evening.

March 10. — The business at the Court was not so heavy as I have seen it the last day of the Session, yet sharp enough. About three o'clock I got to a meeting of the Bannatyne Club. I hope this institution will be really useful

and creditable. Thomson is superintending a capital edition of Sir James Melville's Memoirs. It is brave to see how he wags his Scots tongue, and what a difference there is in the force and firmness of the language, compared to the mincing English edition in which he has hitherto been alone known. Nothing to-day but correcting proofs; Anne went to the play, I remained at home.

March 11. — All my books packed this morning, and this and tomorrow will be blank days, or nearly such; but I am far ahead of the printer, who is not done with vol. vii., while I am deep in volume viii. I hate packing; but my servants never pack books quite to please me. James Ballantyne dined with us. He kept up my heart about Bonaparte, which sometimes flags; and he is such a grumbler that I think I may trust him when he is favourable. There must be sad inaccuracies, some which might certainly have been prevented by care; but as the Lazaroni used to say, "Did you but know how lazy I am!"

[Abbotsford,] March 12. — Away we set, and came safely to Abbotsford amid all the dulness of a great thaw, which has set the rivers a-streaming in full tide. The wind is wintry, but for my part

> "I like this rocking of the battlements."

I was received by old Tom and the dogs, with the unsophisticated feelings of goodwill. I have been trying to read a new novel which I have heard praised. It is called Almacks, and the author has so well succeeded in describing the cold selfish fopperies of the time, that the copy is almost as dull as the original. I think I will take up my bundle of Sheriff-Court processes instead of Almacks, as the more entertaining avocation of the two.

March 13. — Before breakfast, prepared and forwarded the processes to Selkirk. As I had the loan of £250 at March from Cadell I am now verging on to the £500 which he promised to allow me in advance on second series Canongate Chronicles. I do not like this, but unless I review or write to some other purpose, what else can I do? My own expenses are as limited as possible, but my house expenses are considerable, and every now and then starts up something of old scores which I cannot turn over to Mr. Gibson

and his co-trustees. Well — time and the hour — money is the smallest consideration.

Had a pleasant walk to the thicket, though my ideas were olla-podrida-ish, curiously checkered between pleasure and melancholy. I have cause enough for both humours, God knows. I expect this will not be a day of work but of idleness, for my books are not come. Would to God I could make it light thoughtless idleness, such as I used to have when the silly smart fancies ran in my brain like the bubbles in a glass of champagne, — as brilliant to my thinking, as intoxicating as evanescent. But the wine is somewhat on the lees. Perhaps it was but indifferent cider after all. Yet I am happy in this place, where everything looks friendly, from old Tom to young Nym. After all, he has little to complain of who has left so many things that like him.

March 14. — All yesterday spent in putting to rights books, and so forth. Not a word written except interlocutors. But this won't do. I have tow on the rock, and it must be spun off. Let us see our present undertakings. 1. Napoleon. 2. Review Home, Cranbourne Chase, and the Mysteries. 3. Something for that poor faineant Gillies. 4. Essay on Ballad and Song. 5. Something on the modern state of France. These two last for the Prose Works. But they may

> " — do a little more,
> And produce a little ore."

Come, we must up and be doing. There is a rare scud without, which says, "Go spin, you jade, go spin." I loitered on, and might have answered,

> "My spinning-wheel is auld and stiff."

Smoked a brace of cigars after dinner as a sedative. This is the first time I have smoked these two months. I was afraid the custom would master me. Went to work in the afternoon, and reviewed for Lockhart Mackenzie's edition of Home's Works. Proceeded as far as the eighth page.

March 15. — Kept still at the review till two o'clock; not that there is any hurry, but because I should lose my ideas, which are not worth preserving. Went on therefore. I drove over to Huntly Burn with Anne, then walked

through the plantations, with Tom's help to pull me through the snow-wreaths. Returned in a glow of heat and spirits. Corrected proof-sheets in the evening.

March 16. —

> "A trifling day we have had here,
> Begun with trifle and ended."

But I hope no otherwise so ended than to meet the rubrick of the ballad, for it is but three o'clock. In the morning I was l'homme qui cherche — everything fell aside, — the very pens absconded, and crept in among a pack of letters and trumpery, where I had the devil's work finding them. Thus the time before breakfast was idled, or rather fidgeted, away. Afterwards it was rather worse. I had settled to finish the review, when, behold, as I am apt to do at a set task, I jibb'd, and my thoughts would rather have gone with Waterloo. So I dawdled, as the women say, with both, now writing a page or two of the review, now reading a few pages of the Battle of Waterloo by Captain Pringle, a manuscript which is excellently-written. Well, I will find the advantage of it by and by. So now I will try to finish this accursed review, for there is nothing to prevent me, save the untractable character that hates to work on compulsion, whether of individuals or circumstances.

March 17. — I wrought away at the review and nearly finished it. Was interrupted, however, by a note from Ballantyne, demanding copy, which brought me back from Home and Mackenzie to Boney. I had my walk as usual, and worked nevertheless very fairly. Corrected proofs.

March 18. — Took up Boney again. I am now at writing, as I used to be at riding, slow, heavy, and awkward at mounting, but when I did get fixed in my saddle, could screed away with any one. I have got six pages ready for my learned Theban tomorrow morning. William Laidlaw and his brother George dined with me, but I wrote in the evening all the same.

March 19. — Set about my labours, but enter Captain John Ferguson from the Spanish Main, where he has been for three years. The honest tar sat about two hours, and I was heartily glad to see him again. I had a general sketch of his adventures, which we will hear more in detail when we can

meet at kail-time. Notwithstanding this interruption I have pushed far into the seventh page. Well done for one day. Twenty days should finish me at this rate, and I read hard too. But allowance must be made for interruptions.

March 20. — To-day worked till twelve o'clock, then went with Anne on a visit of condolence to Mrs. Pringle of Yair and her family. Mr. Pringle was the friend both of my father and grandfather; the acquaintance of our families is at least a century old.

March 21. — Wrote till twelve, then out upon the heights though the day was stormy, and faced the gale bravely. Tom Purdie was not with me. He would have obliged me to keep the sheltered ground. But, I don't know —

> "Even in our ashes live our wonted fires."

There is a touch of the old spirit in me yet that bids me brave the tempest, — the spirit that, in spite of manifold infirmities, made me a roaring boy in my youth, a desperate climber, a bold rider, a deep drinker, and a stout player at single-stick, of all which valuable qualities there are now but slender remains. I worked hard when I came in, and finished five pages.

March 22. — Yesterday I wrote to James Ballantyne, acquiescing in his urgent request to extend the two last volumes to about 600 each. I believe it will be no more than necessary after all, but makes one feel like a dog in a wheel, always moving and never advancing.

March 23. — When I was a child, and indeed for some years after, my amusement was in supposing to myself a set of persons engaged in various scenes which contrasted them with each other, and I remember to this day the accuracy of my childish imagination. This might be the effect of a natural turn to fictitious narrative, or it might be the cause of it, or there might be an action and reaction, or it does not signify a pin's head how it is. But with a flash of this remaining spirit, I imagine my mother Duty to be a sort of old task-mistress, like the hag of the merchant Abudah, in the Tales of the Genii — not a hag though, by any means; on the contrary, my old woman wears a rich old-fashioned gown of black silk, with ruffles of triple blonde-lace, and a coif as rich as that of Pearling Jean; a figure and countenance something like Lady D.S.'s twenty years ago; a clear blue eye,

capable of great severity of expression, and conforming in that with a wrinkled brow, of which the ordinary expression is a serious approach to a frown — a cautionary and nervous shake of the head; in her withered hand an ebony staff with a crutch head, — a Tompion gold watch, which annoys all who know her by striking the quarters as regularly as if one wished to hear them. Occasionally she has a small scourge of nettles, which I feel her lay across my fingers at this moment, and so Tace is Latin for a candle. I have 150 pages to write yet.

March 24. — Does Duty not wear a pair of round old-fashioned silver buckles? Buckles she has, but they are square ones. All belonging to Duty is rectangular. Thus can we poor children of imagination play with the ideas we create, like children with soap-bubbles. Pity that we pay for it at other times by starting at our shadows.

> "Man but a rush against Othello's breast."

The hard work still proceeds, varied only by a short walk.

March 25. — Hard work still, but went to Huntly Burn on foot, and returned in the carriage. Walked well and stoutly — God be praised! — and prepared a whole bundle of proofs and copy for the Blucher to morrow; that damned work will certainly end some time or other. As it drips and dribbles out on the paper, I think of the old drunken Presbyterian under the spout.

March 26. — Despatched packets. Colonel and Captain Ferguson arrived to breakfast. I had previously determined to give myself a day to write letters; and, as I expect John Thomson to dinner, this day will do as well as another. I cannot keep up with the world without shying a letter now and then. It is true the greatest happiness I could think of would be to be rid of the world entirely. Excepting my own family, I have little pleasure in the world, less business in it, and am heartily careless about all its concerns. Mr. Thomson came accordingly — not John Thomson of Duddingston, whom the letter led me to expect, but John Anstruther Thomson of Charlton [Fifeshire], the son-in-law of Lord Ch.-Commissioner.

March 27. — Wrote two leaves this morning, and gave the day after breakfast to my visitor, who is a country gentleman of the best description;

knows the world, having been a good deal attached both to the turf and the field; is extremely good-humoured, and a good deal of a local antiquary. I showed him the plantations, going first round the terrace, then to the lake, then came down by the Rhymer's Glen, and took carriage at Huntly Burn, almost the grand tour, only we did not walk from Huntly Burn. The Fergusons dined with us.

March 28. — Mr Thomson left us about twelve for Minto, parting a pleased guest, I hope, from a pleased landlord. When I see a "gemman as is a gemman," as the blackguards say, why, I know how to be civil. After he left I set doggedly to work with Bonaparte, who had fallen a little into arrear. I can clear the ground better now by mashing up my old work in the Edinburgh Register with my new matter, a species of colcannen, where cold potatoes are mixed with hot cabbage. After all, I think Ballantyne is right, and that I have some talents for history-writing after all. That same history in the Register reads prettily enough. Coragio, cry Claymore. I finished five pages, but with additions from Register they will run to more than double I hope; like Puff in the Critic, be luxuriant.

Here is snow back again, a nasty, comfortless, stormy sort of a day, and I will work it off at Boney. What shall I do when Bonaparte is done? He engrosses me morning, noon, and night. Never mind; Komt Zeit komt Rath, as the German says. I did not work longer than twelve, however, but went out in as rough weather as I have seen, and stood out several snow blasts.

March 29, 30. —

> "He walk'd and wrought, poor soul! What then?
> Why, then he walk'd and wrought again."

March 31. — Day varied by dining with Mr. Scrope, where we found Mr. Williams and Mr. Simson, both excellent artists. We had not too much of the palette, but made a very agreeable day out. I contrived to mislay the proof-sheets sent me this morning, so that I must have a revise. This frequent absence of mind becomes very exceeding troublesome. I have the distinct recollection of laying them carefully aside after I dressed to go to the Pavilion. Well, I have a head — the proverb is musty.

April

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April 1. — The proofs are not to be found. Applications from R.P. G[illies]. I must do something for him; yet have the melancholy conviction that nothing will do him any good. Then he writes letters and expects answers. Then they are bothering me about writing in behalf of the oil-gas light, which is going to the devil very fast. I cannot be going a-begging for them or anybody. Please to look down with an eye of pity — a poor distressed creature! No, not for the last morsel of bread. A dry ditch and a speedy death is worth it all.

April 2. — Another letter from R.P.G. I shall begin to wish, like S., that he had been murthered and robbed in his walks between Wimbledon and London. John [Archibald] Murray and his young wife came to dinner, and in good time. I like her very much, and think he has been very lucky. She is not in the vaward of youth, but John is but two or three years my junior. She is pleasing in her manners, and totally free from affectation; a beautiful musician, and willingly exerts her talents in that way; is said to be very learned, but shows none of it. A large fortune is no bad addition to such a woman's society.

April 3. — I had processes to decide; and though I arose at my usual hour, I could not get through above two of five proofs. After breakfast I walked with John Murray, and at twelve we went for Melrose, where I had to show the lions. We came back by Huntly Burn, where the carriage broke down, and gave us a pretty long walk home. Mr. Scrope dined with his two artists, and John [Thomson?]. The last is not only the best landscape-painter of his age and country, but is, moreover, one of the warmest-hearted men living, with a keen and unaffected feeling of poetry. Poor fellow! he has had many misfortunes in his family. I drank a glass or two of wine more than usual, got into good spirits, and came from Tripoli for the amusement of the good company. I was in good fooling.

April 4. — I think I have a little headache this morning; however, as

Othello says, “That’s not much.” I saw our guests go off by seven in the morning, but was not in time to give them goodbye.

“And now again, boys, to the oar.”

I did not go to the oar though, but walked a good deal.

April 5. — Heard from Lockhart; the Duke of W[ellington] and Croker are pleased with my historical labours; so far well — for the former, as a soldier said of him, “I would rather have his long nose on my side than a whole brigade.” Well! something good may come of it, and if it does it will be good luck, for, as you and I know, Mother Duty, it has been a rummily written work. I wrote hard to-day.

April 6. — Do. Do. I only took one turn about the thicket, and have nothing to put down but to record my labours.

April 7. — The same history occurs; my desk and my exercise. I am a perfect automaton. Bonaparte runs in my head from seven in the morning till ten at night without intermission. I wrote six leaves to-day and corrected four proofs.

April 8. — Ginger, being in my room, was safely delivered in her basket of four puppies; the mother and children all doing well. Faith! that is as important an entry as my Journal could desire. The day is so beautiful that I long to go out. I won’t, though, till I have done something. A letter from Mr. Gibson about the trust affairs. If the infernal bargain with Constable go on well, there will be a pretty sop in the pan to the creditors; £35,000 at least. If I could work as effectually for three years more, I shall stand on my feet like a man. But who can assure success with the public?

April 9. — I wrote as hard to-day as need be, finished my neat eight pages, and, notwithstanding, drove out and visited at Gattonside. The devil must be in it if the matter drags out longer now.

April 10. — Some incivility from the Leith Bank, which I despise with my heels. I have done for settling my affairs all that any man — much more than most men — could have done, and they refuse a draught of £20,

because, in mistake, it was £8 overdrawn. But what can be expected of a sow but a grumph? Wrought hard, hard.

April 11. — The parks were rouped for £100 a year more than they brought last year. Poor Abbotsford will come to good after all. In the meantime it is Sic vos non vobis — but who cares a farthing? If Boney succeeds, we will give these affairs a blue eye, and I will wrestle stoutly with them, although

> "My banks they are covered with bees,"

or rather with wasps. A very tough day's work.

April 12. — Ha-a-lt — as we used to say, my proof-sheets being still behind. Very unhandsome conduct on the part of the Blucher while I was lauding it so profusely. It is necessary to halt and close up our files — of correspondence I mean. So it is a chance if, except for contradiction's sake, or upon getting the proof-sheets, I write a line to-day at Boney. I did, however, correct five revised sheets and one proof, which took me up so much of the day that I had but one turn through the courtyard. Owing to this I had some of my flutterings, my trembling exies, as the old people called the ague. Wrote a great many letters — but no "copy."

April 13. — I have sometimes wondered with what regularity — that is, for a shrew of my impatient temper — I have been able to keep this Journal. The use of the first person being, of course, the very essence of a diary, I conceive it is chiefly vanity, the dear pleasure of writing about the best of good fellows, Myself, which gives me perseverance to continue this idle task. This morning I wrote till breakfast, then went out and marked trees to be cut for paling, and am just returned — and what does any one care? Ay, but, Gad! I care myself, though. We had at dinner to-day Mr. and Mrs. Cranstoun (Burns's Maria of Ballochmyle), Mr. Bainbridge and daughters, and Colonel Russell.

April 14. — Went to Selkirk to try a fellow for an assault on Dr. Clarkson — fined him seven guineas, which, with his necessary expenses, will amount to ten guineas. It is rather too little; but as his income does not amount to £30 a year, it will pinch him severely enough, and is better than sending him to an ill-kept jail, where he would be idle and drunk from

morning to night. I had a dreadful headache while sitting in the Court — rheumatism in perfection. It did not last after I got warm by the fireside.

April 15. — Delightful soft morning, with mild rain. Walked out and got wet, as a sovereign cure for the rheumatism. Was quite well, though, and scribbled away.

April 16. — A day of work and exercise. In the evening a letter from L[ockhart], with the wonderful news that the Ministry has broken up, and apparently for no cause that any one can explain. The old grudge, I suppose, betwixt Peel and Canning, which has gone on augmenting like a crack in the side of a house, which enlarges from day to day, till down goes the whole. Mr. Canning has declared himself fully satisfied with J.L., and sent Barrow to tell him so. His suspicions were indeed most erroneous, but they were repelled with no little spirit both by L. and myself, and Canning has not been like another Great Man I know to whom I showed demonstrably that he had suspected an individual unjustly. "It may be so," he said, "but his mode of defending himself was offensive."

April 17. — Went to dinner to-day to Mr. Bainbridge's Gattonside House, and had fireworks in the evening, made by Captain Burchard, a good-humoured kind of Will Wimble. One nice little boy announced to us everything that was going to be done, with the importance of a prologue. Some of the country folks assembled, and our party was enlivened by the squeaks of the wenches and the long-protracted Eh, eh's! by which a Teviotdale tup testifies his wonder.

April 18. — I felt the impatience of news so much that I walked up to Mr. Laidlaw, surely for no other purpose than to talk politics. This interrupted Boney a little. After I returned, about twelve or one, behold Tom Tack; he comes from Buenos Ayres with a parcel of little curiosities he had picked up for me. As Tom Tack spins a tough yarn, I lost the morning almost entirely — what with one thing, what with t'other, as my friend the Laird of Raeburn says. Nor have I much to say for the evening, only I smoked a cigar more than usual to get the box ended, and give up the custom for a little.

April 19. — Another letter from Lockhart. I am sorry when I think of the goodly fellowship of vessels which are now scattered on the ocean. There is the Duke of Wellington, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Melville, Mr. Peel, and I wot not who besides, all turned out of office or resigned! I wonder what they can do in the House of Lords when all the great Tories are on the wrong side of the House. Canning seems quite serious in his views of helping Lockhart. I hope it will come to something.

April 20. — A surly sort of day. I walked for two hours, however, and then returned chiefly to Nap. Egad! I believe it has an end at last, this blasted work. I have the fellow at Plymouth, or near about it. Well, I declare, I thought the end of these beastly big eight volumes was like the end of the world, which is always talked of and never comes.

April. 21. — Here is a vile day — downright rain, which disconcerts an inroad of bairns from Gattonside, and, of course, annihilates a part of the stock of human happiness. But what says the proverb of your true rainy day —

> "'Tis good for book, 'tis good for work,
> For cup and can, or knife and fork."

April 22. — Wrote till twelve o'clock, then sallied forth, and walked to Huntly Burn with Tom; and so, look you, sir, I drove home in the carriage. Wrought in the afternoon, and tried to read De Vere, a sensible but heavy book, written by an able hand — but a great bore for all that. Wrote in the evening.

April 23. — Snowy morning. White as my shirt. The little Bainbridges came over; invited to see the armoury, etc., which I stood showman to. It is odd how much less cubbish the English boys are than the Scotch. Well-mannered and sensible are the southern boys. I suppose the sun brings them forward. Here comes six o'clock at night, and it is snowing as if it had not snowed these forty years before. Well, I'll work away a couple of chapters — three at most will finish Napoleon.

April 24. — Still deep snow — a foot thick in the courtyard, I dare say. Severe welcome to the poor lambs now coming into the world. But what signifies whether they die just now, or a little while after to be united with salad at luncheon-time? It signifies a good deal too. There is a period, though a short one, when they dance among the gowans, and seem happy. As for your aged sheep or wether, the sooner they pass to the Norman side of the vocabulary the better. They are like some old dowager ladies and gentlemen of my acquaintance, — no one cares about them till they come to be cut up, and then we see how the tallow lies on the kidneys and the chine.

April 25. — Snow yet, and it prevents my walking, and I grow bilious. I wrote hard though. I have now got Boney pegg'd up in the knotty entrails of Saint Helena, and may make a short pause.

So I finished the review of John Home's works, which, after all, are poorer than I thought them. Good blank verse and stately sentiment, but something lukewarmish, excepting Douglas, which is certainly a masterpiece. Even that does not stand the closet. Its merits are for the stage; but it is certainly one of the best acting plays going. Perhaps a play, to act well, should not be too poetical.

There is a talk in London of bringing in the Marquis of Lansdowne, then Lauderdale will perhaps come in here. It is certain the old Tory party is down the wind, not from political opinions, but from personal aversion to Canning. Perhaps his satirical temper has partly occasioned this; but I rather consider emulation as the source of it, the head and front of the offending. Croker no longer rhymes to joker. He has made a good coup, it is said, by securing Lord Hertford for the new administration. D.W. calls him their viper. After all, I cannot sympathise with that delicacy which throws up office, because the most eloquent man in England, and certainly the only man who can manage the House of Commons, is named Minister.

April 26. — The snow still profusely distributed, and the surface, as our hair used to be in youth, after we had played at some active game, half black, half white, all in large patches. I finished the criticism on Home, adding a string of Jacobite anecdotes, like that which boys put to a kite's tail. Sent off the packet to Lockhart; at the same time sent Croker a volume of French tracts, containing La Portefeuille de Bonaparte, which he wished

to see. Received a great cargo of papers from Bernadotte, some curious, and would have been inestimable two months back, but now my siege is almost made. Still my feelings for poor Count Itterburg, the lineal and legitimate, make me averse to have much to do with this child of the revolution.

April 27. — This hand of mine gets to be like a kitten's scratch, and will require much deciphering, or, what may be as well for the writer, cannot be deciphered at all. I am sure I cannot read it myself. Weather better, which is well, as I shall get a walk. I have been a little nervous, having been confined to the house for three days. Well, I may be disabled from duty, but my tamed spirits and sense of dejection have quelled all that freakishness of humour which made me a voluntary idler. I present myself to the morning task, as the hack-horse patiently trudges to the pole of his chaise, and backs, however reluctantly, to have the traces fixed. Such are the uses of adversity.

April 28. — Wrought at continuing the Works, with some criticism on Defoe. I have great aversion, I cannot tell why, to stuffing the "Border Antiquities" into what they call the Prose Works.

There is no encouragement, to be sure, for doing better, for nobody seems to care. I cannot get an answer from J. Ballantyne, whether he thinks the review on the Highlands would be a better substitution.

April 29. — Colonel and Captain Ferguson dined here with Mr. Laidlaw. I wrote all the morning, then cut some wood. I think the weather gets too warm for hard work with the axe, or I get too stiff and easily tired.

April 30. — Went to Jedburgh to circuit, where found my old friend and schoolfellow, D. Monypenny. Nothing to-day but a pack of riff-raff cases of petty larceny and trash. Dined as usual with the Judge, and slept at my old friend Mr. Shortreed's.

May

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May 1. — Brought Andrew Shortreed to copy some things I want. Maxpopple came with us as far as Lessudden, and we stopped and made a pilgrimage to Fair Maiden Lilliard's Stone, which has been restored lately, to the credit of Mr. Walker of Muirhouselaw. Set my young clerk to work when we came home, and did some laborious business. A letter from Sir Thomas Lawrence informed me I am chosen Professor of Antiquities to the Royal Academy — a beautiful professor to be sure!

May 2. — Did nothing but proofs this morning. At ten went to Selkirk to arrange about the new measures, which, like all new things, will throw us into confusion for a little at least. The weather was so exquisitely good that I walked after tea to halfpast eight, and enjoyed a sort of half-lazy, half-sulky humour — like Caliban's, "There's wood enough within." Well, I may be the bear, but I must mount the ragged staff all the same. I set my myself to labour for R.P.G. The Germanic Horrors are my theme, and I think something may be yet made of them.

May 3. — An early visit from Mr. Thomas Stewart, nephew of Duchess of Wellington, with a letter from his aunt. He seems a well-behaved and pleasant young man. I walked him through the Glen. Colonel Ferguson came to help us out at dinner, and then we had our wine and wassail.

May 4. — Corrected proofs in the morning. Mr. Stewart still here, which prevented work; however, I am far beforehand with everything. We walked a good deal; asked Mr. Alexander Pringle, Whytbank, to dinner. This is rather losing time, though.

May 5. — Worked away upon those wild affairs of Hoffmann for Gillies. I think I have forgot my German very much, and then the stream of criticism does not come freely at all: I cannot tell why. I gave it up in despair at halfpast one, and walked out.

Had a letter from R.P.G. He seems in spirits about his work. I wish it may answer. Under good encouragement it certainly might. But —

Maxpopple came to dinner, and Mr. Laidlaw after dinner, so that broke up a day, which I can ill spare. Mr. Stewart left us this day.

May 6. — Wrought again at Hoffmann — unfructuously I fear — unwillingly I am certain; but how else can I do a little good in my generation? I will try a walk. I would fain catch myself in good-humour with my task, but that will not be easy.

May 7. — Finished Hoffmann, talis qualis. I don't like it; but then I have been often displeased with things that have proved successful. Our own labours become disgusting in our eyes, from the ideas having been turned over and over in our own minds. To others, to whom they are presented for the first time, they have a show of novelty. God grant it may prove so. I would help the poor fellow if I could, for I am poor myself.

May 8. — Corrected Hoffmann with a view to send him off, which, however, I could not accomplish. I finished a criticism on Defoe's Writings. His great forte is his power of vraisemblance. This I have instanced in the story of Mrs. Veal's Ghost. Ettrick Shepherd arrived.

May 9. — This day we went to dinner at Mr. Scrope's, at the Pavilion, where were the Haigs of Bemerside, Isaac Haig, Mr. and Mrs. Bainbridge, *etc.* Warm dispute whether par are or are not salmon trout. "Fleas are not lobsters, d — n their souls."

Mr. Scrope has made a painting of Tivoli, which, when mellowed a little by time, will be a fine one. Letters from Lockhart, with news concerning the beautiful mess they are making in London. Henry Scott will be threatened in Roxburghshire. This would be bad policy, as it would drive the young Duke to take up his ground, which, unless pressed, he may be in no hurry to do. Personally, I do not like to be driven to a point, as I think Canning may do much for the country, provided he does not stand committed to his new Whig counsellors. But if the push does come, I will not quit my old friends — that I am freely resolved, and dissolutely, as Slender says.

May 10. — We went to breakfast at Huntly Burn, and I wandered all the morning in the woods to avoid an English party who came to see the house.

When I came home I found my cousin Col. Russell, and his sister, so I had no work to-day but my labour at proofs in the morning. To-day I dismiss my aide-de-camp, Shortreed — a fine lad. The Boar of the Forest left us after breakfast. Had a present of a medal forming one of a series from Chantrey's busts. But this is not for nothing: the donor wants a motto for the reverse of the King's medal. I am a bad hand to apply to.

May 11. — Hogg called this morning to converse about trying to get him on the pecuniary list of the Royal Literary Society. Certainly he deserves it, if genius and necessity could do so. But I do not belong to the society, nor do I propose to enter it as a coadjutor. I don't like your royal academies of this kind; they almost always fall into jobs, and the members are seldom those who do credit to the literature of a country. It affected, too, to comprehend those men of letters who are specially attached to the Crown, and though I love and honour my King as much as any of them can, yet I hold it best, in this free country, to preserve the exterior of independence, that my loyalty may be the more impressive, and tell more effectually. Yet I wish sincerely to help poor Hogg, and have written to Lockhart about it. It may be my own desolate feelings — it may be the apprehension of evil from this political hocus-pocus, but I have seldom felt more moody and uncomfortable than while writing these lines. I have walked, too, but without effect. W. Laidlaw, whose very ingenious mind is delighted with all novelties, talked nonsense about the new government, in which men are to resign principle, I fear, on both sides.

May 12. — Wrote Lockhart on what I think the upright and honest principle, and am resolved to vex myself no more about it. Walked with my cousin, Colonel Russell, for three hours in the woods, and enjoyed the sublime and delectable pleasure of being well, — and listened to on the subject of my favourite themes of laying out ground and plantation. Russel seems quite to follow such an excellent authority, and my spirits mounted while I found I was haranguing to a willing and patient pupil. To be sure, Ashestiel, planting the high knolls, and drawing woodland through the pasture, could be made one of the most beautiful forest things in the world. I have often dreamed of putting it in high order; and, judging from what I have been able to do here, I think I should have succeeded. At any rate, my

blue devils are flown at the sense of retaining some sort of consequence. Lord, what fools we are!

May 13. — A most idle and dissipated day. I did not rise till halfpast eight o'clock. Col. and Capt. Ferguson came to breakfast. I walked halfway home with them, then turned back and spent the day, which was delightful, wandering from place to place in the woods, sometimes reading the new and interesting volumes of Cyril Thornton, sometimes chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy which strangely alternated in my mind, idly stirred by the succession of a thousand vague thoughts and fears, the gay thoughts strangely mingled with those of dismal melancholy; tears, which seemed ready to flow unbidden; smiles, which approached to those of insanity; all that wild variety of mood which solitude engenders. I scribbled some verses, or rather composed them in my memory. The contrast at leaving Abbotsford to former departures is of an agitating and violent description. Assorting papers and so forth. I never could help admiring the concatenation between Ahitophel's setting his house in order and hanging himself. The one seems to me to follow the other as a matter of course. I don't mind the trouble, though my head swims with it. I do not mind meeting accounts, which unpaid remind you of your distress, or paid serve to show you you have been throwing away money you would be glad to have back again. I do not mind the strange contradictory mode of papers hiding themselves that you wish to see, and others thrusting themselves into your hand to confuse and bewilder you. There is a clergyman's letter about the Scottish pronunciation, to which I had written an answer some weeks since (the person is an ass, by the by). But I had laid aside my answer, being unable to find the letter which bore his address; and, in the course of this day, both his letter with the address, and my answer which wanted the address, fell into my hands half-a-dozen times, but separately always. This was the positive malice of some hobgoblin, and I submit to it as such. But what frightens and disgusts me is those fearful letters from those who have been long dead, to those who linger on their wayfare through this valley of tears. These fine lines of Spencer came into my head —

> "When midnight o'er the pathless skies."

Ay, and can I forget the author! — the frightful moral of his own vision. What is this world? A dream within a dream — as we grow older each step

is an awakening. The youth awakes as he thinks from childhood — the full-grown man despises the pursuits of youth as visionary — the old man looks on manhood as a feverish dream. The Grave the last sleep? — no; it is the last and final awakening.

May 14. — To town per Blucher coach, well stowed and crushed, but saved cash, coming off for less than £2; posting costs nearly five, and you don't get on so fast by onethird. Arrived in my old lodgings here with a stouter heart than I expected. Dined with Mr. and Mrs. Skene, and met Lord Medwyn and lady.

May 15. — Parliament House a queer sight. Looked as if people were singing to each other the noble song of "The sky's falling — chickie diddle." Thinks I to myself, I'll keep a calm sough.

> "Betwixt both sides I unconcerned stand by;
> Hurt, can I laugh, and honest, need I cry?"

I wish the old Government had kept together, but their personal dislike to Canning seems to have rendered that impossible.

I dined at a great dinner given by Sir George Clerk to his electors, the freeholders of Midlothian; a great attendance of Whig and Tory, huzzaing each other's toasts. If is a good peacemaker, but quarter-day is a better. I have a guess the best gamecocks would call a truce if a handful or two of oats were scattered among them.

May 16. — Mr. John Gibson says the Trustees are to allow my expense in travelling — £300, with £50 taken in in Longman's bill. This will place me rectus in curia, and not much more, faith!

There is a fellow bawling out a ditty in the street, the burthen of which is

> "There's nothing but poverty everywhere."

He shall not be a penny richer for telling me what I know but too well without him.

May 17. — Learned with great distress the death of poor Richard Lockhart,

the youngest brother of my son-in-law. He had an exquisite talent for acquiring languages, and was under the patronage of my kinsman, George Swinton, who had taken him into his own family at Calcutta, and now he is drowned in a foolish bathing party.

May 18. — Heard from Abbotsford; all well. Wrought to-day but awkwardly. Tom Campbell called, warm from his Glasgow Rectorship; he is looking very well. He seemed surprised that I did not know anything about the contentions of Tories, Whigs, and Radicals, in the great commercial city. I have other eggs on the spit. He stayed but a few minutes.

May 19. — Went out to-day to Sir John Dalrymple's, at Oxenford, a pretty place; the lady a daughter of Lord Duncan. Will Clerk and Robert Graeme went with me. A good dinner and pleasant enough party; but ten miles going and ten miles coming make twenty, and that is something of a journey. Got a headache too by jolting about after dinner.

May 20. — Wrote a good deal at Appendix [to Bonaparte], or perhaps I should say tried to write. Got myself into a fever when I had finished four pages, and went out at eight o'clock at night to cool myself if possible. Walked with difficulty as far as Skene's, and there sat and got out of my fidgety feeling. Learned that the Princes Street people intend to present me with the key of their gardens, which will be a great treat, as I am too tender-hoofed for the stones. We must now get to work in earnest.

May 21. — Accordingly this day I wrought tightly, and though not in my very best mood I got on in a very businesslike manner. Was at the Gas Council, where I found things getting poorly on. The Treasury have remitted us to the Exchequer. The Committee want me to make private interest with the L.C. Baron. That I won't do, but I will state their cause publicly any way they like.

May 22. — At Court — home by two, walking through the Princes Street Gardens for the first time. Called on Mrs. Jobson. Worked two hours. Must dress to dine at Mr. John Borthwick's, with the young folk, now Mr. and Mrs. Dempster. Kindly and affectionately received by my good young friends, who seem to have succeeded to their parents' regard for me.

May 23. — Got some books, etc., which I wanted to make up the Saint Helena affair. Set about making up the Appendix, but found I had mislaid a number of the said postliminary affair. Had Hogg's nephew here as a transcriber, a modest and well-behaved young man — clever, too, I think. Being Teind Wednesday I was not obliged to go to the Court, and am now bang up, and shall soon finish Mr. Nappy. And how then? Ay, marry, sir, that's the question.

> "Lord, what will all the people say,
> Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor!"
>
> "The fires i' the lowest hell fold in the people!" as Coriolanus says. I live not in their report, I hope.

May 24. — Mr. Gibson paid me £70 more of my London journey. A good thought came into my head: to write stories for little Johnnie Lockhart from the History of Scotland, like those taken from the History of England. I will not write mine quite so simply as Croker has done. I am persuaded both children and the lower class of readers hate books which are written down to their capacity, and love those that are more composed for their elders and betters. I will make, if possible, a book that a child will understand, yet a man will feel some temptation to peruse should he chance to take it up. It will require, however, a simplicity of style not quite my own. The grand and interesting consists in ideas, not in words. A clever thing of this kind will have a run —

> "Little to say,
> But wrought away,
> And went out to dine with the Skenes to-day."

Rather too many dinner engagements on my list. Must be hardhearted. I cannot say I like my solitary days the worst by any means. I dine, when I like, on soup or broth, and drink a glass of porter or ginger-beer; a single tumbler of whisky and water concludes the debauch. This agrees with me charmingly. At ten o'clock bread and cheese, a single draught of small beer, porter, or ginger-beer, and to bed.

May 26. — I went the same dull and weary round out to the Parliament House, which bothers one's brains for the day. Nevertheless, I get on. Pages vanish from under my hand, and find their way to J. Ballantyne, who is grinding away with his presses. I think I may say, now I begin to get rid of the dust raised about me by so many puzzling little facts, that it is plain sailing to the end.

Dined at Skene's with George Forbes and lady. But that was yesterday.

May 27. — I got ducked in coming home from the Court. Naboclish! — I thank thee, Pat, for teaching me the word. Made a hard day of it. Scarce stirred from one room to another, but at bed-time finished a handsome handful of copy. I have quoted Gourgaud's evidence; I suppose he will be in a rare passion, and may be addicted to vengeance, like a long-moustached son of a French bitch as he is. Naboclish! again for that.

> "Frenchman, Devil, or Don,
> Damn him, let him come on,
> He shan't scare a son of the Island."

May 28. — Another day of uninterrupted study; two such would finish the work with a murrain. I have several engagements next week; I wonder how I was such a fool as to take them. I think I shall be done, however, before Saturday. What shall I have to think of when I lie down at night and awake in the morning? What will be my plague and my pastime, my curse and my blessing, as ideas come and the pulse rises, or as they flag and something like a snow haze covers my whole imagination? I have my Highland Tales — and then — never mind, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

May 29. — Detained at the House till near three. Made a call on Mrs. Jobson and others; also went down to the printing-office. I hope James Ballantyne will do well. I think and believe he will. Wrought in the evening.

May 30. — Having but a trifle on the roll to-day, I set hard to work, and brought myself in for a holiday, or rather played truant. At two o'clock went to a Mr. Mackenzie in my old house at Castle Street, to have some touches

given to Walker's print. Afterwards, having young Hogg with me as an amanuensis, I took to the oar till near ten o'clock.

May 31. — Being a Court day I was engaged very late. Then I called at the printing-house, but got no exact calculation how we come on. Met Mr. Cadell, who bids, as the author's copy [money] 1s. profit on each book of Hugh Littlejohn. I thought this too little. My general calculation is on such profits, that, supposing the book to sell to the public for 7s. 6d., the price ought to go in three shares — one to the trade, one to the expense of print and paper, and one to the author and publisher between them, which of course would be 1s. 3d., not 1s. to the author. But in stating this rule I omitted to observe that books for young persons are half bound before they go out into the trade. This comes to about 9d. for two volumes. The allowance to the trade is also heavy, so that 1s. a book is very well on great numbers. There may besides be a third volume.

Dined at James Ballantyne's, and heard his brother Sandy sing and play on the violin, beautifully as usual. James himself sang the Reel of Tullochgorum, with hearty cheer and uplifted voice. When I came home I learned that we had beat the Coal Gas Company, which is a sort of triumph.

June

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June 1. — Settled my household-book. Sophia does not set out till the middle of the week, which is unlucky, our antiquarian skirmish beginning in Fife just about the time she is to arrive. Letter from John touching public affairs; don't half like them, and am afraid we shall have the Whig alliance turn out like the calling in of the Saxons. I told this to Jeffrey, who said they would convert us, as the Saxons did the British. I shall die in my Paganism for one. I don't like a bone of them as a party. Ugly reports of the King's health; God pity this poor country should that be so, but I think it a thing devised by the enemy. Anne arrived from Abbotsford. I dined at Sir Robert Dundas's, with Mrs. Dundas, Arniston, and other friends. Worked a little, not much.

June 2. — Do. Do. Dined at Baron Hume's. These dinners are cruelly in the way, but que faut-il faire? the business of the Court must be done, and it is impossible absolutely to break off all habits of visiting. Besides, the correcting of proof-sheets in itself is now become burdensome. Three or four a day is hard work.

June 3. — Wrought hard. I think I have but a trifle more to do, but new things cast up; we get beyond the life, however, for I have killed him to-day. The newspapers are very saucy; The Sun says I have got £4000 for suffering a Frenchman to look over my manuscript. Here is a proper fellow for you! I wonder what he thinks Frenchmen are made of — walking moneybags, doubtless. Now as Sir Fretful Plagiary says, another man would be mad at this, but I care not one brass farthing.

June 4. — The birthday of our good old king. It was wrong not to keep up the thing as it was of yore with dinners, and claret, and squibs, and crackers, and saturnalia. The thoughts of the subjects require sometimes to be turned to the sovereign, were it but only that they may remember there is such a person.

The Bannatyne edition of Melville's Memoirs is out, and beats all print. Gad, it is a fine institution that; a rare one, by Jove! beats the Roxburghe.

Wrought very bobbishly to-day, but went off at dinner-time to Thomas Thomson, where we had good cheer and good fun. By the way, we have lost our Coal Gas Bill. Sorry for it, but I can't cry.

June 5. — Proofs. Parliament House till two. Commenced the character of Bonaparte. Tomorrow being a Teind-day I will hope to get it finished. Meantime I go out tonight to see Frankenstein at the theatre.

June 6. — Frankenstein is entertaining for once — considerable art in the man that plays the Monster, to whom he gave great effect. Cooper is his name; played excellently in the farce too, as a sailor — a more natural one, I think, than my old friend Jack Bannister, though he has not quite Jack's richness of humour. I had seven proof-sheets to correct this morning, by Goles. So I did not get to composition till nine; work on with little interruption (save that Mr. Verplanck, an American, breakfasted with us) until seven, and then walked, for fear of the black dog or devil that worries me when I work too hard.

June 7. — This morning finished Boney. And now, as Dame Fortune says, in Quevedo's Visions, Go, wheel, and the devil drive thee. It was high time I brought up some reinforcements, for my pound was come to half-crowns, and I had nothing to keep house when the Lockharts come. Credit enough to be sure, but I have been taught by experience to make short reckonings. Some great authors now will think it a degradation to write a child's book; I cannot say I feel it such. It is to be inscribed to my grandson, and I will write it not only without a sense of its being infra dig. but with a grandfather's pleasure.

I arranged with Mr. Cadell for the property of Tales of a Grandfather, 10,000 copies for £787, 10s.

June 8. — A Mr. Maywood, much protected by poor Alister Dhu, brought me a letter from the late Colonel Huxley. His connection and approach to me is through the grave, but I will not be the less disposed to assist him if an opportunity offers. I made a long round to-day, going to David Laing's about forwarding the books of the Bannatyne Club to Sir George Rose and Duke of Buckingham. Then I came round by the printing-office, where the presses are groaning upon Napoleon, and so home through the gardens. I

have done little to-day save writing a letter or two, for I was fatigued and sleepy when I got home, and nodded, I think, over Sir James Melville's Memoirs. I will do something, though, when I have dined. By the way, I corrected the proofs for Gillies; they read better than I looked for.

June 9. — Corrected proofs in the morning. When I came home from Court I found that John Lockhart and Sophia were arrived by the steamboat at Portobello, where they have a small lodging. I went down with a bottle of Champagne, and a flask of Maraschino, and made buirdly cheer with them for the rest of the day. Had the great pleasure to find them all in high health. Poor Johnny is decidedly improved in his general health, and the injury on the spine is got no worse. Walter is a very fine child.

June 10. — Rose with the odd consciousness of being free of my daily task. I have heard that the fishwomen go to church of a Sunday with their creels new washed, and a few stones in them for ballast, just because they cannot walk steadily without their usual load. I feel somewhat like this, and rather inclined to pick up some light task, than to be altogether idle. I have my proof-sheets, to be sure; but what are these to a whole day? Fortunately my thoughts are agreeable; cash difficulties, etc., all provided for, as far as I can see, so that we go on hooly and fairly. Betwixt and August 1st I should receive £750, and I cannot think I have more than the half of it to pay away. Cash, to be sure, seems to burn in my pocket. "He wasna gien to great misguiding, but coin his pouches wouldna bide in." By goles, this shall be corrected, though! Lockhart gives a sad account of Gillies's imprudences. Lockhart dined with us. Day idle.

June 11. — The attendance on the Committee, and afterwards the general meeting of the Oil Gas Company took up my morning, and the rest dribbled away in correcting proofs and trifling; reading, among the rest, an odd volume of Vivian Grey; clever, but not so much so as to make me, in this sultry weather, go upstairs to the drawingroom to seek the other volumes. Ah! villain, but you smoked when you read. — Well, Madam, perhaps I think the better of the book for that reason. Made a blunder, — went to Ravelston on the wrong day. This Anne's fault, but I did not reproach her, knowing it might as well have been my own.

June 12. — At Court, a long hearing. Got home only about three. Corrected proofs, *etc.* Dined with Baron Clerk, and met several old friends; Will Clerk in particular.

June 13. — Another long seat at Court. Almost overcome by the heat in walking home, and rendered useless for the day. Let me be thankful, however; my lameness is much better, and the nerves of my unfortunate ankle are so much strengthened that I walk with comparatively little pain. Dined at John Swinton's; a large party. These festive occasions consume much valuable time, besides trying the stomach a little by late hours, and some wine shed, though that's not much.

June 14. — Anne and Sophia dined. Could not stay at home with them alone. We had the Skenes and Allan, and amused ourselves till ten o'clock.

June 15. — This being the day long since appointed for our cruise to Fife, Thomas Thomson, Sir A. Ferguson, Will Clerk, and I, set off with Miss Adam, and made our journey successfully to Charlton, where met Lord Chief-Baron and Lord Chief-Commissioner, all in the humour to be happy, though time is telling with us all. Our goodnatured host, Mr. A. Thomson, his wife, and his good-looking daughters, received us most kindly, and the conversation took its old roll, in spite of woes and infirmities. Charlton is a good house, in the midst of highly-cultivated land, and immediately surrounded with gardens and parterres, together with plantations, partly in the old, partly in the new, taste; I like it very much; though, as a residence, it is perhaps a little too much finished. Not even a bit of bog to amuse one, as Mr. Elphinstone said.

June 16. — This day we went off in a body to St. Andrews, which Thomas Thomson had never seen. On the road beyond Charlton saw a small cottage said to have been the heritable appanage of a family called the Keays [?]. He had a right to feed his horse for a certain time on the adjoining pasture. This functionary was sent to Falkland with the fish for the royal table. The ruins at St. Andrews have been lately cleared out. They had been chiefly magnificent from their size — not their extent of ornament. I did not go up to St. Rule's Tower as on former occasions; this is a falling off, for when

before did I remain sitting below when there was a steeple to be ascended? But the rheumatism has begun to change that vein for some time past, though I think this is the first decided sign of acquiescence in my lot. I sat down on a gravestone, and recollected the first visit I made to St. Andrews, now thirtyfour years ago. What changes in my feeling and my fortune have since then taken place! some for the better, many for the worse. I remembered the name I then carved in Runic characters on the turf beside the castle-gate, and I asked why it should still agitate my heart. But my friends came down from the tower, and the foolish idea was chased away.

June 17. — Lounged about while the good family went to church. The day is rather cold and disposed to rain. The papers say that the Corn Bill is given up in consequence of the Duke of Wellington having carried the amendment in the House of Lords. All the party here — Sir A.F. perhaps excepted — are Ministerialists on the present double bottom. They say the names of Whig and Tory are now to exist no longer. Why have they existed at all?

In the forenoon we went off to explore the environs; we visited two ancient manor-houses, those of Elie and Balcaskie. Large roomy mansions, with good apartments, two or three good portraits, and a collection of most extraordinary frights, prodigiously like the mistresses of King George I., who "came for all the goods and chattels" of old England. There are at Elie House two most ferocious-looking Ogresses of this cast. There are noble trees about the house. Balcaskie put me in mind of poor Philip Anstruther, dead and gone many a long year since. He was a fine, gallant, lighthearted young sailor. I remember the story of his drawing on his father for some cash, which produced an angry letter from old Sir Robert, to which Philip replied, that if he did not know how to write like a gentleman, he did not desire any more of his correspondence. Balcaskie is much dilapidated; but they are restoring the house in the good old style, with its terraces and yew-hedges. The beastly fashion of bringing a bare ill-kept park up to your very doors seems going down. We next visited with great pleasure the Church of St. Monans, which is under repair, designed to correspond strictly with the ancient plan, which is the solid, gloomy, but impressive Gothic It was built by David II., in the fulfilment of a vow made to St. Monan on the field of battle at Neville's Cross. One would have judged the king to be thankful for small mercies, for certainly St. Monan proved but an ineffective patron.

Mr. Hugh Cleghorn dined at Charlton, and I saw him for the first time, having heard of him all my life. He is an able man, has seen much, and speaks well. Age has clawed him in his clutch, and he has become deaf. There is also Captain Black of the navy, second lieutenant of the Mars at Trafalgar. Villeneuve was brought on board that ship after the debate. He had no expectation that the British fleet would have fought till they had formed a regular line. Captain Black disowns the idea of the French and Spaniards being drawn up chequer form for resisting the British attack, and imputes the appearance of that array to sheer accident of weather.

June 18. — We visited Wemyss Castle on our return to Kinghorn. On the left, before descending to the coast, are considerable remains of a castle, called popularly the old castle, or Macduff's Castle. That of the Thane was situated at Kennochquay, at no great distance. The front of Wemyss Castle, to the land, has been stripped entirely of its castellated appearance, and narrowly escaped a new front. To the sea it has a noble situation, overhanging the red rocks; but even there the structure has been much modernised and tamed. Interior is a good old house, with large oak staircases, family pictures, *etc.* We were received by Captain Wemyss — a gallant sea-captain, who could talk against a northwester, — by his wife Lady Emma, and her sister Lady Isabella — beautiful women of the house of Errol, and vindicating its title to the handsome Hays. We reached the Pettycur about halfpast one, crossed to Edinburgh, and so ended our little excursion. Of casualties we had only one: Triton, the house-dog at Charlton, threw down Thomson and he had his wrist sprained. A restive horse threatened to demolish our landau, but we got off for the fright. Happily L.C.B. was not in our carriage.

Dined at William M'Kenzie's to meet the Marquis and Marchioness of Stafford, who are on their road to Dunrobin. Found them both very well.

June 19. — Lord Stafford desires to be a member of the Bannatyne Club — also Colin M'Kenzie. Sent both names up accordingly.

The day furnishes a beggarly record of trumpery. From eight o'clock till nine wrote letters, then Parliament House, where I had to wait on without anything to do till near two, when rain forced me into the Antiquarian museum. Lounged there till a meeting of the Oil Gas Committee at three o'clock. There remained till near five. Home and smoked a cheroot after

dinner. Called on Thomson, who is still disabled by his sprain. Pereat inter hæc. We must do better tomorrow.

June 20. — Kept my word, being Teind Wednesday. Two young Frenchmen, friends of Gallois, rather interrupted me. I had asked them to breakfast, but they stayed till twelve o'clock, which is scarce fair, and plagued me with compliments. Their names are Rémusat and Guyzard. Pleasant, good-humoured young men. Notwithstanding this interruption I finished near six pages, three being a good Session-day's work. Allons, vogue la galère. Dined at the Solicitor's with Lord Hopetoun, and a Parliament House party.

June 21. — Finished five leaves — that is, betwixt morning and dinner-time. The Court detained me till two o'clock. About nine leaves will make the volume quite large enough.

By the way, the booksellers have taken courage to print up 2000 more of the first edition [of Napoleon]; which, after the second volume, they curtailed from 8000 to 6000. This will be £1000 more in my way, at least, and that is a good help. We dine with the Skenes to-day, Lockhart being with us.

June 22. — Wrought in the morning as usual. Received to breakfast Dr. Bishop, a brother of Bishop the composer. He tells me his brother was very ill when he wrote "The Chough and Crow," and other music for Guy Mannering. Singular! but I do think illness, if not too painful, unseals the mental eye, and renders the talents more acute, in the study of the fine arts at least.

I find the difference on 2000 additional copies will be £3000 instead of £1000 in favour of the author. My good friend Publicum is impatient. Heaven grant his expectations be not disappointed! Coragio, andiamos! Such another year of labour and success would do much towards making me a free man of the forest. But I must to work since we have to dine with Lord and Lady Gray. By the way, I forgot an engagement to my old friend, Lord Justice-Clerk. This is shockingly illbred. But the invitation was a month old, and that is some defence.

June 23. — I corrected proofs and played the grandfather in the morning.

After Court saw Lady Wedderburn, who asked my advice about printing some verses of Mrs. Hemans in honour of the late Lord James Murray, who died in Greece. Also Lord Gray, who wishes me to write some preliminary matter to his ancestor, the Master of Gray's correspondence. I promised. But ancestor was a great rogue, and if I am to write about him at all, I must take my will of him. Anne and I dined at home. She went to the play, and I had some mind to go too. But Miss Foote was the sole attraction, and Miss Foote is only a very pretty woman, and if she played Rosalind better than I think she can, it is a bore to see Touchstone and Jacques murdered. I have a particular respect for As You Like It. It was the first play I ever saw, and that was at Bath in 1776 or 1777. That is not yesterday, yet I remember the piece very well. So I remained at home, smoked a cigar, and worked leisurely upon the review of the Culloden Papers, which, by dint of vamping and turning, may make up the lacking copy for the "Works" better, I think, than that lumbering Essay on Border Antiquities.

June 24. — I don't care who knows it, I was lazy this morning. But I cheated my laziness capitally, as you shall hear. My good friend, Sir Watt, said I to my esteemed friend, it is hard you should be obliged to work when you are so disinclined to it. Were I you, I would not be quite idle though. I would do something that you are not obliged to do, just as I have seen a cowardly dog willing to fight with any one save that which his master would have desired him to yoke with. So I went over the review of the Culloden Papers, and went a great way to convert it into the Essay on Clanship, etc., which I intend for the Prose Works. I wish I had thought of it before correcting that beastly border essay. Naboclish!

June 25. — Wrote five pages of the Chronicles, and hope to conquer one or two more ere night to fetch up the leeway. Went and saw Allan's sketch of a picture for Abbotsford, which is promising; a thing on the plan of Watteau. He intends to introduce some interesting characters, and some, I suspect, who have little business there. Yesterday I dined with the Lockharts at Portobello. To-day at home with Anne and Miss Erskine. They are gone to walk. I have a mind to go to trifle, so I do not promise to write more tonight, having begun the dedication (advertisement I mean) to the Chronicles. I have pleasant subjects of reflection. The fund in Gibson's hands will approach £40,000, I think.

Lord Melville writes desiring to be a candidate for the Bannatyne Club.

I made a balance of my affairs, and stuck it into my book: it should answer very well, but still

> "I am not given to great misguiding,
> But coin my pouches will na bide in,
> With me it ne'er was under hiding,
> I dealt it free."

I must, however, and will, be independent.

June 26. — Well, if ever I saw such another thing since my mother bound up my head! Here is nine of clock strucken and I am still fast asleep abed. I have not done the like of this many a day. However, it cannot be helped. Went to Court, which detained me till two o'clock. A walk home consumed the hour to three! Wrote in the Court, however, to the Duke of Wellington and Lord Bloomfield. and that is a good job over.

I have a letter from a member of the Commission of the Psalmody of the Kirk, zealous and pressing. I shall answer him, I think. One from Sir James Stuart, on fire with Corfe Castle, with a drawing of King Edward, occupying one page, as he hurries down the steep, mortally wounded by the assassin. Singular power of speaking at once to the eye and the ear. Dined at home. After dinner sorted papers. Rather idle.

June 27. — Corrected proofs and wrote till breakfast. Then the Court. Called on Skene and Charles K. Sharpe, and did not get home until three o'clock, and then so wet as to require a total change. We dine at Hector Buchanan Macdonald's, where there are sometimes many people and little conversation. Sent a little chest of books by the carrier to Abbotsford.

A visit from a smart young man, Gustavus Schwab of Königsberg; he gives a flattering picture of Prussia, which is preparing for freedom. The King must keep his word, though, or the people may chance to tire of waiting. Dined at H.B. Macdonald's with rather a young party for Colin M'Kenzie and me.

June 28. — Wrote a little and corrected proofs. How many things have I unfinished at present?

Chronicles, first volume not ended.

do., second volume begun.
Introduction to ditto.
Tales of My Grandfather.
Essay on Highlands. This unfinished, owing to certain causes, chiefly want of papers and books to fill up blanks, which I will get at Abbotsford. Came home through rain about two, and commissioned John Stevenson to call at three about binding some books. Dined with Sophia; visited, on invitation, a fine old little Commodore Trunnion, who, on reading a part of Napoleon's history, with which he had himself been interested, as commanding a flotilla, thought he had detected a mistake, but was luckily mistaken, to my great delight.

"I fear thee, ancient mariner."

To be cross-examined by those who have seen the true thing is the devil. And yet these eyewitnesses are not all right in what they repeat neither, indeed cannot be so, since you will have dozens of contradictions in their statements.

June 29. — A distressing letter from Haydon; imprudent, probably, but who is not? A man of rare genius. What a pity I gave that £10 to Craig! But I have plenty of ten pounds sure, and I may make it something. I will get £100 at furthest when I come back from the country. Wrote at proofs, but no copy; I fear I shall wax fat and kick against Madam Duty, but I augur better things.

Just as we were sitting down to dinner, Cadell burst in in high spirits with the sale of Napoleon the orders for which pour in, and the public report is favourable. Detected two gross blunders though, which I have ordered for cancel. Supped (for a wonder) with Colin Mackenzie and a bachelor party. Mr. Williams was there, whose extensive information, learning, and lively talent makes him always pleasant company. Up till twelve — a debauch for me nowadays.

June 30. — Redd up my things for moving, which will clear my hands a little on the next final flitting. Corrected proof-sheets. Williams told me an English bull last night. A fellow of a college, deeply learned, sitting at a public entertainment beside a foreigner, tried every means to enter into conversation, but the stranger could speak no dead language, the Doctor no

living one but his own. At last the scholar, in great extremity, was enlightened by a happy “Nonne potes loqui cum digitis?” — said as if the difficulty was solved at once.

Abbotsford. — Reached this about six o’clock.

MAP OF ABBOTSFORD FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY 1858

MAP OF ABBOTSFORD FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY 1858

Appendix

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SCOTT'S LETTERS TO ERSKINE. — P. 61.

Sir Walter was in the habit of consulting him in those matters more than any of his other friends, having great reliance upon his critical skill. The manuscripts of all his poems, and also of the earlier of his prose works, were submitted to Kinnedder's judgment, and a considerable correspondence on these subjects had taken place betwixt them, which would, no doubt, have constituted one of the most interesting series of letters Sir Walter had left.

Lord Kinnedder was a man of retired habits, but little known except to those with whom he lived on terms of intimacy, and by whom he was much esteemed, and being naturally of a remarkably sensitive mind, he was altogether overthrown by the circumstance of a report having got abroad of some alleged indiscretions on his part in which a lady was also implicated. Whether the report had any foundation in truth or not, I am altogether ignorant, but such an allegation affecting a person in his situation in life as a judge, and doing such violence to the susceptibility of his feelings, had the effect of bringing a severe illness which in a few days terminated his life. I never saw Sir Walter so much affected by any event, and at the funeral, which he attended, he was quite unable to suppress his feelings, but wept like a child. The family, suddenly bereft of their protector, were young, orphans, their mother, daughter of Professor John Robertson, having previously died, found also that they had to struggle against embarrassed circumstances; neither had they any near relative in Scotland to take charge of their affairs. But a lady, a friend of the family, Miss M — — , was active in their service, and it so happened, in the course of arranging their affairs, the packet of letters from Sir Walter Scott, containing the whole of his correspondence with Lord Kinnedder, came into her hands. She very soon discovered that the correspondence laid open the secret of the authorship of the Waverley Novels, at that period the subject of general and intense interest, and as yet unacknowledged by Sir Walter.

Considering what under these circumstances it was her duty to do, whether to replace the letters and suffer any accident to bring to light what the author seemed anxious might remain unknown, or to seal them up, and

keep them in her own custody undivulged — or finally to destroy them in order to preserve the secret, — with, no doubt, the best and most upright motives, so far as her own judgment enabled her to decide in the matter, in which she was unable to take advice, without betraying what it was her object to respect, she came to the resolution, most unfortunately for the world, of destroying the letters. And, accordingly, the whole of them were committed to the flames; depriving the descendants of Lord Kinnedder of a possession which could not fail to be much valued by them, and which, in connection with Lord Kinnedder's letters to Sir Walter, which are doubtless preserved, would have been equally valuable to the public, as containing the contemporary opinions, prospects, views, and sentiments under which these works were sent forth into the world. It would also have been curious to learn the unbiased impression which the different works created on the mind of such a man as Lord Kinnedder, before the collision of public opinion had suffused its influence over the opinions of people in general in this matter. — Skene's Reminiscences.

Volume II

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“THE NIGHT COMETH.”

¥ž “‘¡ •¡§•¤‘™.

“I must home to work while it is called day; for the night cometh when no man can work. I put that text, many years ago, on my dial-stone; but it often preached in vain.” — Scott’s Life, x. 88.

July

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July 1, [Abbotsford]. — A most delicious day, in the course of which I have not done

> "The least right thing."

Before breakfast I employed myself in airing my old bibliomaniacal hobby, entering all the books lately acquired into a temporary catalogue, so as to have them shelved and marked. After breakfast I went out, the day being delightful — warm, yet cooled with a gentle breeze, all around delicious; the rich luxuriant green refreshing to the eye, soft to the tread, and perfume to the smell. Wandered about and looked at my plantations. Came home, and received a visit from Sir Adam. Loitered in the library till dinner-time. If there is anything to be done at all to-day, it must be in the evening. But I fear there will be nothing. One can't work always nowther.

> "Neque semper arcum tendit Apollo."

There's warrant for it.

July 2. — Wrote in the morning, correcting the Essay on the Highlands, which is now nearly completed. Settled accounts with Tom and Bogie. Went over to Huntly Burn at two o'clock, and reconnoitred the proposed plantation to be called Jane's Wood. Dined with the Fergusons.

July 3 — - Worked in the morning upon the Introduction to the Chronicles; it may be thought egotistical. Learned a bad accident had happened yesterday. A tinker (drunk I suppose) entered the stream opposite to Faldonside with an ass bearing his children. The ass was carried down by the force of the stream, and one of the little creatures was drowned; the other was brought out alive, poor innocent, clinging to the ass. It had floated as far down as Deadwater-heugh. Poor thing, it is as well dead as to live a tinker! The Fergusons dine with us en masse; also Dr. Brewster.

July 4, [Edinburgh]. — Worked a little in the morning, and took a walk

after breakfast, the day so delicious as makes it heartbreaking to leave the country. Set out, however, about four o'clock, and reached Edinburgh a little after nine. Slept part of the way; read De Vere the rest. It is well written, in point of language and sentiment, but has too little action in it to be termed a pleasing novel. Everything is brought out by dialogue — or worse: through the medium of the author's reflections, which is the clumsiest of all expedients.

July 5. — This morning worked, and sent off to J.B. the Introduction to the Chronicles, containing my Confessions, and did something, but not fluently, to the Confessions themselves. Not happy, however; the black dog worries me. Bile, I suppose. "But I will rally and combat the reiver." Reiver it is, that wretched malady of the mind; got quite well in the forenoon. Went out to Portobello after dinner, and chatted with little Johnnie, and told him the history of the Field of Prestonpans. Few remain who care about these stories.

July 6. — This morning wrought a good deal, but scarce a task. The Court lasted till halfpast three; exhausting work in this hot weather. I returned to dine alone, Anne going to Roslin with a party. After noon a Miss Bell broke in upon me, who bothered me some time since about a book of hers, explaining and exposing the conduct of a Methodist Tartuffe, who had broken off (by anonymous letters) a match betwixt her and an accepted admirer. Tried in vain to make her comprehend how little the Edinburgh people would care about her wrongs, since there was no knowledge of the parties to make the scandal acceptable. I believe she has suffered great wrong. Letter from Longman and Co. to J.B. grumbling about bringing out the second edition, because they have, forsooth, 700 copies in hand out of 5000, five days after the first edition is out. What would they have? It is uncomfortable, though.

July 7. — Night dreadfully warm, and bilious; I could not be fool enough surely to be anxious for these wise men of the East's prognostication. Letters from Lockhart give a very cheerful prospect; if there had been any thundering upsetting broadside, he would have noticed it surely more or less. R. Cadell quite stout, and determined to go on with the second edition. Well, I hope all's right — thinking won't help it. Charles came down this

morning penniless, poor fellow, but we will soon remedy that. Lockhart remits £100 for reviewing; I hope the next will be for Sophia, for cash affairs loom well in the offing, and if the trust funds go right, I was never so easy. I will take care how I get into debt again. I do not like this croaking of these old owls of Saint Paul's when all is done. The pitcher has gone often to the well. But — However, I worked away at the Chronicles. I will take pains with them. I will, by Jove!

July 8. — I did little to-day but arrange papers, and put bills, receipts, etc., into apple-pie order. I believe the fair prospect I have of clearing off some encumbrances, which are like thorns in my flesh, nay, in my very eye, contribute much to this. I did not even correct proof-sheets; nay, could not, for I have cancelled two sheets, instante Jacobo, and I myself being of his opinion; for, as I said yesterday, we must and will take pains. The fiddle-faddle of arranging all the things was troublesome, but they give a good account of my affairs. The money for the necessary payments is ready, and therefore there is a sort of pleasure which does not arise out of any mean source, since it has for its object the prospect of doing justice and achieving independence. J.B. dined with me, poor fellow, and talked of his views as hopeful and prosperous. God send honest industry a fair riddance.

July 9. — Wrote in the morning. At eleven went by appointment with Colin Mackenzie to the New Edinburgh Academy. In the fifth class, Mr. Mitchell's, we heard Greek, of which I am no otherwise a judge than that it was fluently read and explained. In the rector Mr. Williams's class we heard Virgil and Livy admirably translated ad aperturam libri, and, what I thought remarkable, the rector giving the English, and the pupils returning, with singular dexterity, the Latin, not exactly as in the original, but often by synonymes, which showed that the exercise referred to the judgment, and did not depend on the memory. I could not help saying, with great truth, that, as we had all long known how much the pupils were fortunate in a rector, so we were now taught that the rector was equally lucky in his pupils. Of my young friends, I saw a son of John Swinton, a son of Johnstone of Alva, and a son of Craufurd Tait. Dined at John Murray's; Mr. and Mrs. Philips of Liverpool, General and Charles Stuart of Blantyre, Lord Abercromby, Clerk and Thomson. Pleasant evening.

July 10. — Corrected proofs, but wrote nothing. To Court till two o'clock. I went to Cadell's by the Mound, a long roundabout; transacted some business. I met Baron Hume coming home, and walked with him in the Gardens. His remarkable account of his celebrated uncle's last moments is in these words: — Dr. Black called on Mr. D. Hume on the morning on which he died. The patient complained of having suffered a great deal during the night, and expressed a fear that his struggle might be prolonged, to his great distress, for days or weeks longer. "No, sir," said Dr. Black, with the remarkable calmness and sincerity which characterised him, "I have examined the symptoms, and observe several which oblige me to conclude that dissolution is rapidly approaching." "Are you certain of that, Doctor?" "Most assuredly so," answered the physician. The dying philosopher extended his arm, and shook hands with his medical friend. "I thank you," he said, "for the news." So little reason there was for the reports of his having been troubled in mind when on his deathbed.

Dined at Lord Abercromby's, to meet Lord Melville in private. We had an interview betwixt dinner and tea. I was sorry to see my very old friend, this upright statesman and honourable gentleman, deprived of his power and his official income, which the number of his family must render a matter of importance. He was cheerful, not affectedly so, and bore his declension like a wise and brave man. I had nursed the idea that he had been hasty in his resignation; but, from the letters which he showed me confidentially, which passed betwixt him and Canning, it is clear his resignation was to be accomplished, not I suppose for personal considerations, but because it rendered the Admiralty vacant for the Duke of Clarence, as his resignation was eagerly snapped at. It cannot be doubted that if he had hesitated or hung back behind his friends, forcible means would have been used to compel to the measure, which with more dignity he took of his own accord — at least so it seemed to me. The first intimation which Lord Melville received of his successor was through Mr. — — , who told him, as great news, that there was to be a new Duke of York. Lord M. understood the allusion so little, as to inquire whether his informant meant that the Duke of Cambridge had taken the Duke of York's situation, when it was explained to refer to the Duke of Clarence getting the Admiralty. There are some few words that speak volumes. Lord Melville said that none of them suspected Canning's negotiations with the Whigs but

the Duke of Wellington, who found it out through the ladies ten days before. I asked him how they came to be so unprepared, and could not help saying I thought they had acted without consideration, and that they might have shown a face even to Canning. He allowed the truth of what I said, and seemed to blame Peel's want of courage. In his place, he said, he would have proposed to form a government disclaiming any personal views for himself as being Premier and the like, but upon the principle of supporting the measures of Lord Castlereagh and Lord Liverpool. I think this would have been acceptable to the King. Mr. Peel obviously feared his great antagonist Canning, and perhaps threw the game up too soon. Canning said the office of Premier was his inheritance; he could not, from constitution, hold it above two years, and then it would descend to Peel. Such is ambition! Old friends forsaken — old principles changed — every effort used to give the vessel of the State a new direction, and all to be Palinurus for two years!

July 11, [Abbotsford]. — Worked at proofs in the morning; composed nothing. Got off by one, and to this place between six and seven. Weather delicious.

July 12. — Unpacking and arranging; the urchins are stealing the cherries in the outer garden. But I can spare a thousand larch-trees to put it in order with a good fence for next year. It is not right to leave fruit exposed; for if Adam in the days of innocence fell by an apple, how much may the little gossoon Jamie Moffatt be tempted by apples of gold in an age of iron! Anne and I walked to Huntly Burn — a delicious excursion. That place is really become beautiful; the Miss Fergusons have displayed a great deal of taste.

July 13. — Two agreeable persons — Rev. Mr. Gilly, one of the prebendaries of Durham, with his wife, a pretty little woman — dined with us, and met Mr. Scrope. I heard the whole history of the discovery of St. Cuthbert's body at Durham Cathedral. The Catholics will deny the identity, of course; but I think it is constaté by the dress and other circumstances. Made a pleasant day of it, and with a good conscience, for I had done my task this morning.

July 14. — Did task this morning, and believe that I shall get on now very well. Wrote about five leaves. I have been baking and fevering myself like a

fool for these two years in a room exposed to the south; comfortable in winter, but broiling in the hot weather. Now I have removed myself into the large cool library, one of the most refreshing as well as handsomest rooms in Scotland, and will not use the study again till the heats are past. Here is an entry as solemn as if it respected the Vicar of Wakefield's removal from the yellow room to the brown. But I think my labours will advance greatly in consequence of this arrangement. Walked in the evening to the lake.

July 15. — Achieved six pages to-day, and finished volume i. of Chronicles. It is rather long; but I think the last story interesting, and it should not be split up into parts. J.B. will, I fear, think it low; and if he thinks so, others will. Yet — vamos. Drove to Huntly Burn in the evening.

July 16. — Made a good morning's work of the Tales. In the daytime corrected various proofs. J.B. thinks that in the proposed introduction I contemn too much the occupation by which I have thriven so well, and hints that I may easily lead other people to follow my opinion in vilipending my talents, and the use I have made of them. I cannot tell. I do not like, on the one hand, to suppress my own opinion of the floccipauci-nihilipilification with which I regard these things; but yet, in duty to others, I cannot afford to break my own bow, or befoul my own nest, and there may be something like affectation and nolo episcopari in seeming to underrate my own labours; so, all things considered, I will erase the passage. Truth should not be spoke at all times. In the evening we had a delightful drive to Ashestiel with Colonel and Miss Ferguson.

July 17. — I wrote a laborious task; seven pages of Tales. Kept about the doors all day. Gave Bogie £10 to buy cattle tomorrow at St. Boswell's Fair. Here is a whimsical subject of affliction. Mr. Harper, a settler, who went from this country to Botany Bay, thinking himself obliged to me for a recommendation to General M'Allister and Sir Thomas Brisbane, has thought proper to bring me home a couple of Emus. I wish his gratitude had either taken a different turn, or remained as quiescent as that of others whom I have obliged more materially. I at first accepted the creatures, conceiving them, in my ignorance, to be some sort of blue and green parrot, which, though I do not admire their noise, might scream and yell at their pleasure if hung up in the hall among the armour. But your emu, it seems,

stands six feet high on his stocking soles, and is little better than a kind of cassowary or ostrich. Hang them! they might [eat] up my collection of old arms for what I know. It reminds me of the story of the adjutant birds in Theodore Hook's novel. No; I'll no Emuses!

July 18. — Entered this morning on the history of Sir William Wallace. I wish I may be able to find my way between what the child can comprehend and what shall not yet be absolutely uninteresting to the grown readers. Uncommon facts I should think the best receipt. Learn that Mr. Owen Rees and John Gibson have amicably settled their differences about the last edition of Napoleon, the Trustees allowing the publishers nine months' credit. My nerves have for these two or three last days been susceptible of an acute excitement from the slightest causes; the beauty of the evening, the sighing of the summer breeze, brings the tears into my eyes not unpleasingly. But I must take exercise, and caseharden myself. There is no use in encouraging these moods of the mind. It is not the law we live on.

We had a little party with some luncheon at the lake, where Mr. Bainbridge fished without much success. Captain Hamilton and two Messrs. Stirling, relatives of my old friend Keir, were there, and walked with me a long round home. I walked better than I had done for some days. Mr. Scrope dined with us; he was complaining of gout, which is a bad companion for the stag-shooting.

July 19. — I made out my task this forenoon, and a good deal more. Sent five or six pages to James Ballantyne, *i.e.* got them ready, and wrote till the afternoon, then I drove over to Huntly Burn, and walked through the glens till dinner-time. After dinner read and worked till bed-time. Yet I have written well, walked well, talked well, and have nothing to regret.

July 20. — Despatched my letters to J.B., with supply of copy, and made up more than my task — about four leaves, I think. Offered my Emuses to the Duke of Buccleuch. I had an appointment with Captain Hamilton and his friends the Stirlings, that they were to go up Yarrow to-day. But the weather seems to say no.

My visitors came, however, and we went up to Newark. Here is a little misfortune, for Spice left me, and we could not find her. As we had no servant with us on horseback, I was compelled to leave her to her fate,

resolving to send in quest of her tomorrow morning. The keepers are my bonos socios, as the host says in the Devil of Edmonton, and would as soon shoot a child as a dog of mine. But there are scamps and traps, and I am ashamed to say how reluctantly I left the poor little terrier to its fate.

She came home to me, however, about an hour and a half after we were home, to my great delectation. Our visitors dined with us.

July 21. — This morning wrote five pages of children's history. Went to Minto, where we met, besides Lord M. and his delightful countess, Thomas Thomson, Kennedy of Dunure, Lord Carnarvon, and his younger son and daughter-in-law; the dowager Lady Minto also, whom I always delight to see, she is so full of spirit and intelligence. We rubbed up some recollections of twenty years ago, when I was more intimate with the family till Whig and Tory separated us for a time. By the way, nobody talks Whig or Tory just now, and the fighting men on each side go about muzzled and mute like dogs after a proclamation about canine madness. Am I sorry for this truce or not? Half and half. It is all we have left to stir the blood, this little political brawling; but better too little of it than too much.

July 22, [Abbotsford]. — Rose a little later than usual, and wrote a letter to Mrs. Joanna Baillie. She is writing a tragedy on witchcraft. I shall be curious to see it. Will it be real witchcraft — the ipsissimus diabolus — or an impostor, or the half-crazed being who believes herself an ally of condemned spirits, and desires to be so? That last is a sublime subject. We set out after breakfast, and reached this about two. I walked from two till four; chatted a long time with Charles after dinner, and thus went my day sine linea. But we will make it up. James Ballantyne dislikes my "Drovers." But it shall stand. I must have my own way sometimes.

I received news of two deaths at once: Lady Die Scott, my very old friend, and Archibald Constable, the bookseller.

July 23. — Yes! they are both for very different reasons subjects of reflection. Lady Diana Scott, widow of Walter Scott of Harden, was the last person whom I recollect so much older than myself, that she kept always at the same distance in point of years, so that she scarce seemed older to me (relatively) two years ago, when in her ninety-second year, than fifty years before. She was the daughter (alone remaining) of Pope's Earl of

Marchmont, and, like her father, had an acute mind and an eager temper. She was always kind to me, remarkably so indeed when I was a boy.

Constable's death might have been a most important thing to me if it had happened some years ago, and I should then have lamented it much. He has lived to do me some injury; yet, excepting the last £5000, I think most unintentionally. He was a prince of booksellers; his views sharp, powerful, and liberal; too sanguine, however, and, like many bold and successful schemers, never knowing when to stand or stop, and not always calculating his means to his objects with mercantile accuracy. He was very vain, for which he had some reason, having raised himself to great commercial eminence, as he might also have attained great wealth with good management. He knew, I think, more of the business of a bookseller in planning and executing popular works than any man of his time. In books themselves he had much bibliographical information, but none whatever that could be termed literary. He knew the rare volumes of his library not only by the eye, but by the touch, when blindfolded. Thomas Thomson saw him make this experiment, and, that it might be complete, placed in his hand an ordinary volume instead of one of these libri rariores. He said he had overestimated his memory; he could not recollect that volume. Constable was a violent-tempered man with those that he dared use freedom with. He was easily overawed by people of consequence, but, as usual, took it out of those whom poverty made subservient to him. Yet he was generous, and far from bad-hearted. In person good-looking, but very corpulent latterly; a large feeder, and deep drinker, till his health became weak. He died of water in the chest, which the natural strength of his constitution set long at defiance. I have no great reason to regret him; yet I do. If he deceived me, he also deceived himself.

Wrote five pages to-day, and went to see Mr. Scrope, who is fast with the gout — a bad companion to attend him

> "to Athole Braes,
> To shoot the dun deer down, down —
> To shoot the dun deer down."

July 24. — Finished five pages before eleven o'clock, at which time Mr. Deputy Register arrived from Minto, and we had an agreeable afternoon, talking about the old days we have had together. I was surprised to find that

Thomson knew as little as I do myself how to advise Charles to a good course of Scottish History. Hailes and Pinkerton, Robertson and Laing — there is nothing else for it — and Pinkerton is poor work. Laing, besides his party spirit, has a turn for generalising, which renders him rather dull, which was not the nature of the acute Orcadian.

July 25. — Thomson left us this morning early. I finished four pages, and part of a fifth, then drove to Huntly Burn and returned through the Glen; I certainly turn heavy-footed, not in the female sense, however. I had one or two falls among the slippy heather, not having Tom Purdie to give me his arm. I suppose I shall need a go-cart one of these days; and if it must be so — so let it be. Fiat voluntas tua.

A letter from John Gibson in the evening brought me word that Lord Newton had adjudged the profits of Woodstock and Napoleon to be my own. This is a great matter, and removes the most important part of my dispute with Constable's creditors. I waked in the middle of the night. Sure I am not such a feather-headed gull as not to be able to sleep for good news. I am thankful that it is as it is. Had it been otherwise, I could have stood it. The money realised will pay onethird of all that I owe in the world — and what will pay the other twothirds? I am as well and as capable as when those misfortunes began — January was a year. The public favour may wane, indeed, but it has not failed as yet, and I must not be too anxious about that possibility.

James B. has found fault with my tales for being too historical; formerly it was for being too infantine. He calls out for starch, and is afraid of his cravat being too stiff. O ye critics, will nothing melt ye?

July 26. — Wrote till one o'clock, and finished the first volume of Tales — about six leaves. Tomorrow I resume the Chronicles, tooth and nail. They must be good, if possible. After all, works of fiction, viz., cursed lies, are easier to write, and much more popular than the best truths. Walked over to the head of the Roman road, coming round by Bauchland and the Abbot's Walk. Wrote letters in the evening.

July 27. — In the morning still busied with my correspondence. No great desire to take up the Chronicles. But it must be done. Devil take the necessity, and the folly and knavery, that occasioned it! But this is no matter

now. Accordingly I set tightly to work, and got on till two, when I took a walk. Was made very happy by the arrival of Sophia and her babies, all in good health and spirits.

July 28. — Worked hard in the morning. The two Ballantynes, and Mr. Hogarth with them. Owen Rees came early in the day. Fergusons came to dinner. Rees in great kindness and good-humour, but a little drumlie, I think, about Napoleon. We heard Sandie's violin after dinner —

> " — — Whose touch harmonious can remove
> The pangs of guilty power and hopeless love."

I do not understand or care about fine music; but there is something in his violin which goes to the very heart. Sophia sung too, and we were once more merry in hall — the first time for this many a month and many a day.

July 29. — Could not do more than undertake my proofs to-day, of which J.B. has brought out a considerable quantity. Walked at one with Hogarth and Rees — the day sultry, hot, and we hot accordingly, but crept about notwithstanding. I am sorry to see my old and feal friend James rather unable to walk — once so stout and active — so was I in my way once. Ah! that vile word, what a world of loss it involves!

July 30. — One of the most peppering thunderstorms which I have heard for some time. Routed and roared from six in the morning till eight continuously.

> "The thunder ceased not, nor the fire reposed;
> Well done, old Botherby."

Time wasted, though very agreeably, after breakfast. At noon, set out for Chiefswood in the carriage, and walked home, footing it over rough and smooth, with the vigour of early days. James Ballantyne marched on too, somewhat meltingly, but without complaint. We again had beautiful music after dinner. The heart of age arose. I have often wondered whether I have a taste for music or no. My ear appears to me as dull as my voice is incapable of musical expression, and yet I feel the utmost pleasure in any such music as I can comprehend, learned pieces always excepted. I believe I may be

about the pitch of Terry's connoisseurship, and that "I have a reasonable good ear for a jig, but your solos and sonatas give me the spleen."

July 31. — Employed the morning writing letters and correcting proofs; this is the second day and scarce a line written, but circumstances are so much my apology that even Duty does not murmur, at least not much. We had a drive up to Galashiels, and sent J.B. off to Edinburgh in the Mail. Music in the evening as before.

August

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August 1. — My guests left me and I thought of turning to work again seriously. Finished five pages. Dined alone, excepting Huntly Gordon, who is come on a visit, poor lad. I hope he is well fixed under Mr. Planta's patronage. Smoked a cigar after dinner. Laughed with my daughters, and read them the review of Hoffmann's production out of Gillies's new Foreign Review.

The undertaking would do, I am convinced, in any other person's hands than those of the improvident editor; but I hear he is living as thoughtlessly as ever in London, has hired a large house, and gives Burgundy to his guests. This will hardly suit £500 a year.

August 2. — Got off my proofs. Went over to breakfast at Huntly Burn; the great object was to see my cascade in the Glen suitably repaired. I have had it put to rights by puddling and damming. What says the frog in the Fairy Tale? —

> "Stuff with moss, and clog with clay,
> And that will weize the water away."

Having seen the job pretty tightly done, walked deliciously home through the woods. But no work all this while. Then for up and at it. But in spite of good resolutions I trifled with my children after dinner, and read to them in the evening, and did just nothing at all.

August 3. — Wrote five pages and upwards — scarce amends for past laziness. Huntly Gordon lent me a volume of his father's manuscript memoirs. They are not without interest, for Pryse Gordon, though a bit of a roué, is a clever fellow in his way. One thing struck me, being the story of an Irish swindler, who called himself Henry King Edgeworth, an impudent gawsey fellow, who deserted from Gordon's recruiting party, enlisted again, and became so great a favourite with the Colonel of the regiment which he joined, that he was made pay-sergeant. Here he deserted to purpose with £200 or £300, escaped to France, got a commission in the Corps sent to

invade Ireland, was taken, recognised, and hanged. What would Mr. Theobald Wolfe Tone have said to such an associate in his regenerating expedition? These are thy gods, O Israel! The other was the displeasure of the present Cameron of Lochiel, on finding that the forty Camerons, with whom he joined the Duke of Gordon's Northern Fencible regiment, were to be dispersed. He had wellnigh mutinied and marched back with them. This would be a good anecdote for Garth.

August 4. — Spent the morning at Selkirk, examining people about an assault. When I returned I found Charlotte Kerr here with a clever little boy, Charles Scott, grandson of Charles of the Woll, and son of William, and grand-nephew of John of Midgehope. He seems a smart boy, and, considering that he is an only son with expectations, not too much spoiled. General Yermoloff called with a letter from a Dr. Knox, whom I do not know. If it be Vicesimus, we met nearly twentyfive years ago and did not agree. But General Yermoloff's name was luckily known to me. He is a man in the flower of life, about thirty, handsome, bold, and enthusiastic; a great admirer of poetry, and all that. He had been in the Moscow campaign, and those which followed, but must have been very young. He made not the least doubt that Moscow was burned by Rostopchin, and said that there was a general rumour before the French entered the town, and while the inhabitants were leaving it, that persons were left to destroy it. I asked him why the magazine of gunpowder had not been set fire to in the first instance. He answered that he believed the explosion of that magazine would have endangered the retreating Russians. This seemed unsatisfactory. The march of the Russians was too distant from Moscow to be annoyed by the circumstance. I pressed him as well as I could about the slowness of Koutousoff's operations; and he frankly owned that the Russians were so much rejoiced and surprised to see the French in retreat, that it was long ere they could credit the extent of the advantage which they had acquired. This has been but an idle day, so far as composition is concerned, but I was detained late at Selkirk.

August 5. — Wrote near six pages. General Yermoloff left me with many expressions of enthusiastic regard, as foreigners use to do. He is a kinsman of Princess Galitzin, whom I saw at Paris. I walked with Tom after one

o’clock. Dined en famille with Miss Todd, a pretty girl, and wrote after dinner.

August 6. — This morning finished proofs and was bang up with everything. When I was about to sit down to write, I have the agreeable tidings that Henderson, the fellow who committed the assault at Selkirk, and who made his escape from the officers on Saturday, was retaken, and that it became necessary that I should go up to examine him. Returned at four, and found Mrs. George Swinton from Calcutta, to whose husband I have been much obliged, with Archie and cousin Peggie Swinton, arrived. So the evening was done up.

August 7. — Cousins still continuing, we went to Melrose. I finished, however, in the first place, a pretty smart task, which is so far well, as we expect the Skenes tomorrow. Lockhart arrived from London. The news are that Canning is dangerously ill. This is the bowl being broken at the cistern with a vengeance. If he dies now, it will be pity it was not five months ago. The time has been enough to do much evil, but not to do any-permanent good.

August 8. — Huntly Gordon proposed to me that I should give him my correspondence, which we had begun to arrange last year. I resolved not to lose the opportunity, and began to look out and arrange the letters from about 1810, throwing out letters of business and such as are private. They are of little consequence, generally speaking, yet will be one day curious. I propose to have them bound up, to save trouble. It is a sad task; how many dead, absent, estranged, and altered! I wrought till the Skenes came at four o’clock. I love them well; yet I wish their visit had been made last week, when other people were here. It kills time, or rather murders it, this company-keeping. Yet what remains on earth that I like so well as a little society? I wrote not a line to-day.

August 9. — I finished the arrangement of the letters so as to put them into Mr. Gordon’s hands. It will be a great job done. But, in the meanwhile, it interrupts my work sadly, for I kept busy till one o’clock to-day with this idle man’s labour. Still, however, it might have been long enough ere I got a

confidential person like Gordon to arrange these confidential papers. They are all in his hands now. Walked after one.

August 10. — This is a morning of fidgety, nervous confusion. I sought successively my box of Bramah pens, my proof-sheets, and last, not least anxiously, my spectacles. I am convinced I lost a full hour in these various chases. I collected all my insubordinate movables at once, but had scarce corrected the proof and written half-a-score of lines, than enter Dalgleish, declaring the Blucher hour is come. The weather, however, is rainy, and fitted for a day of pure work, but I was able only to finish my task of three pages.

The death of the Premier is announced. Late George Canning, the witty, the accomplished, the ambitious; he who had toiled thirty years, and involved himself in the most harassing discussions to attain this dizzy height; he who had held it for three months of intrigue and obloquy — and now a heap of dust, and that is all. He was an early and familiar friend of mine, through my intimacy with George Ellis. No man possessed a gayer and more playful wit in society; no one, since Pitt's time, had more commanding sarcasm in debate; in the House of Commons he was the terror of that species of orators called the Yelpers. His lash fetched away both skin and flesh, and would have penetrated the hide of a rhinoceros. In his conduct as a statesman he had a great fault: he lent himself too willingly to intrigue. Thus he got into his quarrel with Lord Castlereagh, and lost credit with the country for want of openness. Thus too, he got involved with the Queen's party to such an extent that it fettered him upon that memorable quarrel, and obliged him to butter Sir Robert Wilson with dear friend, and gallant general, and so forth. The last composition with the Whigs was a sacrifice of principle on both sides. I have some reason to think they counted on getting rid of him in two or three years. To me Canning was always personally most kind. I saw, with pain, a great change in his health when I met him at Colonel Bolton's at Stors in 1825. In London I thought him looking better.

August 11. — Wrote nearly five pages; then walked. A visit from Henry Scott; nothing known as yet about politics. A high Tory Administration would be a great evil at this time. There are repairs in the structure of our constitution which ought to be made at this season, and without which the

people will not long be silent. A pure Whig Administration would probably play the devil by attempting a thorough repair. As to a compound, or melodramatic, Ministry, the parts out of which such a one could be organised just now are at a terrible discount in public estimation, nor will they be at par in a hurry again. The public were generally shocked at the complete lack of principle testified by public men on the late occasion, and by some who till then had some credit with the public. The Duke of W. has risen by his firmness on the one side, Earl Grey on the other.

August 12. — Wrote my task and no more. Walked with Lockhart from one o'clock to four. Took in our way the Glen, which looks beautiful. I walked with extreme pain and feebleness until we began to turn homewards, when the relaxation of the ankle sinews seemed to be removed, and I trode merrily home. This is strange; that exercise should restore the nerves from the chill or numbness which is allied to palsy, I am well aware, but how it should restore elasticity to sinews that are too much relaxed, I for one cannot comprehend. Colonel Russell came to dinner with us, and to consult me about some family matters. He has the spirit of a gentleman; that is certain.

August 13. — A letter from booksellers at Brussels informs me of the pleasant tidings that Napoleon is a total failure; that they have lost much money on a version which they were at great expense in preparing, and modestly propose that I should write a novel to make them amends for loss on a speculation which I knew nothing about. "Have you nothing else to ask?" as Sancho says to the farmer, who asks him to stock a farm for his son, portion off his daughters, *etc. etc.* They state themselves to be young booksellers; certes, they must hold me to be a very young author! Napoleon, however, has failed on the Continent — and perhaps in England also; for, from the mumbling, half-grumbling tone of Longman and Co., dissatisfaction may be apprehended. Well, I can set my face to it boldly. I live not in the public opinion, not I; but egad! I live by it, and that is worse. Tu ne cede malis, sed contra, *etc.*

I corrected and transmitted sheets before breakfast; afterwards went and cut wood with Tom, but returned about twelve in rather a melancholy humour. I fear this failure may be followed by others; and then what chance of extricating my affairs. But they that look to freits, freits will follow them.

Hussards en avant, — care killed a cat. I finished three pages — that is, a full task of the Chronicles — after I returned. Mr. and Mrs. Philips of Manchester came to dinner.

August 14. — Finished my task before breakfast. A bad rainy day, for which I should not have cared but for my guests. However, being good-humoured persons and gifted with taste, we got on very well, by dint of showing prints, curiosities; finally the house up stairs and down; and at length by undertaking a pilgrimage to Melrose in the rain, which pilgrimage we accomplished, but never entered the Abbey Church, having just had wetting enough to induce us, when we arrived at the gate, to "Turn again, Whittington."

August 15. — Wrote in the morning. After breakfast walked with Mr. Philips, who is about to build and plan himself, and therefore seemed to enter con amore into all I had been doing, asked questions, and seemed really interested to learn what I thought myself not ill-qualified to teach. The little feeling of superior information in such cases is extremely agreeable. On the contrary, it is a great scrape to find you have been boring some one who did not care a d — — about the matter, so to speak; and that you might have been as well employed in buttering a whinstone. Mr. and Mrs. Philips left us about twelve — day bad. I wrote nearly five pages of Chronicles.

August 16. — A wet, disagreeable, sulky day, but such things may be carried to account. I wrote upwards of seven pages, and placed myself rectus in curia with Madam Duty, who was beginning to lift up her throat against me. Nothing remarkable except that Huntly Gordon left us.

August 17. — Wrote my task in the morning. After breakfast went out and cut wood with Tom and John Swanston, and hewed away with my own hand; remained on foot from eleven o'clock till past three, doing, in my opinion, a great deal of good in plantations above the house, where the firs had been permitted to predominate too much over the oak and hardwood. The day was rough and stormy — not the worst for working, and I could do it with a good conscience, all being well forward in the duty line. After tea I

worked a little longer. On the whole finished four leaves and upwards — about a printed sheet — which is enough for one day.

August 18. — Finished about five leaves, and then out to the wood, where I chopped away among the trees, laying the foundation for future scenery. These woods will one day occupy a great number of hands. Four years hence they will employ ten stout woodsmen almost every day of the year. Henry and William Scott (Harden) came to dinner.

August 19. — Wrote till about one, then walked for an hour or two by myself entirely; finished five pages before dinner, when we had Captain and Mrs. Hamilton and young Davidoff, who is their guest. They remained with us all night.

August 20. — I corrected proofs and wrote one leaf before breakfast; then went up to Selkirk to try a fellow for an assault. The people there get rather riotous. This is a turbulent fierce fellow. Some of his attitudes were good during the trial. This dissipated my attention for the day, although I was back by halfpast two. I did not work any more, so am behind in my reckoning.

August 21. — Wrote four pages, then set out to make a call at Sunderland Hall and Yair, but the old sociable broke down before we had got past the thicket, so we trudged all back on foot, and I wrote another page. This makes up the deficiency of yesterday.

August 22. — I wrote four or five leaves, but begin to get aground for want of Indian localities. Colonel Ferguson's absence is unlucky, and half-a-dozen Qui Hi's besides, willing to write chits, eat tiffin, and vent all their Pagan jargon when one does not want to hear it; and now that I want a touch of their slang, lo! there is not one near me. Mr. Adolphus, son of the celebrated counsel, and author of a work on the Waverley Novels, came to make me a visit. He is a modest as well as an able man, and I am obliged to him for the delicacy with which he treated a matter in which I was personally so much concerned. Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton asked us to breakfast tomorrow.

August 23. — Went to breakfast at Chiefswood, which, with a circuitous walk, have consumed the day. Found, in the first place, my friend Allan, the painter, busy about a picture, into which he intends introducing living characters — a kind of revel at Abbotsford. Second, a whimsical party, consisting of John Stevenson, the bookseller, Peter Buchan from Peterhead, a quiz of a poetical creature, and a bookbinder, a friend of theirs. The plan was to consult me about publishing a great quantity of ballads which this Mr. Buchan has collected. I glanced them over. He has been very successful, for they are obviously genuine, and many of them very curious. Others are various editions of wellknown ballads. I could not make the man comprehend that these last were of little value, being generally worse readings of what was already published. A small edition published by subscription may possibly succeed. It is a great pity that few of these ballads are historical, almost all being of the romantic cast. They certainly ought to be preserved, after striking out one or two which have been sophisticated, I suppose by Mr. Buchan himself, which are easily distinguishable from the genuine ballads. No one but Burns ever succeeded in patching up old Scottish songs with any good effect.

August 24. — Corrected proofs and wrote letters in the morning. Began a review upon Monteath's Planter for Lockhart. Other matters at a stand. A drive down to Mertoun, and engaged to dine there on Sunday first. This consumed the day.

August 25. — Mr. Adolphus left us this morning after a very agreeable visit. We all dined at Dr. Brewster's. Met Sir John Wright, Miss Haig, *etc.* Slandered our neighbours, and were good company. Major John Scott there. I did a little more at the review to-day. But I cannot go on with the tale without I could speak a little Hindostanee — a small seasoning of curry-powder. Ferguson will do it if I can screw it out of him.

August 26. — Encore review. Walked from twelve till three, then drove to Mertoun with Lockhart and Allan. Dined en famille, and home by halfpast ten. We thought of adding a third volume to the Chronicles, but Gibson is afraid it would give grounds for a pretext to seize this work on the part of Constable's creditors, who seem determined to take any advantage of me,

but they can only show their teeth I trust; though I wish the arbitration was ended.

August 27. — Sent off proofs in morning, revised in afternoon. Walked from one till four. What a life of uniformity! Yet I never wish to change it. I even regret I must go to town to meet Lady Compton next week.

A singular letter from a lady, requesting I would father a novel of hers. That won't pass.

Cadell writes me, transmitting a notice from the French papers that Gourgaud has gone, or is going, to London to verify the facts alleged in my history of Napoleon, and the bibliopolist is in a great funk. I lack some part of his instinct. I have done Gourgaud no wrong: every word imputed to him exists in the papers submitted to me as historical documents, and I should have been a shameful coward if I had shunned using them. At my years it is somewhat late for an affair of honour, and as a reasonable man I would avoid such an arbitrament, but will not plead privilege of literature. The country shall not be disgraced in my person, and having stated why I think I owe him no satisfaction, I will at the same time most willingly give it to him.

> "Il sera reçu,
> Biribi,
> A la façon de Barbaru,
> Mon ami."

I have written to Will Clerk to stand my friend if necessary. He has mettle in him, and thinks of my honour as well as my safety.

August 28. — I am still bothering with the review, but gave Lockhart fifteen leaves, which is something. Learned with regret that Williams leaves his situation of Rector of the New Academy. It is a shot in the wing of the institution; for he is a heaven-born teacher. Walked at two till four along the thicket, and by the river-side, where I go seldom; I can't say why, unless that the walk is less private than those more distant. Lockhart, Allan, and I, talk of an excursion to Kelso tomorrow. I have no friends there now. Yet once how many!

August 29. — Went on our little expedition, breakfasting at Mertoun.

Called at Fleurs, where we found Sir John S. and his whole family. The great lady received us well, though we had been very remiss in our duty. From that we went to Kelso, where I saw not a soul to acknowledge former acquaintance. How should I, when my residence there was before 1783, I fancy? The little cottage in which I lived with poor Aunt Jenny is still standing, but the great garden is divided betwixt three proprietors. Its huge platanus tree withered, I was told, in the same season which was fatal to so many of the species. It was cut down. The yew-hedges, labyrinths, wildernesses, and other marks that it had once been the abode of one of the Millers connected with the author of the Gardener's Dictionary (they were a Quaker family), are all obliterated, and the place is as common and vulgar as may be. The lady the cottage belongs to was very civil. Allan, as a man of taste, was much delighted with what he saw. When we returned, we found our party at home increased by Lady Anna Maria Elliot, who had been showing Melrose to two friends, Miss Drinkwaters. Lady M.'s wit and good-humour made the evening go pleasantly off. There were also two friends of Charles's, by name Paley (a nephew of the archdeacon) and Ashworth. They seem nice young men, with modesty and good-breeding. I am glad, as my mother used to say, that his friends are so presentable. Moreover, there came my old, right trusty, and wellbeloved friend, John Richardson, so we were a full party. Lady Anna Maria returned in the evening. Francis Scott also dined with us.

August 30. — Disposed of my party as I best might, and worked at my review. Walked out at one, and remained till near five. Mr. Scott of Harden and David Thomson, W.S., dined with us. Walked with Mr. Allan through Haxel Cleugh.

August 31. — Went on with my review; but I have got Sir Henry's original pamphlet, which is very cleverly written. I find I cannot touch on his mode of transplantation at all in this article. It involves many questions, and some of importance, so I will make another article for January. Walked up the Rhymer's Glen with John Richardson.

September

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September 1. — Colonel Ferguson and Colonel Byers breakfasted; the latter from India, the nephew of the old antiquarian; but I had not an opportunity to speak to him about the Eastern information required for the Chronicles. Besides, my review is not finished, though I wrought hard to-day. Sir William Hamilton and his brother, Captain Hamilton, called; also young Davidoff. I am somewhat sorry for my young friend. His friends permit him to remain too long in Britain to be happy in Russia. Yet this [is a] prejudice of those who suppose that when the institutions and habits by which they are governed come to be known to strangers, they must become exclusively attached to them. This is not so. The Hottentot returns from civilisation to the wild manners of his kraal, and wherefore should not a Russian resume his despotic ideas when returned to his country?

September 2. — This was a very warm day. I remained at home, chiefly engaged in arranging papers, as I go away tomorrow. It is lucky these starts happen from time to time as I should otherwise never get my table clear. At five o'clock the air became cooler, and I sat out of doors and played with the children. Anne, who had been at Mertoun the day before, brought up Anne and Elizabeth Scott with her, and Francis has been with us since yesterday. Richardson left us.

September 3. — Went on with my arranging of papers till twelve, when I took chaise and arrived at Melville Castle.

Found Lord and Lady M. and the two young ladies. Dr. Hope, my old schoolfellow James Hope and his son, made up our party, which was very pleasant. After they went away we had some private conversation about politics. The Whigs and Tories of the Cabinet are strangely divided, the former desiring to have Mr. Herries for Chancellor of the Exchequer, the latter to have Lord Palmerston, that Calcraft may be Secretary of War. The King has declared firmly for Herries, on which Lord Goderich with tears entreated Herries to remove the bone of contention by declining to accept. The King called him a blubbering fool. That the King does not like or trust the Whigs is obvious from his passing over Lord Lansdowne, a man who, I

should suppose, is infinitely better fitted for a Premier than Goderich. But he probably looks with no greater [favour] on the return of the High Tories. I fear he may wish to govern by the system of bascule, or balancing the two parties, a perilous game. The Advocate also dined with us.

September 4, [Edinburgh]. — Came into town after breakfast, and saw Gibson, whose account of affairs is comfortable. Also William Clerk, whom I found quite ready and willing to stand my friend if Gourgaud should come my road. He agrees with me that there is no reason why he should turn on me, but that if he does, reason or none, it is best to stand buff to him. It is clear to me that what is least forgiven in a man of any mark or likelihood is want of that article blackguardly called pluck. All the fine qualities of genius cannot make amends for it. We are told the genius of poets especially is irreconcilable with this species of grenadier accomplishment. If so, quel chien de génie! Saw Lady Compton. I dine with her to-day, and go to Glasgow with her tomorrow.

September 5. — Dined with Lady Compton yesterday, and talked over old stories until nine, our tête-à-tête being a very agreeable one. Then hence to my good friend John Gibson's, and talked with him of sundries. I had an odd dream last night. It seemed to me that I was at a panorama, when a vulgar little man behind me was making some very clever but impudent remarks on the picture, and at the same time seemed desirous of information, which no one would give him. I turned round and saw a young fellow dressed like a common carter, with a blue coat and red waistcoat, and a whip tied across him. He was young, with a hatchet-face, which was turned to a brick colour by exposure to the weather, sharp eyes, and in manner and voice not unlike John Leyden. I was so much struck with his countenance and talents that I asked him about his situation, and expressed a wish to mend it. He followed me, from the hopes which I excited, and we had a dreadful walk among ruins, and afterwards I found myself on horseback, and in front of a roaring torrent. I plunged in as I have formerly done in good sad earnest, and got to the other side. Then I got home among my children and grandchildren, and there also was my genius. Now this would defy Daniel and the soothsayers to boot; nor do I know why I should now put it down, except that I have seldom seen a portrait in life which was more strongly marked on my memory than that man's. Perhaps my genius was Mr. Dickinson, papermaker, who has undertaken that the London

creditors who hold Constable's bills will be satisfied with 10s. in the pound. This would be turning a genius to purpose, for 6s. 8d. is provided, and they can have no difficulty about 3s. 4d. These debts, for which I am legally responsible, though no party to their contraction, amount to £30,000 odds. Now if they can be cleared for £15,000 it is just so much gained. This would be a giant step to freedom. I see in my present comfortable quarters some of my own old furniture in Castle St., which gives me rather queer feelings. I remember poor Charlotte and I having so much thought about buying these things. Well, they are in kind and friendly hands.

September 6. — Went with Lady Compton to Glasgow, and had as pleasant a journey as the kindness, wit, and accomplishment of my companion could make it. Lady C. gives an admirable account of Rome, and the various strange characters she has met in foreign parts. I was much taken with some stories out of a romance called Manuscrit trouvé à Saragosse, by a certain Count John Polowsky [Potocki?], a Pole. It seems betwixt the style of Cazotti, Count Hamilton and Le Sage. The Count was a toiler after supernatural secrets, an adept, and understood the cabbala. He put himself to death, with many odd circumstances, inferring derangement. I am to get a sight of the book if it be possible. At Glasgow (Buck's Head) we met Mrs. Maclean Clephane and her two daughters, and there was much joy. After the dinner the ladies sung, particularly Anna Jane, who has more taste and talent of every kind than half the people going with great reputations on their backs.

A very pleasant day was paid for by a restless night.

September 7. — This day had calls from Lord Provost and Mr. Rutherford (William) with invitations, which I declined. Read in manuscript a very clever play (comedy) by Miss A.J. Clephane in the old style, which was very happily imitated. The plot was confused — too much taking and retaking of prisoners, but the dialogue was excellent.

Took leave of these dear friends, never perhaps to meet all together again, for two of us are old. Went down by steam to Colonel Campbell's, Blythswood House, where I was most courteously received by him and his sisters. We are kinsfolk and very old acquaintance. His seat here is a fine one; the house is both grand and comfortable.

We walked to Lawrence Lockhart's of Inchinnan, within a mile of Blythswood House. It is extremely nice and comfortable, far beyond the style of a Scotch clergyman; but Lawrence is wealthy. I found John Lockhart and Sophia there, returned from Largs. We all dined at Colonel Campbell's on turtle, and all manner of good things. Miss A. and H. Walker were there. The sleep at night made amends for the Buck's Head.

September 8. — Colonel Campbell carried me to breakfast in Glasgow, and at ten I took chaise for Corehouse, where I found my old friend George Cranstoun rejoiced to see me, and glad when I told him what Lord Newton had determined in my affairs. I should observe I saw the banks of the Clyde above Hamilton much denuded of its copse, untimely cut; and the stools ill cut, and worse kept. Cranstoun and I walked before dinner. I never saw the great fall of Corehouse from this side before, and I think it the best point, perhaps; at all events, it is not that from which it is usually seen; so Lord Corehouse has the sight and escapes the tourists. Dined with him, his sister Mrs. Cunningham, and Corehouse.

I omitted to mention in yesterday's note that within Blythswood plantation, near to the Bridge of Inchinnan, the unfortunate Earl of Argyle was taken in 1685, at a stone called Argyle's Stone. Blythswood says the Highland drovers break down his fences in order to pay a visit to the place. The Earl had passed the Cart river, and was taken on the Renfrew side.

September 9. — This is a superb place of Corehouse's. Cranstoun has as much feeling about improvement as other things. Like all new improvers, he is at more expense than is necessary, plants too thick, and trenches where trenching is superfluous. But this is the eagerness of a young artist. Besides the grand lion, the Fall of Clyde, he has more than one lion's whelp; a fall of a brook in a cleugh called Mill's Gill must be superb in rainy weather. The old Castle of Corehouse is much more castle-like on this than from the other side.

Left Corehouse at eight in the morning, and reached Lanark by halfpast nine. I was thus long in travelling three miles because the postilion chose to suppose I was bound for Biggar, and was two miles ere I discovered what he was doing. I thought he aimed at crossing the Clyde by some new bridge above Bonnington. Breakfasted at Lanark with the Lockharts, and reached Abbotsford this evening by nine o'clock.

Thus ends a pleasant expedition among the people I like most. Drawback only one. It has cost me £15, including two gowns for Sophia and Anne; and I have lost six days' labour. Both may be soon made up.

N.B. — We lunched (dined, videlicet) with Professor Wilson at Inverleithen, and met James Hogg,

September 10, [Abbotsford]. — Gourgaud's wrath has burst forth in a very distant clap of thunder, in which he accuses me of combining with the ministry to slander his rag of a reputation. He be d — — d for a fool, to make his case worse by stirring. I shall only revenge myself by publishing the whole extracts I made from the records of the Colonial Office, in which he will find enough to make him bite his nails. Still I wonder he did not come over and try his manhood otherwise. I would not have shunned him nor any Frenchman who ever kissed Bonaparte's breech.

September 11. — Went to Huntly Burn and breakfasted with Colonel Ferguson, who has promised to have some Indian memoranda ready for me. After breakfast went to choose the ground for a new plantation, to be added next week to the end of Jane's Wood. Came to dinner Lord Carnarvon and his son and daughter; also Lord Francis Leveson Gower, the translator of Faust.

September 12. — Walk with Lord Francis. When we return, behold ye! enter Lady Hampden and Lady Wedderburn. In the days of George Square, Jane and Maria Brown, beauties and toasts. There was much pleasure on my side, and some, I suppose, on theirs; and there was a riding, and a running, and a chattering, and an asking, and a showing — a real scene of confusion, yet mirth and good spirits. Our guests quit us next day.

September 13. — Fined a man for an assault at Selkirk. He pleaded guilty, which made short work. The beggarly appearance of the Jury in the new system is very worthy of note. One was a menial servant. When I returned, James Ballantyne and Mr. Cadell arrived. They bring a good account of matters in general. Cadell explained to me a plan for securing the copyright of the novels, which has a very good face. It appears they are going off fast; and if the glut of the market is once reduced by sales, the property will be excellent, and may be increased by notes. James B. brought his son. Robert Rutherford also here, and Miss Russells.

September 14. — In the morning wrote my answer to Gourgaud, rather too keen perhaps, but I owe him nothing; and as for exciting his resentment, I will neither seek nor avoid it.

Cadell's views seem fair, and he is open and explicit. His brothers support him, and he has no want of cash. He sells two or three copies of Bonaparte and one of the novels, or two, almost every day. He must soon, he says, apply to London for copies. Read a Refutation, as it calls itself, of Napoleon's history. It is so very polite and accommodating that every third word is a concession — the work of a man able to judge distinctly on specific facts, but erroneous in his general results. He will say the same of me, perhaps. Ballantyne and Cadell leave us. Enter Miss Sinclairs, two in number, also a translator, and a little Flemish woman, his wife — very good-humoured, rather a little given to compliment; name Fauconpret. They are to return at night in a gig as far as Kelso — a bold undertaking.

September 16. — The ladies went to Church; I, God forgive me, finished the Chronicles with a good deal of assistance from Colonel Ferguson's notes about Indian affairs. The patch is, I suspect, too glaring to be pleasing; but the Colonel's sketches are capitally good. I understand, too, there are one or two East Indian novels which have lately appeared. Naboclish! vogue la galère!

September 17. — Received from James B. the proofs of my reply to General Gourgaud, with some cautious balaam from mine honest friend, alarmed by a Highland Colonel, who had described Gourgaud as a mauvais garçon, famous fencer, marksman, and so forth. I wrote in answer, which is true, that I would hope all my friends would trust to my acting with proper caution and advice; but that if I were capable, in a moment of weakness, of doing anything short of what my honour demanded, I would die the death of a poisoned rat in hole, out of mere sense of my own degradation. God knows, that, though life is placid enough with me, I do not feel anything to attach me to it so strongly as to occasion my avoiding any risk which duty to my character may demand from me.

I set to work with the Tales of a Grandfather, second volume, and finished four pages.

September 18. — Wrote five pages of the Tales. Walked from Huntly Burn, having gone in the carriage. Smoked my cigar with Lockhart after dinner, and then whiled away the evening over one of Miss Austen's novels. There is a truth of painting in her writings which always delights me. They do not, it is true, get above the middle classes of society, but there she is inimitable.

September 19. — Wrote three pages, but dawdled a good deal; yet the Tales get on, although I feel bilious, and vapourish, I believe I must call it. At such times my loneliness, and the increasing inability to walk, come dark over me, but surely these mulligrubs belong to the mind more than the body.

September 22. — Captain and Colonel Ferguson, the last returned from Ireland, dined here. Prayer of the minister of the Cumbrays, two miserable islands in the mouth of the Clyde: "O Lord, bless and be gracious to the Greater and the Lesser Cumbrays, and in thy mercy do not forget the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland."

September 23. — Worked in the morning; then drove over to Huntly Burn, chiefly to get from the good-humoured Colonel the accurate spelling of certain Hindu words which I have been using under his instructions. By the way, the sketches he gave me of Indian manners are highly picturesque. I have made up my Journal, which was three days in arrear. Also I wrought a little, so that the second volume of Grandfather's Tales is nearly half finished.

September 24. — Worked in the morning as usual, and sent off the proofs and copy. Something of the black dog still hanging about me; but I will shake him off. I generally affect good spirits in company of my family, whether I am enjoying them or not. It is too severe to sadden the harmless mirth of others by suffering your own causeless melancholy to be seen; and this species of exertion is, like virtue, its own reward; for the good spirits, which are at first simulated, become at length real.

September 25, [Edinburgh], — Got into town by one o'clock, the purpose being to give my deposition before Lord Newton in a case betwixt me and Constable's creditors. My oath seemed satisfactory; but new reasons

were alleged for additional discussion, which is, I trust, to end this wearisome matter. I dined with Mr. Gibson, and slept there. J.B. dined with us, and we had thoughts how to save our copyright by a bargain with Cadell. I hope it will turn to good, as I could add notes to a future edition, and give them some value.

September 26, [Abbotsford]. — Set off in mail coach, and my horses met me at Yair Bridge. I travelled with rather a pleasant man, an agent, I found, on Lord Seaford's West Indian Estates. Got home by twelve o'clock, and might have been here earlier if the Tweed had not been too large for fording. I must note down my cash lest it gets out of my head; "may the foul fa' the gear, and the blathrie o't," and yet there's no doing either with it or without it.

September 27. — The morning was damp, dripping, and unpleasant; so I even made a work of necessity, and set to the Tales like a dragon. I murdered M'Lellan of Bomby at Thrieve Castle; stabbed the Black Douglas in the town of Stirling; astonished King James before Roxburgh; and stifled the Earl of Mar in his bath in the Canongate. A wild world, my masters, this Scotland of ours must have been. No fear of want of interest; no lassitude in those days for want of work,

> "For treason, d' ye see,
> Was to them a dish of tea,
> And murther bread and butter."

We dined at Gattonside with Mr. Bainbridge, who kindly presented me with six bottles of super-excellent Jamaica rum, and with a manuscript collection of poetry, said to be Swift's handwriting, which it resembles. It is, I think, poor Stella's. Nothing very new in it.

September 28. — Another dropping and busy day. I wrought hard at the Historical Tales, which get on fast.

September 29. — I went on with the little history which now (i.e. vol. ii.) doth appropinque an end. Received in the evening [Nos. 37 to 41?] of the Roxburghe publications. They are very curious, and, generally speaking, well selected. The following struck me: — An Italian poem on the subject of Floddenfield; the legend of St. Robert of Knaresborough; two plays,

printed from MS. by Mr. Haslewood. It does not appear that Mr. H. fully appreciated the light which he was throwing on the theatrical history by this valuable communication. It appears that the change of place, or of scene as we term it, was intimated in the following manner.

In the middle of the stage was placed Colchester, and the sign of Pigot's tavern — called the Tarlton — intimated what part of the town was represented. The name was painted above. On one side of the stage was, in like manner, painted a town, which the name announced to be Maldon; on the other side a ranger's lodge. The scene lay through the piece in one or other of these three places, and the entrance of the characters determined where each scene lay. If they came in from Colchester, then Colchester was for the time the scene of action. When that scene was shifted to Maldon, it was intimated by the approach of the actors from the side where it was painted — a clumsy contrivance, doubtless, compared to changeable scenery; yet sufficient to impress the audience with a sense of what was meant.

September 30. — Wet, drizzling, dismal day. I finished odds and ends, scarce stirring out of my room, yet doing little to the purpose. Wrote to Sir Henry [Seton Steuart] about his queries concerning transplanted trees, and to Mr. Freeling concerning the Roxburghe Club books. I have settled to print the manuscript concerning the murder of the two Shaws by the Master of Sinclair. I dallied with the precious time rather than used it. Read the two Roxburghe plays; they are by William Percy, a son of the eighth Earl of Northumberland; worthless and very gross, but abounding with matter concerning scenery, and so forth, highly interesting to the dramatic antiquary.

Note on the "grenadier accomplishment" mentioned in p. 30.

In a letter to the Duke of Buccleuch, of May 1818, Scott gives the following amusing account of an incident in the life of the Ettrick Shepherd: —

> "Our poor friend Hogg has had an affair of honour…. Two mornings ago, about seven in the morning, my servant announced, while I was shaving in my dressing-room, that Mr. Hogg wished earnestly to speak with me. He was ushered in, and I cannot describe the half-startled, half-humorous air with

which he said, scratching his head most vehemently, ‘Odd, Scott, here’s twae fo’k’s come frae Glasgow to provoke mey to fecht a duel.’ ‘A duel,’ answered I, in great astonishment, ‘and what do you intend to do?’ ‘Odd, I just locket them up in my room and sent the lassie for twae o’ the police, and just gie’d the men ower to their chairge, and I thocht I wad come and ask you what I should do….’ He had already settled for himself the question whether he was to fight or not, and all that he had to do was to go to the Police Office and tell the charge he had to bring against the two Glasgow gentlemen…. The Glaswegians were greatly too many for him [in Court]…. They returned in all triumph and glory, and Hogg took the wings of the morning and fled to his cottage at Altrive, not deeming himself altogether safe in the streets of Edinburgh! Now, although I do not hold valour to be an essential article in the composition of a man like Hogg, yet I heartily wish he could have prevailed on himself to swagger a little…. But considering his failure in the field and the Sheriff Office, I am afraid we must apply to Hogg the apology which is made for Waller by his biographer: ‘Let us not condemn him with untempered severity because he was not such a prodigy as the world has seldom seen — because his character included not the poet, the orator, and the hero.’“

October

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October 1. — I set about work for two hours, and finished three pages; then walked for two hours; then home, adjusted sheriff processes, and cleared the table. I am to set off tomorrow for Ravensworth Castle, to meet the Duke of Wellington; a great let off, I suppose. Yet I would almost rather stay and see two days more of Lockhart and my daughter, who will be off before my return. Perhaps. But there is no end to perhaps. We must cut the rope and let the vessel drive down the tide of destiny.

October 2. — Set out in the morning at seven, and reached Kelso by a little past ten with my own horses. Then took the Wellington coach to carry me to Wellington — smart that. Nobody inside but an old lady, who proved a toy-woman in Edinburgh; her head furnished with as substantial ware as her shop, but a good soul, I'se warrant her. Heard all her debates with her landlord about a new door to the cellar, *etc.* etc.; propriety of paying rent on the 15th or 25th of May. Landlords and tenants have different opinions on that subject. Danger of dirty sheets in inns. We dined at Wooler, and I found out Dr. Douglas on the outside, son of my old acquaintance Dr. James Douglas of Kelso. This made us even lighter in mind till we came to Whittingham. Thence to Newcastle, where an obstreperous horse retarded us for an hour at least, to the great alarm of my friend the toy-woman. N.B. — She would have made a good featherbed if the carriage had happened to fall, and her undermost. The heavy roads had retarded us near an hour more, so that I hesitated to go to Ravensworth so late; but my good woman's tales of dirty sheets, and certain recollections of a Newcastle inn, induced me to go on. When I arrived the family had just retired. Lord Ravensworth and Mr. Liddell came down, however, and really received me as kindly as possible.

October 3. — Rose about eight or later. My morals begin to be corrupted by travelling and fine company. Went to Durham with Lord Ravensworth betwixt one and two. Found the gentlemen of Durham county and town assembled to receive the Duke of Wellington. I saw several old friends, and with difficulty suited names to faces, and faces to names. There was

Headlam, Dr. Gilly and his wife, and a world of acquaintance besides, Sir Thomas Lawrence too, with Lord Londonderry. I asked him to come on with me, but he could not. He is, from habit of coaxing his subjects I suppose, a little too fair-spoken, otherwise very pleasant. The Duke arrived very late. There were bells and cannon and drums, trumpets and banners, besides a fine troop of yeomanry. The address was well expressed, and as well answered by the Duke. The enthusiasm of the ladies and the gentry was great — the common people were lukewarm. The Duke has lost popularity in accepting political power. He will be more useful to his country it may be than ever, but will scarce be so gracious in the people's eyes; and he will not care a curse for what outward show he has lost. But I must not talk of curses, for we are going to take our dinner with the Bishop of Durham, a man of amiable and courteous manners, who becomes his station well, but has traces of bad health on his countenance.

We dined, about one hundred and forty or fifty men, a distinguished company for rank and property. Marshal Beresford, and Sir John, amongst others, Marquis of Lothian, Lord Duncombe, Marquis Londonderry, and I know not who besides:

> "Lords and Dukes and noble Princes,
> All the pride and flower of Spain."

We dined in the rude old baronial hall, impressive from its antiquity, and fortunately free from the plaster of former improvement, as I trust it will, from the gingerbread taste of modern Gothicisers. The bright moon streaming in through the old Gothic windows, made a light which contrasted strangely with the artificial lights within; spears, banners, and armour were intermixed with the pictures of old, and the whole had a singular mixture of baronial pomp with the graver and more chastened dignity of prelacy. The conduct of our reverend entertainer suited the character remarkably well. Amid the welcome of a Count Palatine he did not for an instant forget the gravity of the Church dignitary. All his toasts were gracefully given, and his little speeches well made, and the more affecting that the failing voice sometimes reminded us that our aged host laboured under the infirmities of advanced life. To me personally the Bishop was very civil, and paid me his public compliments by proposing my health in the most gratifying manner.

The Bishop's lady received a sort of drawingroom after we rose from table, at which a great many ladies attended. I ought not to forget that the singers of the choir attended at dinner, and sung the Anthem Non nobis Domine, as they said who understood them, very well — and, as I think, who did not understand the music, with an unusual degree of spirit and interest. It is odd how this can be distinguished from the notes of fellows who use their throats with as little feeling of the notes they utter as if they were composed of the same metal as their bugle-horns.

After the drawingroom we went to the Assembly-rooms, which were crowded with company. I saw some very pretty girls dancing merrily that old-fashioned thing called a country-dance which Old England has now thrown aside, as she would do her creed, if there were some foreign frippery offered instead. We got away after midnight, a large party, and reached Ravensworth Castle — Duke of Wellington, Lord Londonderry, and about twenty besides — about halfpast one. Soda water, and to bed by two.

October 4. — Slept till nigh ten — fatigued by our toils of yesterday, and the unwonted late hours. Still too early for this Castle of Indolence, for I found few of last night's party yet appearing. I had an opportunity of some talk with the Duke. He does not consider Foy's book as written by himself, but as a thing got up perhaps from notes. Says he knew Foy very well in Spain. Mentioned that he was, like other French officers, very desirous of seeing the English papers, through which alone they could collect any idea of what was going on without their own cantonments, for Napoleon permitted no communication of that kind with France. The Duke, growing tired of this, at length told Baron Tripp, whose services he chiefly used in communication with the outposts, that he was not to give them the newspapers. "What reason shall I allege for withholding them?" said Baron Tripp. "None," replied the Duke. "Let them allege some reason why they want them." Foy was not at a loss to assign a reason. He said he had considerable sums of money in the English funds and wanted to see how Stocks fell and rose. The excuse did not, however, go down. I remember Baron Tripp, a Dutch nobleman, and a dandy of the first water, and yet with an energy in his dandyism which made it respectable. He drove a gig as far as Dunrobin Castle, and back again, without a whip. He looked after his own horse, for he had no servant, and after all his little establishment of clothes and necessaries, with all the accuracy of a petit-maître. He was one

of the best-dressed men, and his horse was in equally fine condition as if he had had a dozen of grooms. I met him at Lord Somerville's, and liked him much. But there was something exaggerated, as appeared from the conclusion of his life. Baron Tripp shot himself in Italy for no assignable cause.

What is called great society, of which I have seen a good deal in my day, is now amusing to me, because from age and indifference I have lost the habit of considering myself as a part of it, and have only the feelings of looking on as a spectator of the scene, who can neither play his part well nor ill, instead of being one of the dramatis personæ; and, careless what is thought of myself, I have full time to attend to the motions of others.

Our party went to-day to Sunderland, where the Duke was brilliantly received by an immense population, chiefly of seamen. The difficulty of getting into the rooms was dreadful, for we chanced to march in the rear of an immense Gibraltar gun, etc., all composed of glass, which is here manufactured in great quantities. The disturbance created by this thing, which by the way I never saw afterwards, occasioned an ebbing and flowing of the crowd, which nearly took me off my legs. I have seen the day I would have minded it little. The entertainment was handsome; about two hundred dined, and appeared most hearty in the cause which had convened them — some indeed so much so, that, finding themselves so far on the way to perfect happiness, they e'en … After the dinner-party broke up there was a ball, numerously attended, where there was a prodigious anxiety discovered for shaking of hands. The Duke had enough of it, and I came in for my share; for, though as jackal to the lion, I got some part in whatever was going. We got home about halfpast two in the morning, sufficiently tired. The Duke went to Seaham, a house of Lord Londonderry's. After all, this Sunderland trip might have been spared..

October 5. — A quiet day at Ravensworth Castle, giggling and making giggle among the kind and frank-hearted young people. Ravensworth Castle is chiefly modern, excepting always two towers of great antiquity. Lord Ravensworth manages his woods admirably well, and with good taste. His castle is but half-built. Elections have come between. In the evening, plenty of fine music, with heart as well as voice and instrument. Much of the music was the spontaneous effusions of Mrs. Arkwright, who had set Hohenlinden and other pieces of poetry. Her music was of a highly-gifted

character. She was the daughter of Stephen Kemble. The genius she must have inherited from her mother, who was a capital actress. The Miss Liddells and Mrs. Barrington sang the "The Campbells are coming," in a tone that might have waked the dead.

October 6. — Left Ravensworth this morning, and travelled as far as Whittingham with Marquis of Lothian. Arrived at Alnwick to dinner, where I was very kindly received. The Duke is a handsome man, who will be corpulent if he does not continue to take hard exercise. The Duchess very pretty and lively, but her liveliness is of that kind which shows at once it is connected with thorough principle, and is not liable to be influenced by fashionable caprice. The habits of the family are early and regular; I conceive they may be termed formal and old-fashioned by such visitors as claim to be the pink of the mode. The Castle is a fine old pile, with various courts and towers, and the entrance is magnificent. It wants, however, the splendid feature of a keep. The inside fitting up is an attempt at Gothic, but the taste is meagre and poor, and done over with too much gilding. It was done half a century ago, when this kind of taste was ill-understood. I found here the Bishop of [Gloucester], *etc. etc.*

October 7. — This morning went to church and heard an excellent sermon from the Bishop of Gloucester; he has great dignity of manner, and his accent and delivery were forcible. Drove out with the Duke in a phaeton, and saw part of the park, which is a fine one, lying along the Alne. But it has been ill-planted. It was laid out by the celebrated Brown, who substituted clumps of birch and Scottish firs for the beautiful oaks and copse which grows nowhere so freely as in Northumberland. To complete this, the late Duke did not thin, so the wood is in poor state. All that the Duke cuts down is so much waste, for the people will not buy it where coals are so cheap. Had they been oakwood, the bark would have fetched its value; had they been grown oaks, the seaports would have found a market. Had they been [larch], the country demands for ruder purposes would have been unanswerable. The Duke does the best he can to retrieve his woods, but seems to despond more than a young man ought to do. It is refreshing to see a man in his situation give so much of his time and thoughts to the improvement of his estates, and the welfare of the people. The Duke tells me his people in Keeldar were all quite wild the first time his father went up

to shoot there. The women had no other dress than a bedgown and petticoat. The men were savage and could hardly be brought to rise from the heath, either from sullenness or fear. They sung a wild tune, the burden of which was Ourina, ourina, ourina. The females sung, the men danced round, and at a certain part of the tune they drew their dirks, which they always wore.

We came by the remains of the old Carmelite Monastery of Hulne, which is a very fine object in the park. It was finished by De Vesci. The gateway of Alnwick Abbey, also a fine specimen, is standing about a mile distant. The trees are much finer on the left side of the Alne, where they have been let alone by the capability-villain. Visited the enceinte of the Castle, and passed into the dungeon. There is also an armoury, but damp, and the arms in indifferent order. One odd petard-looking thing struck me. — Mem. to consult Grose. I had the honour to sit in Hotspur's seat, and to see the Bloody Gap, where the external wall must have been breached. The Duchess gave me a book of etchings of the antiquities of Alnwick and Warkworth from her own drawings. I had half a mind to stay to see Warkworth, but Anne is alone. We had prayers in the evening read by the Archdeacon.

The Marquis of Lothian on Saturday last told me a remarkable thing, which he had from good authority. Just before Bonaparte's return from Elba there was much disunion at the Congress of Vienna. Russia and Prussia, conscious of their own merits, made great demands, to which Austria, France, and Britain, were not disposed to accede. This went so far that war became probable, and the very Prussian army which was so useful at Waterloo was held in readiness to attack the English. On the other hand, England, Austria, and France entered into a private agreement to resist, beyond a certain extent, Prussia's demands of a barrier on the Rhine, etc., and, what is most singular of all, it was from Bonaparte that the Emperor Alexander first heard of this triple alliance. But the circumstance of finding Napoleon interesting himself so far in the affairs of Europe alarmed the Emperor more than the news he sent him. On the same authority, Gneisenau and most of Blücher's personal suite remained behind a house at the battle of Ligny, and sent out an officer from time to time, but did not remain even in sight of the battle, till Blücher put himself at the head of the cavalry with the zeal of an old hussar.

October 8. — Left Alnwick, where I have experienced a very kind

reception, and took coach at Whittingham at eleven o'clock. I find there is a new road to be made between Alnwick and Wooler, which will make the communication much easier, and avoid Remside Moor.

Saw some fine young plantations about Whittingham suffering from neglect, which is not the case under the Duke's own eye. He has made two neat cottages at Percy's Cross, to preserve that ancient monument of the fatal battle of Hedgeley Moor. The stones marking the adjacent spot called Percy's Leap are thirtythree feet asunder. To show the uncertainty of human testimony, I measured the distance (many years since, it is true), and would have said and almost sworn that it was but eighteen feet. Dined at Wooler, and reached home about seven o'clock, having left Alnwick at halfpast nine. So it would be easy to go there to dinner from Abbotsford, starting at six in the morning, or seven would do very well.

October 9, [Abbotsford]. — No proofs here, which I think odd of Jas. B. But I am not sorry to have a day to write letters, and besides I have a box of books to arrange. It is a bad mizzling day, and might have been a good day for work, yet it is not quite uselessly spent.

October 10. — Breakfasted at Huntly Burn with the merry knight, Sir Adam Ferguson. When we returned we found a whole parcel of proofs which had been forgot yesterday at the toll — so here ends play and begins work. Dr. Brewster and Mr. Thornhill. The latter gave me a box, made of the real mulberry-tree. Very kind of him.

October 11. — Being a base melancholy weeping day I e'en made the best of it, and set in for work. Wrote ten leaves this day, equivalent to forty pages. But then the theme was so familiar, being Scottish history, that my pen never rested. It is more than a triple task.

October 12. — Sent off proofs and copy, a full task of three pages. At one Anne drove me to Huntly Burn, and I examined the earthen fence intended for the new planting, and altered the line in some points. This employed me till near four, the time of my walking home being included.

October 13. — Wrote in the forenoon. Lord Bessborough and Mr. and Mrs. Ponsonby called to see the place. His lady used to be civil to me in London — an accomplished and pleasing woman. They only stayed an hour. At

dinner we had Lord and Lady Bathurst, and my friend Lady Georgiana — also Marquis of Lothian and Lord Castlereagh, plenty of fine folks. Expected also the Lord Register and Mrs. Dundas, but they could not come. Lord Bathurst told me that Gourgaud had negotiated with the French Government to the last moment of his leaving London, and that he had been told so by the French Ambassador. Lord B. refused to see him, because he understood he talked disrespectfully of Napoleon.

October 14. — I read prayers to the company of yesterday, and we took a drive round by Drygrange Bridge. Lord B. told me that the late king made it at one time a point of conscience to read every word of every act of parliament before giving his assent to it. There was a mixture of principle and nonsense in this. Lord Lothian left us. I did a full task to-day, which is much, considering I was a good deal occupied.

October 15. — My noble guests departed, pleased I believe with their visit. I have had to thank Lord Bathurst for former kindness. I respect him too, as one who being far from rich, has on the late occasion preferred political consistency to a love of office and its emoluments. He seems to expect no opposition of a formal kind this next session. What is wonderful, no young man of talents seems to spring up in the House of Commons. I wonder what comes of all the clever lads whom we see at college. The fruit apparently does not ripen as formerly. Lord Castlereagh remained with us. I bestowed a little advice on him. He is a warm-hearted young fellow, with some of the fashionable affectations of the age about him, but with good feelings and an inclination to come forward.

October 16. — With all this racketing the work advances fast. The third volume of the Tales is now half finished, and will, I think, be a useful work. Some drizzling days have been of great use to its progress. This visiting has made some dawdling, but not much, perhaps not more than there ought to be for such a task.

I walked from Huntly Burn up the little Glen, which was in all the melancholy beauty of autumn, the little brook brawling and bickering in fine style over its falls and currents.

October 17. — Drove down to Mertoun and brought up Elizabeth Scott to

be our guest for some days or so. Various chance guests arrived. One of the most welcome was Captain MacKenzie of the Celtic Society and the 72d regiment, a picture of a Highlander in his gigantic person and innocent and generous disposition. Poor fellow, he is going to retreat to Brittany, to make his half-pay support a wife and family. I did not dare to ask how many. God send I may have the means of serving him.

He told me a Maclean story which was new to me. At the battle of Sheriffmuir that clan was commanded by a chief called Hector. In the action, as the chief rushed forward, he was frequently in situations of peril. His foster-father followed him with seven sons, whom he reserved as a bodyguard, whom he threw forward into the battle as he saw his chief pressed. The signal he gave was, "Another for Hector!" The youths replied, "Death for Hector!" and were all successively killed. These words make the sign and countersign at this day of the clan Gillian.

Young Shortreed dined with us and the two Fergusons, Sir Adam and the Colonel. We had a pleasant evening.

October 19. — Wrought out my task, and better — as I have done for these several days past. Lady Anna Maria Elliot arrived unexpectedly to dinner, and though she had a headache, brought her usual wit and good-humour to enliven us.

October 20. — The day being basely muggy, I had no walk, which I was rather desirous to secure. I wrought, however; and twothirds of the last volume of Tales of my Grandfather are finished. I received a large packet of proofs, etc., which for some reason had been delayed. We had two of Dr. Brewster's boys to dinner — fine children; they are spirited, promising, and very well-behaved.

October 21. — Wrought till one o'clock, then walked out for two hours, though with little comfort, the bushes being loaded with rain; but exercise is very necessary to me, and I have no mind to die of my armchair. A letter from Skene, acquainting me that the Censors of the French press have prohibited the insertion of my answer to the man Gourgaud. This is their freedom of the press! The fact is there is an awkward "composition" between the Government and the people of France, that the latter will endure the former so long as they will allow them to lull themselves asleep

with recollections of their past glory, and neither the one nor the other sees that truth and honesty and freedom of discussion are the best policy. He knows, though, there is an answer; and that is all I care about.

October 22. — Another vile damp drizzling day. I do not know any morning in my life so fit for work, on which I nevertheless, while desirous of employing it to purpose, make less progress. A hangdog drowsy feeling wrought against me, and I was obliged to lay down the pen and indulge myself in a drumly sleep.

The Haigs of Bemerside, Captain Hamilton, Mr. Bainbridge and daughter, with young Nicol Milne and the Fergusons, dined here. Miss Haig sings Italian music better than any person I ever heard out of the Opera-house. But I am neither a judge nor admirer of the science. I do not know exactly what is aimed at, and therefore cannot tell what is attained. Had a letter from Colin Mackenzie, who has proposed himself for the little situation in the Register House. I have written, him, begging him to use the best interest in his own behalf, and never mind me.

October 23. — Another sullen rainy day. "Hazy weather, Mr. Noah," as Punch says in the puppet-show. I worked slow, however, and untowardly, and fell one leaf short of my task.

Went to Selkirk, and dined with the forest Club, for the first time I have been there this season. It was the collar-day, but being extremely rainy, I did not go to see them course. N.B. — Of all things, the greatest bore is to hear a dull and bashful man sing a facetious song.

October 24. — Vilely low in spirits. I have written a page and a half, and doubt whether I can write more to-day. A thick throbbing at my heart, and fancies thronging on me. A disposition to sleep, or to think on things melancholy and horrible while I wake. Strange that one's nerves should thus master them, for nervous the case is, as I know too well. I am beginning to tire of my Journal, and no wonder, faith, if I have only such trash as this to record. But the best is, a little exertion or a change of the current of thought relieves me.

God, who subjects us to these strange maladies, whether of mind or body I cannot say, has placed the power within our own reach, and we should be grateful. I wrestled myself so far out of the Slough of Despond as

to take a good long walk, and my mind is restored to its elasticity. I did not attempt to work, especially as we were going down to Mertoun, and set off at five o'clock.

October 25. — We arrived at Mertoun yesterday, and heard with some surprise that George had gone up in an air balloon, and ascended two miles and a half above this sublunary earth. I should like to have an account of his sensations, but his letters said nothing serious about them. Honest George, I certainly did not suspect him of being so flighty! I visited the new plantations on the river-side with Mrs. Scott; I wish her lord and master had some of her taste for planting. When I came home I walked through the Rhymer's Glen, and I thought how the little fall would look if it were heightened. When I came home a surprise amounting nearly to a shock reached me in another letter from L.J.S. Methinks this explains the gloom which hung about me yesterday. I own that the recurrence to these matters seems like a summons from the grave. It fascinates me. I ought perhaps to have stopped it at once, but I have not nerve to do so. Alas! alas! — But why alas? Humana perpessi sumus.

October 26. — Sent off copy to Ballantyne. Drove over to Huntly Burn at breakfast, and walked up to the dike they are building for the new plantation. Returned home. The Fergusons dined; and we had the kirn Supper. I never saw a set of finer lads and lasses, and blithely did they ply their heels till five in the morning. It did me good to see them, poor things.

October 27. — This morning went again to Huntly Burn to breakfast. There picked up Sir Adam and the Colonel, and drove down to old Melrose to see the hounds cast off upon the Gateheugh, the high rocky amphitheatre which encloses the peninsula of old Melrose, the Tweed pouring its dark and powerful current between them. The galloping of the riders and hallooing of the huntsmen, the cry of the hounds and the sight of sly Reynard stealing away through the brakes, waked something of the old spirit within me —

> "Even in our ashes glow their wonted fires."

On return home I had despatches of consequence. John Gibson writes that Lord Newton has decided most of the grand questions in our favour. Good,

that! Rev. Mr. Turner writes that he is desirous, by Lord Londonderry's consent, to place in my hands a quantity of original papers concerning the public services of the late Lord Londonderry, with a view to drawing up a memoir of his life. Now this task they desire to transfer to me. It is highly complimentary; and there is this of temptation in it, that I should be able to do justice to that ill-requited statesman in those material points which demand the eternal gratitude of his country. But then for me to take this matter up would lead me too much into the hackneyed politics of the House of Commons, which odi et arceo. Besides, I would have to study the Irish question, and I detest study. Item. — I might arrive at conclusions different from those of my Lord of Londonderry, and I have a taste for expressing that which I think. Fourthly, I think it is sinking myself into a party writer. Moreover, I should not know what to say to the disputes with Canning; and, to conclude, I think my Lord Londonderry, if he desired such a thing at my hands, ought to have written to me. For all which reasons, good, bad, and indifferent, I will write declining the undertaking.

October 28. — Wrote several letters, and one to Mr. Turner, declining the task of Lord Castlereagh's Memoirs, with due acknowledgments. Had his public and European politics alone been concerned, I would have tried the task with pleasure. I wrote out my task and something more, corrected proofs, and made a handsome remittance of copy to the press.

October 31. — Just as I was merrily cutting away among my trees, arrives Mr. Gibson with a melancholy look, and indeed the news he brought was shocking enough. It seems Mr. Abud, the same Jew broker who formerly was disposed to disturb me in London, has given the most positive orders to take out diligence against me for his debt of £1500. This breaks all the measures we had resolved on, and prevents the dividend from taking place, by which many poor persons will be great sufferers. For me the alternative will be more painful to my feelings than prejudicial to my interest. To take out a sequestration and allow the persons to take what they can get will be the inevitable consequence. This will cut short my labour by several years, which I might spend and spend in vain in labouring to meet their demands. No doubt they may in the interim sell the liferent of this place, with the books and furniture. But, perhaps, it may be possible to achieve some composition which may save these articles, as I would make many

sacrifices for that purpose. Gibson strongly advises taking a sequestration at all events. But if the creditors choose to let Mr. Abud have his pound of flesh out of the first cut, my mind will not be satisfied with the plan of deranging, for the pleasure of disappointing him, a plan of payment to which all the others had consented. We will know more on Saturday, and not sooner. I went to Bowhill with Sir Adam Ferguson to dinner, and maintained as good a countenance in the midst of my perplexities as a man need desire. It is not bravado; I literally feel myself firm and resolute.

November

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November 1. — I waked in the night and lay two hours in feverish meditation. This is a tribute to natural feeling. But the air of a fine frosty morning gave me some elasticity of spirit. It is strange that about a week ago I was more dispirited for nothing at all than I am now for perplexities which set at defiance my conjectures concerning their issue. I suppose that I, the Chronicler of the Canongate, will have to take up my residence in the Sanctuary for a week or so, unless I prefer the more airy residence of the Calton Jail, or a trip to the Isle of Man. These furnish a pleasing choice of expedients. It is to no purpose being angry at Ehud or Ahab, or whatever name he delights in. He is seeking his own, and thinks by these harsh measures to render his road to it more speedy. And now I will trouble myself no more about the matter than I can possibly help, which will be quite enough after all. Perhaps something may turn up better for me than I now look for. Sir Adam Ferguson left Bowhill this morning for Dumfriesshire. I returned to Abbotsford to Anne, and told her this unpleasant news. She stood it remarkably well, poor body.

November 2. — I was a little bilious tonight — no wonder. Had sundry letters without any power of giving my mind to answer them — one about Gourgaud with his nonsense. I shall not trouble my head more on that score. Well, it is a hard knock on the elbow; I knew I had a life of labour before me, but I was resolved to work steadily; now they have treated me like a recusant turnspit, and put in a red-hot cinder into the wheel alongst with [me]. But of what use is philosophy — and I have always pretended to a little of a practical character — if it cannot teach us to do or suffer? The day is glorious, yet I have little will to enjoy it, but sit here ruminating upon the difference and comparative merits of the Isle of Man and of the Abbey. Small choice betwixt them. Were a twelvemonth over, I should perhaps smile at what makes me now very serious.

Smile! — No, that can never be. My present feelings cannot be recollected with cheerfulness; but I may drop a tear of gratitude. I have finished my Tales and have now nothing literary in hand. It would be an evil time to begin anything.

November 3. — Slept ill, and lay one hour longer than usual in the morning. I gained an hour's quiet by it, that is much. I feel a little shaken at the result of to-day's post. Bad it must be, whatsoever be the alternative. I am not able to go out, my poor workers wonder that I pass them without a word. I can imagine no alternative but either retreat to the Sanctuary or to the Isle of Man. Both shocking enough. But in Edinburgh I am always near the scene of action, free from uncertainty and near my poor daughter; so I think I will prefer it, and thus I rest in unrest. But I will not let this unman me. Our hope, heavenly and earthly, is poorly anchored, if the cable parts upon the strain. I believe in God who can change evil into good; and I am confident that what befalls us is always ultimately for the best. I have a letter from Mr. Gibson, purporting the opinion of the trustees and committee of creditors, that I should come to town, and interesting themselves warmly in the matter. They have intimated that they will pay Mr. Abud a composition of six shillings per pound on his debt. This is a handsome offer, but I understand he is determined to have his pound of flesh. If I can prevent it, he shall not take a shilling by his hardhearted conduct.

November 4. — Put my papers in some order, and prepared for my journey. It is in the style of the Emperors of Abyssinia who proclaim — Cut down the Kantuffa in the four quarters of the world, — for I know not where I am going. Yet, were it not for poor Anne's doleful looks, I would feel firm as a piece of granite. Even the poor dogs seem to fawn on me with anxious meaning, as if there were something going on they could not comprehend. They probably notice the packing of the clothes, and other symptoms of a journey.

Set off at twelve, firmly resolved in body and in mind. Dined at Fushie Bridge. Ah! good Mrs. Wilson, you know not you are like to lose an old customer.

But when I arrived in Edinburgh at my faithful friend, Mr. Gibson's, lo! the scene had again changed, and a new hare is started.

The trustees were clearly of opinion that the matter should be probed to the very bottom; so Cadell sets off tomorrow in quest of Robinson, whose haunts he knows. There was much talk concerning what should be done, how to protect my honour's person, and to postpone commencing a defence

which must make Ahab desperate, before we can ascertain that the grounds are really tenable. This much I think I can see, that the trustees will rather pay the debt than break off the trust and go into a sequestration. They are clearly right for themselves, and I believe for me also. Whether it is in human possibility that I can clear off these obligations or not, is very doubtful. But I would rather have it written on my monument that I died at the desk than live under the recollection of having neglected it. My conscience is free and happy, and would be so if I were to be lodged in the Calton Jail. Were I shirking exertion I should lose heart, under a sense of general contempt, and so die like a poisoned rat in a hole.

Dined with Gibson and John Home. His wife is a pretty ladylike woman. Slept there at night.

November 6. — I took possession of No. 6 Shandwick Place, Mrs. Jobson's house. Mr. Cadell had taken it for me; terms £100 for four months — cheap enough, as it is a capital house. I offered £5 for immediate entrance, as I do not like to fly back to Abbotsford. So here we are established, *i.e.* John Nicolson and I, with good fires and all snug.

I waited on L.J.S.; an affecting meeting.

Sir William Forbes came in before dinner to me, highspirited noble fellow as ever, and true to his friend. Agrees with my feelings to a comma. He thinks Cadell's account must turn up trumps, and is for going the vole.

November 7. — Began to settle myself this morning, after the hurry of mind, and even of body, which I have lately undergone. Commenced a review — that is, an essay, on Ornamental Gardening for the Quarterly. But I stuck fast for want of books. As I did not wish to leave the mind leisure to recoil on itself, I immediately began the Second Series of the Chronicles of Canongate, the First having been well approved. I went to make another visit, and fairly softened myself like an old fool, with recalling old stories till I was fit for nothing but shedding tears and repeating verses for the whole night. This is sad work. The very grave gives up its dead, and time rolls back thirty years to add to my perplexities. I don't care. I begin to grow over-hardened, and, like a stag turning at bay, my naturally good temper grows fierce and dangerous. Yet what a romance to tell, and told I fear it will one day be. And then my three years of dreaming and my two

years of wakening will be chronicled doubtless. But the dead will feel no pain.

November 8. — Domum mansi, lanam feci. I may borrow the old sepulchral motto of the Roman matron. I stayed at home, and began the third volume of Chronicles, or rather the first volume of the Second Series. This I pursued with little intermission from morning till night, yet only finished nine pages. Like the machinery of a steam-engine, the imagination does not work freely when first set upon a new task.

November 9. — Finished my task after breakfast, at least before twelve. Then went to College to hear this most amusing good matter of the Essay read. Imprimis occurs a dispute whether the magistrates, as patrons of the University, should march in procession before the Royal visitors; and it was proposed on our side that the Provost, who is undoubtedly the first man in his own city, should go in attendance on the Principal, with the Chairman of the Commission on the Principal's right hand, and the whole Commission following, taking pas of the other Magistrates as well as of the Senatus Academicus — or whether we had not better waive all question of precedence, and let the three bodies find their way separately as they best could. This last method was just adopted when we learned that the question was not in what order of procession we should reach the place of exhibition, but whether we were to get there at all, which was presently after reported as an impossibility. The lads of the College had so effectually taken possession of the class-room where the essay was to be read, that, neither learning or law, neither Magistrates nor Magisters, neither visitors nor visited, could make way to the scene of action. So we grandees were obliged to adjourn the sederunt till Saturday the 17th — and so ended the collie-shangie.

November 10. — Wrote out my task and little more. At twelve o'clock I went to poor Lady J.S. to talk over old stories. I am not clear that it is right or healthful indulgence to be ripping up old sorrows, but it seems to give her deep-seated sorrow words, and that is a mental bloodletting. To me these things are now matter of calm and solemn recollection, never to be forgotten, yet scarce to be remembered with pain.

We go out to Saint Catherine's to-day. I am glad of it, for I would not have these recollections haunt me, and society will put them out of my head.

November 11. — Sir William Rae read us prayers. Sauntered about the doors, and talked of old cavalry stories. Then drove to Melville, and saw the Lord and Lady, and family. I think I never saw anything more beautiful than the ridge of Carnethy (Pentland) against a clear frosty sky, with its peaks and varied slopes. The hills glowed like purple amethysts, the sky glowed topaz and vermilion colours. I never saw a finer screen than Pentland, considering that it is neither rocky nor highly elevated.

November 12. — I cannot say I lost a minute's sleep on account of what the day might bring forth; though it was that on which we must settle with Abud in his Jewish demand, or stand to the consequences. I breakfasted with an excellent appetite, laughed in real genuine easy fun, and went to Edinburgh, resolved to do what should best become me. When I came home I found Walter, poor fellow, who had come down on the spur, having heard from John Lockhart how things stand. Gibson having taken out a suspension makes us all safe for the present. So we dined merrily. He has good hopes of his Majesty, and I must support his interest as well as I can. Wrote letters to Lady Shelley, John L., and one or two chance correspondents. One was singular. A gentleman, writing himself James Macturk, tells me his friends have identified him with Captain Macturk of St. Ronan's Well, and finding himself much inconvenienced by this identification, he proposes I should apply to the King to forward his restoration and advance in the service (he writes himself late Lieutenant 4th Dragoon Guards) as an atonement for having occasioned him (though unintentionally no doubt) so great an injury. This is one road to promotion, to be sure. Lieutenant Macturk is, I suppose, tolerably mad.

We dined together, Anne, Walter, and I, and were happy at our reunion, when, as I was despatching my packet to London,

In started to heeze up our howp John Gibson, radiant with goodnatured joy. He had another letter from Cadell, enclosing one from Robinson, in which the latter pledges himself to make the most explicit affidavit.

On these two last days I have written only three pages, but not from inaptitude or incapacity to labour. It is odd enough — I think it difficult to

place me in a situation of danger, or disagreeable circumstances, purely personal, which would shake my powers of mind, yet they sink under mere lowness of spirits, as this Journal bears evidence in too many passages.

November 13. — Wrote a little in the morning, but not above a page. Went to the Court about one, returned, and made several visits with Anne and Walter. Cadell came, glorious with the success of his expedition, but a little allayed by the prospect of competition for the copyrights, on which he and I have our eyes as joint purchasers. We must have them if possible, for I can give new value to an edition corrected with notes. Nous verrons! Captain Musgrave, of the house of Edenhall, dined with us. After dinner, while we were over our whisky and water and cigars, enter the merry knight. Misses Kerr came to tea, and we had fun and singing in the evening.

November 14. — A little work in the morning, but no gathering to my tackle. Went to Court, remained till nigh one. Then came through a pitiless shower; dressed and went to the christening of a boy of John Richardson's who was baptized Henry Cockburn. Read the Gazette of the great battle of Navarino, in which we have thumped the Turks very well. But as to the justice of our interference, I will only suppose some Turkish plenipotentiary, with an immense turban and long loose trousers, comes to dictate to us the mode in which we should deal with our refractory liegemen the Catholics of Ireland. We hesitate to admit his interference, on which the Moslem admiral runs into Cork Bay or Bantry Bay, alongside of a British squadron, and sends a boat to tow aside a fire-ship. A vessel fires on the boat and sinks her. Is there an aggression on the part of those who fired first, or of those whose manoeuvres occasioned the firing?

Dined at Henry Cockburn's with the christening party.

November 15. — Wrote a little in the morning. Detained in Court till two; then returned home wet enough. Met with Chambers, and complimented him about his making a clever book of the 1745 for Constable's Miscellany. It is really a lively work, and must have a good sale. Before dinner enter Cadell, and we anxiously renewed our plan for buying the copyrights on 19th December. It is most essential that the whole of the Waverley Novels should be kept under our management, as it is called. I may then give them a new impulse by a preface and notes; and if an edition, of say 30 volumes,

were to be published monthly to the tune of 5000, which may really be expected if the shops were once cleared of the over-glut, it would bring in £10,000 clear profit, over all outlay, and so pay any sum of copy-money that might be ventured. I must urge these things to Gibson, for except these copyrights be saved our plans will go to nothing.

Walter and Anne went to hear Madame Pasta sing after dinner. I remained at home; wrote to Sir William Knighton, and sundry other letters of importance.

November 16. — There was little to do in Court to-day, but one's time is squandered, and his ideas broken strangely. At three we had a select meeting of the Gas Directors to consider what line we were to take in the disastrous affairs of the company. Agreed to go to Parliament a second time. James Gibson [Craig] and I to go up as our solicitors. So curiously does interest couple up individuals, though I am sure I have no objection whatever to Mr. James Gibson-Craig.

November 17. — Returned home in early time from the Court. Settled on the review of Ornamental Gardening for Lockhart, and wrote hard. Want several quotations, though — that is the bore of being totally without books. Anne and I dined quietly together, and I wrote after tea — an industrious day.

November 18. — This has been also a day of exertion. I was interrupted for a moment by a visit from young Davidoff with a present of a steel snuffbox [Tula work], wrought and lined with gold, having my arms on the top, and on the sides various scenes from the environs and principal public buildings of St. Petersburg — a joli cadeau — and I take it very kind of my young friend. I had a letter from his uncle, Denis Davidoff, the black captain of the French retreat. The Russians are certainly losing ground and men in Persia, and will not easily get out of the scrape of having engaged an active enemy in a difficult and unhealthy country. I am glad of it; it is an overgrown power; and to have them kept quiet at least is well for the rest of Europe. I concluded the evening — after writing a double task — with the trial of Malcolm Gillespie, renowned as a most venturous excise officer, but now like to lose his life for forgery. A bold man in his vocation he seems to have

been, but the law seems to have got round to the wrong side of him on the present occasion.

November 19. — Corrected the last proof of Tales of my Grandfather. Received Cadell at breakfast, and conversed fully on the subject of the Chronicles and the application of the price of 2d series, say £4000, to the purchase of the moiety of the copyrights now in the market, and to be sold this day month. If I have the command of a new Edition and put it into an attractive shape, with notes, introductions, and illustrations that no one save I myself can give, I am confident it will bring home the whole purchase-money with something over, and lead to the disposal of a series of the subsequent volumes of the following works,

St. Ronan's Well, 3 vols.
Redgauntlet, 3 "
Tales of Crusaders, 4 "
Woodstock, 3 "

— — -

make a series of 7 vols.! The two series of the Chronicles and others will be ready about the same time.

November 20. — Wrought in the morning at the review, which I fear will be lengthy. Called on Hector as I came home from the Court, and found him better, and keeping a Highland heart. I came home like a crow through the mist, half dead with a rheumatic headache caused by the beastly northeast wind.

"What am I now when every breeze appals me?" I dozed for half-an-hour in my chair for pain and stupidity. I omitted to say yesterday that I went out to Melville Castle to inquire after my Lord Melville, who had broke his collarbone by a fall from his horse in mounting. He is recovering well, but much bruised. I came home with Lord Chief-Commissioner Adam. He told me a dictum of old Sir Gilbert Elliot, speaking of his uncles. "No chance of opulence," he said, "is worth the risk of a competence." It was not the thought of a great man, but

perhaps that of a wise one. Wrought at my review, and despatched about half or better, I should hope. I incline to longer extracts in the next sheets.

November 21. — Wrought at the review. At one o'clock I attended the general meeting of the Union Scottish Assurance Company. There was a debate arose whether the ordinary acting directors should or should not have a small sum, amounting to about a crown a piece allotted to them each day of their regular attendance. The proposal was rejected by many, and upon grounds which sound very well, — such as the shabbiness of men being influenced by a trifling consideration like this, and the absurdity of the Company volunteering a bounty to one set of men, when there are others willing to act gratuitously, and many gentlemen volunteered their own services; though I cannot help suspecting that, as in the case of ultroneous offers of service upon most occasions, it was not likely to be acceptable. The motion miscarried, however — impoliticly rejected, as I think. The sound of five shillings sounds shabby, but the fact is that it does in some sort reconcile the party to whom it is offered to leave his own house and business at an exact hour; whereas, in the common case, one man comes too late — another does not come at all — the attendance is given by different individuals upon different days, so that no one acquires the due historical knowledge of the affairs of the Company. Besides, the Directors, by taking even this trifling sum of money, render themselves the paid servants of the Company, and are bound to use a certain degree of diligence, much greater than if they continued to serve, as hitherto, gratuitously. The pay is like enlisting money which, whether great or small, subjects to engagements under the Articles of war.

A china-merchant spoke, — a picture of an orator with bandy legs, squinting eyes, and a voice like an ungreased cart-wheel — a liberty boy, I suppose. The meeting was somewhat stormy, but I preserved order by listening with patience to each in turn; determined that they should weary out the patience of the meeting before I lost mine. An orator is like a top. Let him alone and he must stop one time or another — flog him, and he may go on for ever.

Dined with Directors, of whom I only knew the Manager, Sutherland Mackenzie, Sir David Milne, and Wauchope, besides one or two old Oil

Gas friends. It went off well enough.

November 22. — Wrought in the morning. Then made arrangements for a dinner to celebrate the Duke of Buccleuch coming of age — that which was to have been held at Melville Castle being postponed, owing to Lord M.'s accident. Sent copy of Second Series of Chronicles of Canongate to Ballantyne.

November 23. — I bilked the Court to-day, and worked at the review. I wish it may not be too long, yet know not how to shorten it. The post brought me a letter from the Duke of Buccleuch, acquainting me with his grandmother, the Duchess-Dowager's death. She was a woman of unbounded beneficence to, and even beyond, the extent of her princely fortune. She had a masculine courage, and great firmness in enduring affliction, which pressed on her with continued and successive blows in her later years. She was about eighty-four, and nature was exhausted; so life departed like the extinction of a lamp for lack of oil. Our dinner on Monday is put off. I am not superstitious, but I wish this festival had not been twice delayed by such sinister accidents — first, the injury sustained by Lord Melville, and then this event spreading crape like the shroud of Saladin over our little festival. God avert bad omens!

Dined with Archie Swinton. Company — Sir Alexander and Lady Keith, Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, Clanronald, *etc.* Clanronald told us, as an instance of Highland credulity, that a set of his kinsmen, Borradale and others, believing that the fabulous Water Cow inhabited a small lake near his house, resolved to drag the monster into day. With this view they bivouacked by the side of the lake, in which they placed, by way of night-bait, two small anchors, such as belong to boats, each baited with the carcase of a dog slain for the purpose. They expected the Water Cow would gorge on this bait, and were prepared to drag her ashore the next morning, when, to their confusion of face, the baits were found untouched. It is something too late in the day for setting baits for Water Cows.

November 24. — Wrote at review in the morning. I have made my revocation of the invitation for Monday. For myself it will give me time to work. I could not get home to-day till two o'clock, and was quite tired and stupid. So I did little but sleep or dose till dressing-time. Then went to Sir

David Wedderburn's, where I met three beauties of my own day, Margaret Brown, Maria Brown, and Jane Wedderburn, now Lady Wedderburn, Lady Hampden, and Mrs. Oliphant. We met the pleasant Irish family of Meath. The resemblance between the Earl of Meath and the Duke of Wellington is something remarkably striking — it is not only the profile, but the mode of bearing the person, and the person itself. Lady Theodora Brabazon, the Earl's daughter, and a beautiful young lady, told me that in Paris her father was often taken for Lord Wellington.

November 25. — This forenoon finished the review, and despatched it to Lockhart before dinner. Will Clerk, Tom Thomson, and young Frank Scott dined with me. We had a pleasant day. I have wrought pretty well to-day. But I must

> Do a little more
> And produce a little ore.

November 26. — Corrected proof-sheets of Chronicles and Tales. Advised Sheriff processes, and was busy.

Dined with Robert Dundas of Arniston, Lord Register, *etc.* An agreeable evening.

November 27. — Corrected proofs in the morning, and attended the Court till one or two o'clock, Mr. Hamilton being again ill. I visited Lady S. on my return. Came home too fagged to do anything to purpose.

Anecdote from George Bell. In the days of Charles II. or his brother, flourished an old Lady Elphinstone, so old that she reached the extraordinary period of 103. She was a keen Whig, so did not relish Graham of Clavers. At last, having a curiosity to see so aged a person, he obtained or took permission to see her, and asked her of the remarkable things she had seen. "Indeed," said she, "I think one of the most remarkable is, that when I entered the world there was one Knox deaving us a' with his clavers, and now that I am going out of it, there is one Clavers deaving us with his knocks."

November 28. — Corrected proofs and went to Court. Returned about one, and called on the Lord Chief-Baron. Dined with the Duchess of Bedford at

the Waterloo, and renewed, as I may say, an old acquaintance, which began while her Grace was Lady Georgiana. She has now a fine family, two young ladies silent just now, but they will find their tongues, or they are not right Gordons, a very fine child, Alister, who shouted, sung, and spoke Gaelic with much spirit. They are from a shooting-place in the Highlands, called Invereshie, in Badenoch, which the Duke has taken to gratify the Duchess's passion for the heather.

November 29. — My course of composition is stopped foolishly enough. I have sent four leaves to London with Lockhart's review. I am very sorry for this blunder, and here is another. Forgetting I had been engaged for a long time to Lord Gillies — a first family visit too — the devil tempted me to accept of the office of President of the Antiquarian Society. And now they tell me people have come from the country to be present, and so forth, of which I may believe as much as I may. But I must positively take care of this absurd custom of confounding invitations. My conscience acquits me of doing so by malice prepense, yet one incurs the suspicion. At any rate it is uncivil and must be amended. Dined at Lord C. Commissioner's — to meet the Duchess and her party. She can be extremely agreeable, but I used to think her Grace journalière. She may have been cured of that fault, or I may have turned less jealous of my dignity. At all events let a pleasant hour go by unquestioned, and do not let us break ordinary gems to pieces because they are not diamonds. I forgot to say Edwin Landseer was in the Duchess's train. He is, in my mind, one of the most striking masters of the modern school. His expression both in man and animals is capital. He showed us many sketches of smugglers, etc., taken in the Highlands, all capital.

> "Some gaed there, and some gaed here,
> And a' the town was in a steer,
> And Johnnie on his brocket mear,
> He raid to fetch the howdie."

November 30. — Another idle morning, with letters, however. Had the great pleasure of a letter from Lord Dudley acquainting me that he had received his Majesty's commands to put down the name of my son Charles for the first vacancy that should occur in the Foreign Office, and at the same time to acquaint me with his gracious intentions, which were signified in

language the most gratifying to me. This makes me really feel light and happy, and most grateful to the kind and gracious sovereign who has always shown, I may say, so much friendship towards me. Would to God the King's errand might lie in the cadger's gait, that I might have some better way of showing my gratitude than merely by a letter of thanks or this private memorandum of my gratitude. The lad is a good boy and clever, somewhat indolent I fear, yet with the capacity of exertion. Presuming his head is full enough of Greek and Latin, he has now living languages to study; so I will set him to work on French, Italian, and German, that, like the classic Cerberus, he may speak a leash of languages at once. Dined with Gillies, very pleasant; Lord Chief-Commissioner, Will Clerk, Cranstoun, and other old friends. I saw in the evening the celebrated Miss Grahame Stirling, so remarkable for her power of personifying a Scottish old lady. Unluckily she came late, and I left early in the evening, so I could not find out wherein her craft lay. She looked like a sensible woman. I had a conference with my trustees about the purchase (in company with Cadell) of the copyrights of the novels to be exposed to sale on the 19th December, and had the good luck to persuade them fully of the propriety of the project. I alone can, by notes and the like, give these works a new value, and in fact make a new edition. The price is to be made good from the Second Series Chronicles of Canongate, sold to Cadell for £4000; and it may very well happen that we shall have little to pay, as part of the copyrights will probably be declared mine by the arbiter, and these I shall have without money and without price. Cadell is most anxious on the subject. He thinks that two years hence £10,000 may be made of a new edition.

December

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December 1. — This morning again I was idle. But I must work, and so I will tomorrow whether the missing sheets arrive, ay or no, by goles! After Court I went with Lord Wriothesley Russell, to Dalkeith House, to see the pictures; Charles K. Sharpe alongst with us. We satisfied ourselves that they have actually frames, and that, I think, was all we could be sure of. Lord Wriothesley, who is a very pleasant young man, wellinformed, and with some turn for humour, dined with us, and Mr. Davidoff met him. The Misses Kerr also dined and spent the evening with us in that sort of society which I like best. Charles Sharpe came in and we laughed over oysters and sherry,

> "And a fig for your Sultan and Sophi."

December 2. — Laboured to make lee-way, and finished nearly seven pages to eke on to the end of the missing sheets when returned. I have yoked Charles to Monsieur Surenne, an old soldier in Napoleon's Italian army, and I think a clever little fellow, with good general ideas of etymology. Signor Bugnie is a good Italian teacher; and for a German, why, I must look about. It is not the least useful language of the leash.

December 3. — A day of petty business, which killed a holiday. Finished my tale of the Mirror; went with Tom Allan to see his building at Lauriston, where he has displayed good taste — supporting instead of tearing down or destroying the old chateau, which once belonged to the famous Mississippi Law. The additions are in very good taste, and will make a most comfortable house. Mr. Burn, architect, would fain have had the old house pulled down, which I wonder at in him, though it would have been the practice of most of his brethren. When I came up to town I was just in time for the Bannatyne Club, where things are going on reasonably well. I hope we may get out some good historical documents in the course of the winter. Dined at the Royal Society Club. At the society had some essays upon the specific weight of the ore of manganese, which was caviare to the

President, and I think most of the members. But it seemed extremely accurate, and I have little doubt was intelligible to those who had the requisite key. We supped at Mr. Russell's, where the conversation was as gay as usual. Lieut-Col. Ferguson was my guest at the dinner.

December 4. — Had the agreeable intelligence that Lord Newton had finally issued his decree in my favour, for all the money in the bank, amounting to £32,000. This will make a dividend of six shillings in the pound, which is presently to be paid. A meeting of the creditors was held to-day, at which they gave unanimous approbation of all that has been done, and seemed struck by the exertions which had produced £22,000 within so short a space. They all separated well pleased. So far so good. Heaven grant the talisman break not! I sent copy to Ballantyne this morning, having got back the missing sheets from John Lockhart last night. I feel a little puzzled about the character and style of the next tale. The world has had so much of chivalry. Well, I will dine merrily, and thank God, and bid care rest till tomorrow. How suddenly things are overcast, and how suddenly the sun can break out again! On the 31st October I was dreaming as little of such a thing as at present, when behold there came tidings which threatened a total interruption of the amicable settlement of my affairs, and menaced my own personal liberty. In less than a month we are enabled to turn chase on my persecutors, who seem in a fair way of losing their recourse upon us. Non nobis, Domine.

December 5. — I did a good deal in the way of preparing my new tale, and resolved to make something out of the story of Harry Wynd. The North Inch of Perth would be no bad name, and it may be possible to make a difference betwixt the old Highlander and him of modern date. The fellow that swam the Tay, and escaped, would be a good ludicrous character. But I have a mind to try him in the serious line of tragedy. Miss Baillie has made the Ethling a coward by temperament, and a hero when touched by filial affection. Suppose a man's nerves supported by feelings of honour, or say by the spur of jealousy supporting him against constitutional timidity to a certain point, then suddenly giving way, — I think something tragic might be produced. James Ballantyne's criticism is too much moulded upon the general taste of novels to admit, I fear, this species of reasoning. But what can one do? I am hard up as far as imagination is concerned, yet the world

calls for novelty. Well, I'll try my brave coward or cowardly brave man. Valeat quantum. Being a teind day, remained at home, adjusting my ideas on this point until one o'clock, then walked as far as Mr. Cadell's. Finally, went to dine at Hawkhill with Lord and Lady Binning. Party were Lord Chief-Commissioner, Lord Chief-Baron, Solicitor, John Wilson, Lord Corehouse. The night was so dark and stormy that I was glad when we got upon the paved streets.

December 6. — Corrected proofs and went to Court. Bad news of Ahab's case. I hope he won't beat us after all. It would be mortifying to have them paid in full, as they must be while better men must lie by. Spero meliora.

I think that copy of Beard's Judgments is the first book which I have voluntarily purchased for nearly two years. So I am cured of one folly at least.

December 7. — Being a blank day in the rolls, I stayed at home and wrote four leaves — not very freely or happily; I was not in the vein. Plague on it! Stayed at home the whole day. There is one thing I believe peculiar to me — I work, that is, meditate for the purpose of working, best, when I have a quasi engagement with some other book for example. When I find myself doing ill, or like to come to a standstill in writing, I take up some slight book, a novel or the like, and usually have not read far ere my difficulties are removed, and I am ready to write again. There must be two currents of ideas going on in my mind at the same time, or perhaps the slighter occupation serves like a woman's wheel or stocking to ballast the mind, as it were, by preventing the thoughts from wandering, and so give the deeper current the power to flow undisturbed. I always laugh when I hear people say, Do one thing at once. I have done a dozen things at once all my life. Dined with the family. After dinner Lockhart's proofs came in and occupied me for the evening. I wish I have not made that article too long, and Lockhart will not snip away.

December 8. — Went to Court and stayed there a good while. Made some consultations in the Advocates' Library, not furiously to the purpose.

Court in the morning. Sent off Lockhart's proof, which I hope will do him some good. A precatory letter from Gillies. I must do Molière for him, I suppose; but it is wonderful that knowing the situation I am in, the poor

fellow presses so hard. Sure, I am pulling for life, and it is hard to ask me to pull another man's oar as well as my own. Yet, if I can give a little help,

> "We'll get a blessing wi' the lave,
> And never miss 't."

Went to John Murray's, where were Sir John Dalrymple and Lady, Sir John Cayley, Mr. Hope Vere, and Lady Elizabeth Vere, a sister of the Marquis of Tweeddale, and a pleasant sensible woman. Some turn for antiquity too she shows — and spoke a good deal of the pictures at Yester. Henderland was there too. Mrs. John Murray made some very agreeable music.

December 9. — I set hard to work, and had a long day with my new tale. I did about twelve leaves. Cadell came in, and we talked upon the great project of buying in the copyrights. He is disposed to finesse a little about it, but I do not think it will do much good; all the fine arguments will fly off and people just bid or not bid as the report of the trade may represent the speculation as a good or bad one. I daresay they will reach £7000; but £8000 won't stop us, and that for books overprinted so lately and to such an extent is a pro-di-gi-ous price!

December 10. — I corrected proofs and forwarded copy. Went out for an hour to Lady J.S. Home and dozed a little, half stupefied with a cold in my head — made up this Journal, however. Settled I would go to Abbotsford on the 24th from Arniston. Before that time I trust the business of the copyrights will be finally settled. If they can be had on anything like fair terms, they will give the greatest chance I can see of extricating my affairs. Cadell seems to be quite confident in the advantage of making the purchase upon almost any terms, and truly I am of his opinion. If they get out of Scotland it will not be all I can do that will enable me to write myself a free man during the space I have to remain in this world.

I smoked a couple of cigars for the first time since I came from the country; and as Anne and Charles went to the play, I muddled away the evening over my Sheriff-Court processes, and despatched a hugeous parcel to Will Scott at Selkirk. It is always something off hand.

December 11. — Wrote a little, and seemed to myself to get on. I went also to Court. On return, had a formal communication from Ballantyne,

enclosing a letter from Cadell of an unpleasant tenor. It seems Mr. Cadell is dissatisfied with the moderate success of the First Series of Chronicles; and disapproves of about half the volume already written of the Second Series, obviously rueing his engagement. I have replied that I was not fool enough to suppose that my favour with the public could last for ever, and was neither shocked nor alarmed to find that it had ceased now, as cease it must one day soon; it might he inconvenient for me in some respects, but I would be quite contented to resign the bargain rather than that more loss should be incurred. I saw, I told them, no other receipt than lying lea for a little, while taking a fallow-break to relieve my imagination, which may be esteemed nearly cropped out. I can make shift for myself amid this failure of prospects; but I think both Cadell and J.B. will be probable sufferers. However, they are very right to speak their mind, and may be esteemed tolerably good representatives of the popular taste. So I really think their censure may be a good reason for laying aside this work, though I may preserve some part of it till another day.

December 12. — Reconsidered the probable downfall of my literary reputation. I am so constitutionally indifferent to the censure or praise of the world, that never having abandoned myself to the feelings of self-conceit which my great success was calculated to inspire, I can look with the most unshaken firmness upon the event as far as my own feelings are concerned. If there be any great advantage in literary reputation, I have had it, and I certainly do not care for losing it.

They cannot say but what I had the crown. It is unhappily inconvenient for my affairs to lay by my [work] just now, and that is the only reason why I do not give up literary labour; but, at least, I will not push the losing game of novel-writing. I will take back the sheets now objected to, but it cannot be expected that I am to write upon return. I cannot but think that a little thought will open some plan of composition which may promise novelty at the least. I suppose I shall hear from or see these gentlemen to-day; if not, I must send for them tomorrow. How will this affect the plan of going shares with Cadell in the novels of earlier and happier date? Very-much, I doubt, seeing I cannot lay down the cash. But surely the trustees may find some mode of providing this, or else with cash to secure these copyrights. At any rate, I will gain a little time for thought and discussion.

Went to Court. At returning settled with Chief-Commissioner that I should receive him on 26th December at Abbotsford.

After all, may there not be, in this failure to please, some reliques of the very unfavourable matters in which I have been engaged of late, — the threat of imprisonment, the resolution to become insolvent? I cannot feel that there is. What I suffer by is the difficulty of not setting my foot upon such ground as I have trod before, and thus instead of attaining novelty I lose spirit and nature. On the other hand, who would 'thank me for "repented sheets"? Here is a good joke enough, lost to all who have not known the Clerk's table before the Jurisdiction Act.

My two learned Thebans are arrived, and departed after a long consultation. They deprecated a fallow-break as ruin. I set before them my own sense of the difficulties and risks in which I must be involved by perseverance, and showed them I could occupy my own time as well for six months or a twelvemonth, and let the public gather an appetite. They replied (and therein was some risk) that the expectation would in that case be so much augmented that it would be impossible for any mortal to gratify it. To this is to be added what they did not touch upon — the risk of being thrust aside altogether, which is the case with the horses that neglect keeping the lead when once they have got it. Finally, we resolved the present work should go on, leaving out some parts of the Introduction which they object to. They are good specimens of the public taste in general; and it is far best to indulge and yield to them, unless I was very, very certain that I was right and they wrong. Besides, I am not afraid of their being hypercritical in the circumstances, being both sensible men, and not inclined to sacrifice chance of solid profit to the vagaries of critical taste. So the word is "as you were."

December 13. — A letter from Lockhart announcing that Murray of Albemarle Street would willingly give me my own terms for a volume on the subject of planting and landscape gardening. This will amuse me very much indeed. Another proposal invites me, on the part of Colburn, to take charge of the Garrick papers. The papers are to be edited by Colman, and then it is proposed to me to write a life of Garrick in quarto. Lockhart refused a thousand pounds which were offered, and carte blanche was then sent. But I will not budge. My book and Colman's would run each other down. It is an attempt to get more from the public out of the subject than

they will endure. Besides, my name would be only useful in the way of puff, for I really know nothing of the subject. So I will refuse; that's flat.

Having turned over my thoughts with some anxiety about the important subject of yesterday, I think we have done for the best. If I can rally this time, as I did in the Crusaders, why, there is the old trade open yet. If not, retirement will come gracefully after my failure. I must get the return of the sales of the three or four last novels so as to judge what style of composition has best answered. Add to this, giving up just now loses £4000 to the trustees, which they would not understand, whatever may be my nice authorial feelings. And moreover, it ensures the purchase of the copyrights — *i.e.* almost ensures them.

December 14. — Summoned to pay arrears of our unhappy Oil Gas concern — £140 — which I performed by draft on Mr. Cadell. This will pinch a little close, but it is a debt of honour, and must be paid. The public will never bear a public man who shuns either to draw his purse or his sword when there is an open and honest demand on him.

December 15. — Worked in the morning on the sheets which are to be cancelled, and on the Tale of St. Valentine's Eve — a good title, by the way. Had the usual quantum sufficit of the Court, which, if it did not dissipate one's attention so much, is rather an amusement than otherwise. But the plague is to fix one's attention to the sticking point, after it has been squandered about for two or three hours in such a way. It keeps one, however, in the course and stream of actual life, which is a great advantage to a literary man.

I missed an appointment, for which I am very sorry. It was about our Advocates' Library, which is to be rebuilt. During all my life we have mismanaged the large funds expended on the rooms of our library, totally mistaking the objects for which a library is built; and instead of taking a general and steady view of the subject, patching up disconnected and ill-sized rooms, totally unequal to answer the accommodation demanded, and bestowing an absurd degree of ornament and finery upon the internal finishing. All this should be reversed: the new library should be calculated upon a plan which ought to suffice for all the nineteenth century at least, and for that purpose should admit of being executed progressively; then there should be no ornament other than that of strict architectural

proportion, and the rooms should be accessible one through another, but divided with so many partitions, as to give ample room for shelves. These small rooms would also facilitate the purposes of study. Something of a lounging room would not be amiss, which might serve for meetings of Faculty occasionally. I ought to take some interest in all this, and I do. So I will attend the next meeting of committee. Dined at Baron Hume's, and met General Campbell of Lochnell, and his lady.

December 16. — Worked hard to-day and only took a half hour's walk with Hector Macdonald! Colin Mackenzie unwell; his asthma seems rather to increase, notwithstanding his foreign trip! Alas! long-seated complaints defy Italian climate. We had a small party to dinner. Captain and Mrs. Hamilton, Davidoff, Frank Scott, Harden, and his chum Charles Baillie, second son of Mellerstain, who seems a clever young man. Two or three of the party stayed to take wine and water.

December 17. — Sent off the beginning of the Chronicles to Ballantyne. I hate cancels; they are a double labour.

Mr. Cowan, Trustee for Constable's creditors, called in the morning by appointment, and we talked about the upset price of the copyrights of Waverley, *etc.* I frankly told him that I was so much concerned that they should remain more or less under my control, that I was willing, with the advice of my trustees, to offer a larger upset than that of £4750, which had been fixed, and that I proposed the price set up should be £250 for the poetry, Paul's letters, etc., and £5250 for the novels, in all £5500; but that I made this proposal under the condition, that in case no bidding should ensue, then the copyrights should be mine so soon as the sale was adjourned, without any one being permitted to bid after the sale. It is to be hoped this high upset price will

> "Fright the fuds
> Of the pockpuds."

This speculation may be for good or for evil, but it tends incalculably to increase the value of such copyrights as remain in my own person; and, if a handsome and cheap edition of the whole, with notes, can be instituted in conformity with Cadell's plan, it must prove a mine of wealth, three-fourths of which will belong to me or my creditors. It is possible, no doubt, that the

works may lose their effect on the public mind; but this must be risked, and I think the chances are greatly in our favour. Death (my own I mean) would improve the property, since an edition with a Life would sell like wildfire. Perhaps those who read this prophecy may shake their heads and say, "Poor fellow, he little thought how he should see the public interest in him and his extinguished even during his natural existence." It may be so, but I will hope better. This I know, that no literary speculation ever succeeded with me but where my own works were concerned; and that, on the other hand, these have rarely failed. And so — Vogue la galère!

Dined with the Lord Chief-Commissioner, and met Lord and Lady Binning, Lord and Lady Abercromby, Sir Robert O'Callaghan, *etc.* These dinners put off time well enough, and I write so painfully by candlelight that they do not greatly interfere with business.

December 18. — Poor Huntly Gordon writes me in despair about £180 of debt which he has incurred. He wishes to publish two sermons which I wrote for him when he was taking orders; but he would get little money for them without my name, and that is at present out of the question. People would cry out against the undesired and unwelcome zeal of him who stretched out his hands to help the ark with the best intentions, and cry sacrilege. And yet they would do me gross injustice, for I would, if called upon, die a martyr for the Christian religion, so completely is (in my poor opinion) its divine origin proved by its beneficial effects on the state of society. Were we but to name the abolition of slavery and of polygamy, how much has in these two words been granted to mankind by the lessons of our Saviour!

December 19. — Wrought upon an introduction to the notices which have been recovered of George Bannatyne, author, or rather transcriber, of the famous Repository of Scottish Poetry, generally known by the Bannatyne MS. They are very jejune these same notices — a mere record of matters of business, putting forth and calling in of sums of money, and such like. Yet it is a satisfaction to learn that this great benefactor to the literature of Scotland lived a prosperous life, and enjoyed the pleasures of domestic society, and, in a time peculiarly perilous, lived unmolested and died in quiet.

At eleven o'clock I had an appointment with a person unknown. A youth had written me, demanding an audience. I excused myself by alleging the want of leisure, and my dislike to communicate with a person perfectly unknown on unknown business. The application was renewed, and with an ardour which left me no alternative, so I named eleven this day. I am too much accustomed to the usual cant of the followers of the muses who endeavour by flattery to make their bad stale butter make amends for their stinking fish. I am pretty well acquainted with that sort of thing. I have had madmen on my hands too, and once nearly was Kotzebued by a lad of the name of Sharpe. All this gave me some curiosity, but it was lost in attending to the task I was engaged in; when the door opened and in walked a young woman of middling rank and rather good address, but something resembling our secretary David Laing, if dressed in female habiliments. There was the awkwardness of a moment in endeavouring to make me understand that she was the visitor to whom I had given the assignation. Then there were a few tears and sighs. "I fear, Madam, this relates to some tale of great distress." "By no means, sir;" and her countenance cleared up. Still there was a pause; at last she asked if it were possible for her to see the king. I apprehended then that she was a little mad, and proceeded to assure her that the king's secretary received all such applications as were made to his Majesty, and disposed of them. Then came the mystery. She wished to relieve herself from a state of bondage, and to be rendered capable of maintaining herself by acquiring knowledge. I inquired what were her immediate circumstances, and found she resided with an uncle and aunt. Not thinking the case without hope, I preached the old doctrine of patience and resignation, I suppose with the usual effect.

Went to the Bannatyne Club; and on the way met Cadell out of breath, coming to say he had bought the copyrights after a smart contention. Of this tomorrow. There was little to do at the club.

Afterwards dined with Lord and Lady Abercromby, where I met my old and kind friend, Major Buchanan of Cambusmore. His father was one of those from whom I gained much information about the old Highlanders, and at whose house I spent many merry days in my youth. The last time I saw old Cambusmore was in — — . He sat up an hour later on the occasion, though then eighty-five. I shall never forget him, and was delighted to see the Major, who comes seldom to town.

December 20. — Anent the copyrights — the pockpuds were not frightened by our high price. They came on briskly, four or five bidders abreast, and went on till the lot was knocked down to Cadell at £8400; a very large sum certainly, yet he has been offered profit on it already. For my part I think the loss would have been very great had we suffered these copyrights to go from those which we possessed. They would have been instantly stereotyped and forced on the market to bring home the price, and by this means depreciated for ever, and all ours must have shared the same fate. Whereas, husbanded and brought out with care, they cannot fail to draw in the others in the same series, and thus to be a sure and respectable source of profit. Considered in this point of view, even if they were worth only the £8400 to others, they were £10,000 to us. The largeness of the price arising from the activity of the contest only serves to show the value of the property. Had at the same time the agreeable intelligence that the octavo sets, which were bought by Hurst and Company at a depreciated rate, are now rising in the market, and that instead of 1500 sold, they have sold upwards of 2000 copies. This mass will therefore in all probability be worn away in a few months and then our operations may commence. On the whole, I am greatly pleased with the acquisition. If this first series be worth £8400, the remaining books must be worth £10,000, and then there is Napoleon, which is gliding away daily, for which I would not take the same sum, which would come to £24,200 in all for copyrights; besides £20,000 payable by insurance. Add the value of my books and furniture, plate, etc., there would be £50,000. So this may be considered my present progress. There will still remain upwards of £35,000.

"Heaven's arm strike with us — 'tis a fearful odds."

Yet with health and continued popularity there are chances in my favour.

Dine at James Ballantyne's, and happy man is he at the result of the sale; indeed it must have been the making or marring of him. Sir Henry Steuart there, who "fooled me to the top of my bent."

December 21. — A very sweet pretty-looking young lady, the Prima Donna of the Italian Opera, now performing here, by name Miss Ayton, came to breakfast this morning, with her father, (a bore, after the manner of all fathers, mothers, aunts, and other chaperons of pretty actresses)! Miss

Ayton talks very prettily, and, I dare say, sings beautifully, though too much in the Italian manner, I fear, to be a great favourite of mine. But I did not hear her, being called away by the Clerk's coach. I am like Jeremy in Love for Love — have a reasonable good ear for a jig, but your solos and sonatas give me the spleen.

Called at Cadell's, who is still enamoured of his bargain, and with good reason, as the London booksellers were offering him £1000 or £2000 to give it up to them. He also ascertained that all the copies with which Hurst and Robinson loaded the market would be off in a half year. Make us thankful! the weather is clearing to windward. Cadell is cautious, steady, and hears good counsel; and Gibson quite inclined, were I too confident, to keep a good look-out ahead.

December 22. — Public affairs look awkward. The present Ministry are neither Whig nor Tory, and, divested of the support of either of the great parties of the State, stand supported by the will of the sovereign alone. This is not constitutional, and though it may be a temporary augmentation of the sovereign's personal influence, yet it cannot but prove hurtful to the Crown upon the whole, by tending to throw that responsibility on the Sovereign of which the law has deprived him. I pray to God I may be wrong, but an attempt to govern par bascule — by trimming betwixt the opposite parties — is equally unsafe for the crown and detrimental to the country, and cannot do for a long time. The fact seems to be that Lord Goderich, a well-meaning and timid man, finds himself on a precipice — that his head is grown dizzy and he endeavours to cling to the person next him. This person is Lord Lansdowne, who he hopes may support him in the House of Lords against Lord Grey, so he proposes to bring Lord Lansdowne into the Cabinet. Lord G. resigns, and his resignation is accepted. Lord Harrowby is then asked to place himself at the head of a new Administration, — declines. The tried abilities of Marquis Wellesley are next applied to; it seems he also declines, and then Lord Goderich comes back, his point about Lord Lansdowne having failed, and his threatened resignation goes for nothing. This must lower the Premier in the eyes of every one. It is plain the K. will not accept the Whigs; it is equally plain that he has not made a move towards the Tories, and that with a neutral administration, this country, hard ruled at anytime, can he long governed, I, for one, cannot believe. God send

the good King, to whom I owe so much, as safe and honourable extrication as the circumstances render possible.

After Court Anne set out for Abbotsford with the Miss Kerrs. I came off at three o'clock to Arniston, where I found Lord Register and lady, R. Dundas and lady, Robt. Adam Dundas, Durham of Calderwood and lady, old and young friends. Charles came with me.

December 23. — Went to church to Borthwick with the family, and heard a well-composed, well-delivered, sensible discourse from Mr. Wright, the clergyman — a different sort of person, I wot, from my old half-mad, half-drunken, little humpback acquaintance Clunie, renowned for singing "The Auld Man's Mear's dead," and from the circumstance of his being once interrupted in his minstrelsy by the information that his own horse had died in the stable.

After sermon we looked at the old castle, which made me an old man. The castle was not a bit older for the twentyfive years which had passed away, but the ruins of the visitor were very apparent; to climb up round staircases, to creep through vaults and into dungeons, were not the easy labours but the positive sports of my younger years; but that time is gone by, and I thought it convenient to attempt no more than the access to the large and beautiful hall in which, as it is somewhere described, an armed horseman might brandish his lance. The feeling of growing and increasing inability is painful to one like me, who boasted, in spite of my infirmity, great boldness and dexterity in such feats; the boldness remains, but hand and foot, grip and accuracy of step, have altogether failed me; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, and so I must retreat into the invalided corps and tell them of my former exploits, which may very likely pass for lies. We drove to Dalhousie Castle, where the gallant Earl, who had done so much to distinguish the British name in all and every quarter of the globe, is repairing the castle of his ancestors, which of yore stood a siege against John of Gaunt. I was Lord Dalhousie's companion at school, where he was as much beloved by his companions as he has been ever respected by his companions-in-arms, and the people over whom he has been deputed to exercise the authority of his sovereign. He was always steady, wise, and generous. The old Castle of Dalhousie — potius Dalwolsey — was mangled by a fellow called, I believe, Douglas, who destroyed, as far as in him lay, its military and baronial character, and roofed it after the fashion of a poor-

house. The architect, Burn, is now restoring and repairing in the old taste, and I think creditably to his own feeling. God bless the rooftree!

We returned home through the Temple banks by the side of the South Esk, where I had the pleasure to see that Robert Dundas is laying out his woods with taste, and managing them with care. His father and uncle took notice of me when I was a "fellow of no mark or likelihood," and I am always happy in finding myself in the old oak room at Arniston, where I have drunk many a merry bottle, and in the fields where I have seen many a hare killed.

December 24. — Left Arniston after breakfast and arrived to dinner at Abbotsford.

My reflections on entering my own gate were of a very different and more pleasing cast than those with which I left my house about six weeks ago. I was then in doubt whether I should fly my country or become avowedly bankrupt, and surrender my library and household furniture, with the liferent of my estate, to sale. A man of the world will say I had better done so. No doubt had I taken this course at once, I might have employed the £25,000 which I made since the insolvency of Constable and Robinson's houses in compounding my debts. But I could not have slept sound as I now can, under the comfortable impression of receiving the thanks of my creditors and the conscious feeling of discharging my duty like a man of honour and honesty. I see before me a long tedious and dark path, but it leads to true fame and stainless reputation. If I die in the harrows, as is very likely, I shall die with honour; if I achieve my task I shall have the thanks of all concerned, and the approbation of my own conscience. And so I think I can fairly face the return of Christmas Day.

December 25. — - I drove over to Huntly Burn, and saw the plantation which is to be called Janeswood, in honour of my daughter-in-law. All looking well and in order. Before dinner, arrived Mrs. George Ellis and her nephew and niece, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ellis, whom I was delighted to see, as there are a thousand kind recollections of old days. Mrs. George Ellis is less changed in manner and appearance than any one I know. The gay and lighthearted have in that respect superiority over those who are of a deeper mould and a heavier. There is something even in the slightness and elasticity of person which outlasts the ponderous strength which is borne

down by its own weight. Colonel Ellis is an enthusiastic soldier: and, though young, served in Spain and at Waterloo.

> "And so we held our Christmastide
> With mirth and burly cheer."

December 26. — Colonel Ellis and I took a pretty long walk round by the glen, etc., where I had an extraordinary escape from the breaking down of a footbridge as I put my foot upon it. I luckily escaped either breaking my leg by its passing through the bridge in so awkward a manner, or tearing it by some one of the hundred rusty nails through which it fell. However, I was not, thanks to Heaven, hurt in the slightest degree. Tom Purdie, who had orders to repair the bridge long since, was so scandalised at the consequence of his negligence that the bridge is repaired by the time I am writing this. But how the noiseless step of Fate dogs us in our most seeming safe and innocent sports.

On returning home we were joined by the Lord Chief-Commissioner, the Lord Chief Baron, and William Clerk, of gentlemen; and of ladies, Miss Adam and young Miss Thomson of Charlton. Also the two Miss Kerrs, Lord Robert's daughters, and so behold us a gallant Christmas party, full of mirth and harmony. Moreover, Captain John Ferguson came over from Huntly Burn, so we spent the day jocundly. I intend to take a holiday or two while these friends are about us. I have worked hard enough to merit it, and

> "… Maggie will not sleep
> For that, ere summer."

December 27. — This morning we took a drive up the Yarrow in great force, and perambulated the Duchess's Walk with all the force of our company. The weather was delightful, the season being considered; and Newark Castle, amid its leafless trees, resembled a dear old man who smiles upon the ruins which time has spread around him. It is looking more venerable than formerly, for the repairs judiciously undertaken have now assumed colouring congenial with the old walls; formerly, they had a raw and patchy appearance. I have seldom seen the scene look better even when summer smiled upon it.

I have a letter from James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, asking me to intercede with the Duke of Buccleuch about his farm. He took this burthen upon himself without the advice of his best friends, and certainly contrary to mine. From the badness of the times it would have been a poor speculation in any hands, especially in those of a man of letters, whose occupation, as well as the society in which it involves him, [are so different]. But I hope this great family will be kind to him; if not, cela ne vaudra pas à moi. But I cannot and ought not to look for having the same interest with this gentleman which I exercised in the days of Duke Charles.

December 28. — A demand from Cadell to prepare a revised copy of the Tales of my Grandfather for the press. I received it with great pleasure, for I always had private hopes of that work. If I have a knack for anything it is for selecting the striking and interesting points out of dull details, and hence, I myself receive so much pleasure and instruction from volumes which are generally reputed dull and uninteresting. Give me facts, I will find fancy for myself. The first two volumes of these little tales are shorter than the third by seventy or eighty pages. Cadell proposes to equalise them by adding part of vol. ii. to vol. i., and of vol. iii. to vol. ii. But then vol. i. ends with the reign of Robert Bruce, vol. ii. with the defeat of Flodden; happy points of pause which I cannot think of disturbing, the first in particular, for surely we ought to close one volume at least of Scottish history at a point which leaves the kingdom triumphant and happy; and, alas! where do her annals present us with such an era excepting after Bannockburn? So I will set about to fill up the volumes, which are too short, with some additional matter, and so diminish at least, if we cannot altogether remove, their unsightly inequality in size. The rest of the party went to Dryburgh — too painful a place of pilgrimage for me. I walked with the Lord Chief Commissioner through our grounds at Huntly Burn, and by taking the carriage now and then I succeeded in giving my excellent old friend enough of exercise without any fatigue. We made our visit at Huntly Burn.

December 29. — Lord Chief-Baron, Lord Chief-Commissioner, Miss Adam, Miss Anstruther Thomson, and William Clerk left us. We read prayers, and afterwards walked round the terrace.

I had also time to work hard on the additions to the Tales of a Grandfather, vols. 1 and 2. The day passed pleasantly over.

December 30. — The Fergusons came over, and we welcomed in the New Year with the usual forms of song and flagon.

Looking back to the conclusion of 1826, I observe that the last year ended in trouble and sickness, with pressures for the present and gloomy prospects for the future. The sense of a great privation so lately sustained, together with the very doubtful and clouded nature of my private affairs, pressed hard upon my mind. I am now perfectly well in constitution; and though I am still on troubled waters, yet I am rowing with the tide, and less than the continuation of my exertions of 1827 may, with God's blessing, carry me successfully through 1828, when we may gain a more open sea, if not exactly a safe port. Above all, my children are well. Sophia's situation excites some natural anxiety; but it is only the accomplishment of the burthen imposed on her sex. Walter is happy in the view of his majority, on which matter we have favourable hopes from the Duke of Wellington. Anne is well and happy. Charles's entry upon life under the highest patronage, and in a line for which I hope he is qualified, is about to take place presently.

For all these great blessings it becomes me well to be thankful to God, who in his good time and good pleasure sends us good as well as evil.

1828 — January

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"As I walked by myself,
I talked to myself,
And thus myself said to me."

January 1. — Since the 20th November 1825, for two months that is, and two years, I have kept this custom of a diary. That it has made me wiser or better I dare not say, but it shows by its progress that I am capable of keeping a resolution. Perhaps I should not congratulate myself on this; perhaps it only serves to show I am more a man of method and less a man of originality, and have no longer that vivacity of fancy that is inconsistent with regular labour. Still, should this be the case, I should, having lost the one, be happy to find myself still possessed of the other.

January 2. — Cæcæ mentes hominum. — My last entry records my punctuality in keeping up my diary hitherto; my present labour, commenced notwithstanding the date, upon the 9th January, is to make up my little record betwixt the second and that latter date. In a word, I have been several days in arrear without rhyme or reason, — days too when there was so little to write down that the least jotting would have done it. This must not be in future.

January 3. — Our friends begin to disperse. Mrs. Ellis, who has been indisposed for the last two days, will I hope bear her journey to London well. She is the relict of my dear old friend George Ellis, who had more wit, learning, and knowledge of the world than would fit out twenty literati. The Hardens remained to-day, and I had a long walk with the laird up the Glen, and so forth. He seemed a little tired, and, with all due devotion to my Chief, I was not sorry to triumph over some one in point of activity at my time of day.

January 4. — Visited by Mr. Stewart of Dalguise, who came to collect materials for a description of Abbotsford, to be given with a drawing in a

large work, Views of Gentlemen's Seats. Mr. Stewart is a wellinformed gentlemanlike young man, grave and quiet, yet possessed of a sense of humour. I must take care he does not in civility over-puff my little assemblage of curiosities. Scarce anything can be meaner than the vanity which details the contents of China closets, — basins, ewers, and chamberpots. Horace Walpole, with all his talents, makes a silly figure when he gives an upholsterer's catalogue of his goods and chattels at Strawberry Hill.

January 5. — This day I began to review Taschereau's Life of Molière for Mr. Gillies, who is crying help for God's sake. Messrs. Treuttel and Wurtz offer guerdon. I shall accept, because it is doing Gillies no good to let him have my labour for nothing, and an article is about £100. In my pocket it may form a fund to help this poor gentleman or others at a pinch; in his, I fear it would only encourage a neglect of sober economy. When in his prosperity he asked me whether there was not, in my opinion, something interesting in a man of genius being in embarrassed circumstances. God knows he has had enough of them since, poor fellow; and it should be remembered that if he thus dallied with his good fortune, his benevolence to others was boundless.

We had the agreeable intelligence of Sophia being safely delivered of a girl; the mother and child doing well. Praised be God!

January 6. — I have a letter from the Duke of Wellington, making no promises, but assuring me of a favourable consideration of Walter's case, should an opening occur for the majority. This same step is represented as the most important, but so in their time were the lieutenancy and the troop. Each in its turn was the step par excellence. It appears that these same steps are those of a treadmill, where the party is always ascending and never gains the top. But the same simile would suit most pursuits in life.

The Misses Kerr left us on Friday — two charming young persons, well-looked, well-mannered, and well-born; above all, well-principled. They sing together in a very delightful manner, and our evenings are the duller without them.

I am annoyed beyond measure with the idle intrusion of voluntary correspondents; each man who has a pen, ink, and sheet of foolscap to spare, flies a letter at me. I believe the postage costs me £100 [a year],

besides innumerable franks; and all the letters regard the writer's own hopes or projects, or are filled with unasked advice or extravagant requests. I think this evil increases rather than diminishes. On the other hand, I must fairly own that I have received many communications in this way worth all the trouble and expense that the others cost me, so I must "lay the head of the sow to the tail of the grice," as the proverb elegantly expresses itself.

News again of Sophia and baby. Mrs. Hughes thinks the infant a beauty. Johnnie opines that it is not very pretty, and grandpapa supposes it to be like other new-born children, which are as like as a basket of oranges.

January 7. — Wrought at the review, and finished a good lot of it. Mr. Stewart left us, amply provided with the history of Abbotsford and its contents. It is a kind of Conundrum Castle to be sure, and I have great pleasure in it, for while it pleases a fantastic person in the style and manner of its architecture and decoration, it has all the comforts of a commodious habitation.

Besides the review, I have been for this week busily employed in revising for the press the Tales of a Grandfather. Cadell rather wished to rush it out by employing three different presses, but this I repressed (smoke the pun!). I will not have poor James Ballantyne driven off the plank to which we are all three clinging. I have made great additions to volume first, and several of these Tales; and I care not who knows it, I think well of them. Nay, I will hash history with anybody, be he who he will. I do not know but it would be wise to let romantic composition rest, and turn my mind to the history of England, France, and Ireland, to be da capo rota'd, as well as that of Scotland. Men would laugh at me as an author for Mr. Newbery's shop in Paul's Churchyard. I should care little for that. Virginibus puerisque. I would as soon compose histories for boys and girls, which may be useful, as fictions for children of a larger growth, which can at best be only idle folk's entertainment. But write what I will, or to whom I will, I am doggedly determined to write myself out of the present scrape by any labour that is fair and honest.

January 8. — Despatched my review (in part), and in the morning walked from Chiefswood, all about the shearing flats, and home by the new walk, which I have called the Bride's Walk, because Jane was nearly stuck fast in the bog there, just after her marriage, in the beginning of 1825.

My post brings serious intelligence to-day, and of a very pleasing description. Longman and Company, with a reserve which marks all their proceedings, suddenly inform Mr. Gibson that they desire 1000 of the 8vo edition of St. Ronan's Well, and the subsequent series of Novels thereunto belonging, for that they have only seven remaining, and wish it to be sent to their printers, and pushed out in three months. Thus this great house, without giving any previous notice of the state of the sale, expect all to be boot and saddle, horse and away, whenever they give the signal. In the present case this may do, because I will make neither alteration nor addition till our grand opus, the Improved Edition, goes to press. But ought we to go to press with this 1000 copies knowing that our project will supersede and render equivalent to waste paper such of them as may not reach the public before our plan is publicly known and begins to operate? I have, I acknowledge, doubt as to this. No doubt I feel perfectly justified in letting Longman and Co. look to their own interest, since they have neither consulted me nor attended to mine. But the loss might extend to the retail booksellers; and to hurt the men through whom my works are ultimately to find their way to the public would be both unjust and impolitic. On the contrary, if the St. Ronan Series be hurried out immediately, there is time enough perhaps to sell it off before the Improved Edition appears. In the meantime it appears that the popularity of these works is increasing rather than diminishing, that the measure of securing the copyrights was most judicious, and that, with proper management, things will work themselves round. Successful first editions are good, but they require exertion and imply fresh risk of reputation. But repeated editions tell only to the agreeable part of literature.

Longman and Company have also at length opened their oracular jaws on the subject of Bonaparte, and acknowledged its rapid sale, and the probable exhaustion of the present edition.

These tidings, with the success of the Tales, "speak of Africa and golden joys." But the tidings arriving after dinner rather discomposed me. In the evening I wrote to Cadell and Ballantyne at length, proposing a meeting at my house on Tuesday first, to hold a privy council.

January 9. — My first reflection was on Napoleon. I will not be hurried in my corrections of that work; and that I may not be so, I will begin them the instant that I have finished the review. It makes me tremble to think of the

mass of letters I have to look through in order to select all those which affect the subject of Napoleon, and which, in spite of numerous excellent resolutions, I have never separated from the common file from which they are now to be selected. Confound them! but they are confounded already. Indolence is a delightful indulgence, but at what a rate we purchase it! To-day we go to Mertoun, and having spent some time in making up my Journal to this length, and in a chat with Captain John, who dropped in, I will presently set to the review — knock it off, if possible, before we start at five o'clock. Tomorrow, when I return, we will begin the disagreeable task of a thorough rummage of papers, books, and documents. My character as a man of letters, and as a man of honour, depends on my making that work as correct as possible. It has succeeded, notwithstanding every effort here and in France to put it down, and it shall not lose ground for want of backing. We went to dine and pass the night at Mertoun, where we met Sir John Pringle, Mr. and Mrs. Baillie Mellerstain, and their daughters.

January 10. — When I rose this morning the weather was changed and the ground covered with snow. I am sure it's winter fairly. We returned from Mertoun after breakfast through an incipient snowstorm, coming on partially, and in great flakes, the sun bursting at intervals through the clouds. At last Die Wolken laufen zusammen. We made a slow journey of it through the swollen river and heavy roads, but here we are at last.

I am rather sorry we expect friends to-day, though these friends be the good Fergusons. I have a humour for work, to which the sober, sad uniformity of a snowy day always particularly disposes me, and I am sure I will get poor Gillies off my hand, at least if I had morning and evening. Then I would set to work with arranging everything for these second editions of Napoleon, The Romances, etc., which must be soon got afloat. I must say "the wark gangs bonnily on." Well, I will ring for coals, mend my pen, and try what can be done.

I wrought accordingly on Gillies's review for the Life of Molière, a gallant subject. I am only sorry I have not time to do it justice. It would have required a complete reperusal of his works, for which, alas! I have no leisure.

> "For long, though pleasant, is the way,
> And life, alas! allows but one ill winter's day."

Which is too literally my own case.

January 11. — Renewed my labour, finished the review, talis qualis, and sent it off. Commenced then my infernal work of putting to rights. Much cry and little woo', as the deil said when he shore the sow. But I have detected one or two things that had escaped me, and may do more tomorrow. I observe by a letter from Mr. Cadell that I had somewhat misunderstood his last. It is he, not Longman, that wishes to publish the thousand copies of St. Ronan's Series, and there is no immediate call for Napoleon. This makes little difference in my computation. The pressing necessity of correction is put off for two or three months probably, and I have time to turn myself to the Chronicles. I do not much like the task, but when did I ever like labour of any kind? My hands were fully occupied to-day with writing letters and adjusting papers — both a great bore.

The news from London assure a change of Ministry. The old Tories come in play. But I hope they will compromise nothing. There is little danger since Wellington takes the lead.

January 12. — My expenses have been considerably more than I expected; but I think that, having done so much, I need not undergo the mortification of giving up Abbotsford and parting with my old habits and servants.

January 13, [Edinburgh]. — We had a slow and tiresome retreat from Abbotsford through the worst of weather, half-sleet, half-snow. Dined with the Royal Society Club, and, being an anniversary, sat till nine o'clock, instead of halfpast seven.

January 14. — I read Cooper's new novel, The Red Rover; the current of it rolls entirely upon the ocean. Something there is too much of nautical language; in fact, it overpowers everything else. But, so people once take an interest in a description, they will swallow a great deal which they do not understand. The sweet word "Mesopotamia" has its charm in other compositions as well as in sermons. He has much genius, a powerful conception of character, and force of execution. The same ideas, I see, recur upon him that haunt other folks. The graceful form of the spars, and the tracery of the ropes and cordage against the sky, is too often dwelt upon.

January 15. — This day the Court sat down. I missed my good friend

Colin Mackenzie, who proposes to retire, from indifferent health. A better man never lived — eager to serve every one — a safeguard over all public business which came through his hands. As Deputy-Keeper of the Signet he will be much missed. He had a patience in listening to every one which is of the [highest consequence] in the management of a public body; for many men care less to gain their point than they do to play the orator, and be listened to for a certain time. This done, and due quantity of personal consideration being gained, the individual orator is usually satisfied with the reasons of the civil listener, who has suffered him to enjoy his hour of consequence. I attended the Court, but there was very little for me to do. The snowy weather has annoyed my fingers with chilblains, and I have a threatening of rheumatism — which Heaven avert!

James Ballantyne and Mr. Cadell dined with me to-day and talked me into a good humour with my present task, which I had laid aside in disgust. It must, however, be done, though I am loth to begin to it again.

January 16. — Again returned early, and found my way home with some difficulty. The weather — a black frost powdered with snow, my fingers suffering much and my knee very stiff. When I came home, I set to work, but not to the Chronicles. I found a less harassing occupation in correcting a volume or two of Napoleon in a rough way. My indolence, if I can call it so, is of a capricious kind. It never makes me absolutely idle, but very often inclines me — as it were from mere contradiction's sake — to exchange the task of the day for something which I am not obliged to do at the moment, or perhaps not at all.

January 17. — My knee so swelled and the weather so cold that I stayed from Court. I nibbled for an hour or two at Napoleon, then took handsomely to my gear, and wrote with great ease and fluency six pages of the Chronicles. If they are but tolerable I shall be satisfied. In fact, such as they are, they must do, for I shall get warm as I work, as has happened on former occasions. The fact is, I scarce know what is to succeed or not; but this is the consequence of writing too much and too often. I must get some breathing space. But how is that to be managed? There is the rub.

January 18-19. — Remained still at home, and wrought hard. The fountain trickles free enough, but God knows whether the waters will be

worth drinking. However, I have finished a good deal of hard work, — that's the humour of it.

January 20. — Wrought hard in the forenoon. At dinner we had Helen Erskine, — whom circumstances lead to go to India in search of the domestic affection which she cannot find here, — Mrs. George Swinton, and two young strangers: one, a son of my old friend Dr. Stoddart of the Times, a well-mannered and intelligent youth, the other that unnatural character, a tame Irishman, resembling a formal Englishman.

January 21. — This morning I sent J.B. as far as page forty-three, being fully twothirds of the volume. The rest I will drive on, trusting that, contrary to the liberated posthorse in John Gilpin, the lumber of the wheels rattling behind me may put spirit in the poor brute who has to drag it.

Mr. and Mrs. Moscheles were here at breakfast. She is a very pretty little Jewess; he one of the greatest performers on the pianoforte of the day, — certainly most surprising and, what I rather did not expect, pleasing.

I have this day the melancholy news of Glengarry's death, and was greatly shocked. The eccentric parts of his character, the pretensions which he supported with violence and assumption of rank and authority, were obvious subjects of censure and ridicule, which in some points were not undeserved. He played the part of a chieftain too nigh the life to be popular among an altered race, with whom he thought, felt, and acted, I may say in right and wrong, as a chieftain of a hundred years since would have done, while his conduct was viewed entirely by modern eyes, and tried by modern rules.

January 22. — I am, I find, in serious danger of losing the habit of my Journal; and, having carried it on so long, that would be pity. But I am now, on the 1st February, fishing for the lost recollections of the days since the 21st January. Luckily there is not very much to remember or forget, and perhaps the best way would be to skip and go on.

January 23. — Being a Teind day, I had a good opportunity of work. I should have said I had given breakfast on the 21st to Mr. and Mrs. Moscheles; she a beautiful young creature, "and one that adores me," as Sir Toby says, — that is, in my poetical capacity; — in fact, a frank and

amiable young person. I liked Mr. Moscheles' playing better than I could have expected, considering my own bad ear. But perhaps I flatter myself, and think I understood it better than I did. Perhaps I have not done myself justice, and know more of music than I thought I did. But it seems to me that his variations have a more decided style of originality than those I have commonly heard, which have all the signs of a da capo rota.

Dined at Sir Archibald Campbell's, and drank rather more wine than usual in a sober way. To be sure, it was excellent, and some old acquaintances proved a good excuse for the glass.

January 24. — I took a perverse fit to-day, and went off to write notes, et cetera, on Guy Mannering. This was perverse enough; but it was a composition between humour and duty; and as such, let it pass.

January 25. — I went on working, sometimes at my legitimate labours, sometimes at my jobs of Notes, but still working faithfully, in good spirits, and contented.

Huntly Gordon has disposed of the two sermons to the bookseller Colburn for £250 — well sold, I think — and is to go forth immediately. The man is a puffing quack; but though I would rather the thing had not gone there, and far rather that it had gone nowhere, yet, hang it! if it makes the poor lad easy, what needs I fret about it? After all, there would be little gain in doing a kind thing, if you did not suffer pain or inconvenience upon the score.

January 26. — Being Saturday, attended Mr. Moscheles' concert, and was amused; the more so that I had Mrs. M. herself to flirt a little with. To have so much beauty as she really possesses, and to be accomplished and well-read, she is an unaffected and pleasant person. Mr. Moscheles gives lessons at two guineas by the hour, and he has actually found scholars in this poor country. One of them at least (Mrs. John Murray) may derive advantage from his instructions; for I observe his mode of fingering is very peculiar, as he seems to me to employ the fingers of the same hand in playing the melody and managing the bass at the same time, which is surely most uncommon.

I presided at the Celtic Society's dinner to-day, and proposed Glengarry's memory, which, although there had been a rough dispute with

the Celts and the poor Chief, was very well received. I like to see men think and bear themselves like men. There were fewer in the tartan than usual — which was wrong.

January 27. — Wrought manfully at the Chronicles all this day and have nothing to jot down; only I forgot that I lost my lawsuit some day last week or the week before. The fellow therefore gets his money, plack and bawbee, but it's always a troublesome claim settled, and there can be no other of the same kind, as every other creditor has accepted the composition of 7s. in the £, which my exertions have enabled me to pay them. About £20,000 of the fund had been created by my own exertions since the bankruptcy took place, and I had a letter from Donald Horne, by commission of the creditors, to express their sense of my exertions in their behalf. All this is consolatory.

January 28. — I am in the scrape of sitting for my picture, and had to repair for two hours to-day to Mr. Colvin Smith — Lord Gillies's nephew. The Chief Baron had the kindness to sit with me great part of the time, as the Chief Commissioner had done on a late occasion. The picture is for the Chief Commissioner, and the Chief Baron desires a copy. I trust it will he a good one. At home in the evening, and wrote. I am well on before the press, notwithstanding late hours, lassitude, and laziness. I have read Cooper's Prairie — better, I think, than his Red Rover, in which you never get foot on shore, and to understand entirely the incidents of the story it requires too much knowledge of nautical language. It's very clever, though.

January 29. — This day at the Court, and wrote letters at home, besides making a visit or two — rare things with me. I have an invitation from Messrs Saunders and Otley, booksellers, offering me from £1500 to £2000 annually to conduct a journal; but I am their humble servant. I am too indolent to stand to that sort of work, and I must preserve the undisturbed use of my leisure, and possess my soul in quiet. A large income is not my object; I must clear my debts; and that is to be done by writing things of which I can retain the property. Made my excuses accordingly.

January 30. — After Court hours I had a visit from Mr. Charles Heath, the engraver, accompanied by a son of Reynolds the dramatist. His object was

to engage me to take charge as editor of a yearly publication called The Keepsake, of which the plates are beyond comparison beautiful, but the letterpress indifferent enough. He proposed £800 a year if I would become editor, and £400 if I would contribute from seventy to one hundred pages. I declined both, but told him I might give him some trifling thing or other, and asked the young men to breakfast the next day. Worked away in the evening and completed, "in a way and in a manner," the notes on Guy Mannering. The first volume of the Chronicles is now in Ballantyne's hands, all but a leaf or two. Am I satisfied with my exertions? So so. Will the public be pleased with them? Umph! I doubt the bubble will burst. While it is current, however, it is clear I should stand by it. Each novel of three volumes brings £4000, and I remain proprietor of the mine when the first ore is cropped out. This promises a good harvest, from what we have experienced. Now, to become a stipendiary editor of a New-Year's Gift-Book is not to be thought of, nor could I agree to work for any quantity of supply to such a publication. Even the pecuniary view is not flattering, though these gentlemen meant it should be so. But one hundred of their close-printed pages, for which they offer £400, is not nearly equal to one volume of a novel, for which I get £1300, and have the reversion of the copyright. No, I may give them a trifle for nothing, or sell them an article for a round price, but no permanent engagement will I make. Being the Martyrdom, there was no Court. I wrought away with what appetite I could.

January 31. — I received the young gentlemen to breakfast and expressed my resolution, which seemed to disappoint them, as perhaps they expected I should have been glad of such an offer. However, I have since thought there are these rejected parts of the Chronicles, which Cadell and Ballantyne criticised so severely, which might well enough make up a trifle of this kind, and settle the few accounts which, will I nill I, have crept in this New Year. So I have kept the treaty open. If I give them 100 pages I should expect £500.

I was late at the Court and had little time to write any till after dinner, and then was not in the vein; so commentated.

February

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February 1. — I had my two youths again to breakfast, but I did not say more about my determination, save that I would help them if I could make it convenient. The Chief Commissioner has agreed to let Heath have his pretty picture of a Study at Abbotsford, by Edwin Landseer, in which old Maida occurs. The youth Reynolds is what one would suppose his father's son to be, smart and forward, and knows the world. I suppose I was too much fagged with sitting in the Court to-day to write hard after dinner, but I did work, however.

February 2. — Corrected proofs, which are now nearly up with me. This day was an idle one, for I remained in Court till one, and sat for my picture till halfpast three to Mr. Smith. He has all the steadiness and sense in appearance which his cousin R.P.G. lacks. Whether he has genius or no, I am no judge. My own portrait is like, but I think too broad about the jowls, a fault which they all fall into, as I suppose, by placing their subject upon a high stage and looking upwards to them, which must foreshorten the face. The Chief Baron and Chief Commissioner had the goodness to sit with me.

Dressed and went with Anne to dine at Pinkie House, where I met the President, Lady Charlotte, etc.; above all, Mrs. Scott of Gala, whom I had not seen for some time. We had much fun, and I was, as Sir Andrew Aguecheek says, in good fooling. A lively French girl, a governess I think, but very pretty and animated, seemed much amused with the old gentleman. Home at eleven o'clock.

By the by, Sir John Hope had found a Roman eagle on his estate in Fife with sundry of those pots and coffeepots, so to speak, which are so common: but the eagle was mislaid, so I did not see it.

February 3. — I corrected proofs and wrote this morning, — but slowly, heavily, lazily. There was a mist on my mind which my exertions could not dispel. I did not get two pages finished, but I corrected proofs and commentated.

February 4. — Wrote a little and was obliged to correct the Molière affair

for R.P.G. I think his plan cannot go on much longer with so much weakness at the helm. A clever fellow would make it take the field with a vengeance, but poor G. will run in debt with the booksellers and let all go to the devil. I sent a long letter to Lockhart, received from Horace Smith, very gentlemanlike and well-written, complaining that Mr. Leigh Hunt had mixed him up, in his Life of Byron, with Shelley as if he had shared his irreligious opinions. Leigh Hunt afterwards at the request of Smith published a swaggering contradiction of the inference to be derived from the way in which he has named them together. Horatio Smith seems not to have relied upon his disclamation, as he has requested me to mention the thing to John Lockhart, and to some one influential about Ebony, which I have done accordingly.

February 5. — Concluded the first volume before breakfast. I am but indifferently pleased; either the kind of thing is worn out, or I am worn out myself, or, lastly, I am stupid for the time. The book must be finished, however. Cadell is greatly pleased with annotations intended for the new edition of the Waverley series. I believe that work must be soon sent to press, which would put a powerful wheel in motion to clear the ship. I went to the Parliament House, and in return strolled into Cadell's, being rather anxious to prolong my walk, for I fear the constant sitting for so many hours. When I returned, the Duke of Buccleuch came in. He is looking very well, and stout, but melancholy about his sister, Lady Charlotte Stopford. He is fitting up a part of Bowhill and intends to shoot there this year. God send him life and health, for it is of immense consequence.

February 6. — This and visits wasted my time till past two, and then I slept half-an-hour from mere exhaustion. Went in the evening to the play, and saw that good old thing, an English tragedy, well got up. It was Venice Preserved. Mrs. H. Siddons played Belvidera with much truth, feeling, and tenderness, though short of her motherin-law's uncommon majesty, which is a thing never to be forgotten. Mr. Young played Pierre very well, and a good Jaffier was supplied by a Mr. Vandenhoff. And so the day glided by; only three pages written, which, however, is a fair task.

February 7. — It was a Teind day, so no Court, but very little work. I wrote this morning till the boy made his appearance for proofs; then I had letters

to write. Item, at five o'clock I set out with Charles for Dalkeith to present him to the young Duke.

I asked the Duke about poor Hogg. I think he has decided to take Mr. Riddell's opinion; it is unlucky the poor fellow has ever taken that large and dear farm. Altogether Dalkeith was melancholy tonight, and I could not raise my spirits at all.

February 8. — I had a little work before dinner, but we are only seven pages into volume second. It is always a beginning, however; perhaps not a good one — I cannot tell. I went out to call on Gala and Jack Rutherfurd of Edgerstoun; saw the former, not the latter. Gala is getting much better. He talked as if the increase of his village was like to drive him over the hill to the Abbotsford side, which would greatly beautify that side and certainly change his residence for the better, only that he must remain some time without any appearance of plantation. The view would be enchanting.

I was tempted to buy a picture of Nell Gywnne, which I think has merit; at least it pleases me. Seven or eight years ago Graham of Gartmore bid for it against me, and I gave it up at twentyfive guineas. I have now bought it for £18, 18s. Perhaps there was folly in this, but I reckoned it a token of good luck that I should succeed in a wish I had formerly harboured in vain. I love marks of good luck even in trifles.

February 9. — Sent off three leaves of copy; this is using the press like the famished sailor who was fed by a comrade with shell-fish by one at a time. But better anything than stop, for the devil is to get set a-going again. I know no more than my old boots whether I am right or wrong, but have no very favourable anticipations.

As I came home from the Court about twelve I stepped into the Exhibition. It makes a very good show; the portraits are better than last year, those of Colvin Smith and Watson Gordon especially improve. Landseer's Study at Abbotsford is in a capital light, and generally admired. I particularly distinguished John Thomson's picture of Turnberry, which is of firstrate excellence. A picture by Scrope was also generally distinguished. It is a view in Calabria.

There is a rival Exhibition which does not hurt the earlier foundation, but rather excites emulation. I am told there are good paintings there. I came home with little goodwill to work, but I will compel myself to do

something. Unluckily, I have again to go out to dinner to-day, being President of the Bannatyne.

The dinner was a pleasant one; about thirty members attended. I kept the chair till near eleven, and the company were very joyous.

February 10. — I set myself doggedly to work, and turned off six leaves before dinner. Had to dinner Sir John Pringle, my dear Gala and his lady, and young Mackenzie and Miss Jardine. I was quite pleased to see Gala so well recovered of the consequences of his frightful fall, which hung about him so long. He is one of the kindest and best-informed men whom I know.

February 11. — I had Charles Young to breakfast with us, who gave us some striking anecdotes of Talma during the Reign of Terror, which may figure in Napoleon to great advantage.

My son Charles left us this morning to take possession of his situation in the Foreign Office. He has been very lucky. Correcting sheets, etc., took up the morning hours. I wrote three leaves before two o'clock. Day bitter cold — with snow, a strong contrast to the mild weather we had last week.

Salutation of two old Scottish lairds: — "Ye're maist obedient hummil servant, Tannachy Tulloh." — "Your nain man, Kilspindie."

Finished six pages, twentyfive pages of print that is, or about the thirteenth part of a volume. That would be a volume in a fortnight, with a holiday to boot. It would be possible enough for a little while.

February 12. — I wrought hard this morning. Ballantyne blames the Ossianic monotony of my principal characters. Now they are not Ossianic. The language of the Ossianic poetry is highly figurative; that of the knights of chivalry may be monotonous, and probably is, but it cannot be Ossianic. Sooth to say, this species of romance of chivalry is an exhaustible subject. It affords materials for splendid description for once or twice, but they are too unnatural and formal to bear repetition. We must go on with our present work, however, valeat quantum. Mr. Cadell, less critical than J.B., seems pleased. The world will soon decide if I get on at this rate; for I have finished four leaves to-day, notwithstanding my attendance on the Court.

February 13. — Mr. Macintosh Mackay, minister of Laggan, breakfasted with us this morning. This reverend gentleman is completing the Highland

Dictionary, and seems very competent for the task. He left in my hands some papers of Cluny Macpherson, concerning the affair of 1745, from which I have extracted an account of the battle of Clifton for Waverley. He has few prejudices (for a Highlander), and is a mild, well-mannered young man. We had much talk on Highland matters.

The Children's Tales continue in demand. Cadell expects a new edition of 10,000 about next year, which may be £750 or £800 in pouch, besides constituting a fine property.

February 14. — Mr. Edwards, a candidate for the situation of Rector in the Edinburgh Academy, a pleasant, gentlemanlike man, and recommended highly for experience and learning; but he is himself afraid of wanting bodily strength for the work, which requires all the nerve and muscle of Williams. I wish he had been three inches taller, and stout in proportion. I went to Mr. John Russell's, where there was an Academical party at dinner. Home at nine, a cigar, and to bed.

February 15. — Rose this morning about seven and wrote at the desk till breakfast; finished about a page and a half. I was fagged at Court till near two. Then called on Cadell, and so home, tired enough.

February 16. — There dined with me to-day Tom Thomson, Will Clerk, Mr. Edwards, and my Celtic friend Mr. Mackay of Laggan.

February 17. — A day of hard work, being I think eight pages before dinner. I cannot, I am sure, tell if it is worth marking down, that yesterday at dinner-time I was strangely haunted by what I would call the sense of pre-existence, — videlicet, a confused idea that nothing that passed was said for the first time, that the same topics had been discussed, and the same persons had stated the same opinions on the same subjects. It is true there might have been some ground for recollections, considering that three at least of the company were old friends, and kept much company together: that is, Justice-Clerk, [Lord] Abercromby, and I. But the sensation was so strong as to resemble what is called a mirage in the desert, or a calenture on board ship, when lakes are seen in the desert, and silvan landscapes in the sea. It was very distressing yesterday, and brought to my mind the fancies of Bishop Berkeley about an ideal world. There was a vile sense of want of

reality in all I did and said. It made me gloomy and out of spirits, though I flatter myself it was not observed. The bodily feeling which most resembles this unpleasing hallucination is the giddy state which follows profuse bleeding, when one feels as if walking on featherbeds and could not find a secure footing. I think the stomach has something to do with it. I drank several glasses of wine, but these only augmented the disorder. I did not find the in vino veritas of the philosophers. Something of this insane feeling remains to-day, but a trifle only.

February 18. — I had other work to do this day. In the morning corrected proofs. After breakfast, made a visit or two, and met Sandie Buchanan, whom it joys me to see. Then despatched all my sheriff processes, save one, which hitches for want of some papers. Lastly, here I am, before dinner, with my journal. I sent all the county money to Andrew Lang. Wrote to Mr. Reynolds too; methinks I will let them have the Tales which Jem Ballantyne and Cadell quarrelled with. I have asked £500 for them — pretty well that. I suppose they will be fools enough to give it me. In troth she'll no pe cheaper.

February 19. — A day of hard and continued work, the result being eight pages. But then I hardly ever quitted the table save at mealtime. So eight pages of my manuscript may be accounted the maximum of my literary labour. It is equal to forty printed pages of the novels. I had the whole of this day at my own disposal, by the voluntary kindness of Sir Robert Dundas interfering to take up my duty at the Court. The proofs of my Sermons are arrived, but I have had no time, saving to blot out some flummery, which poor Gordon had put into the preface.

February 20. — Another day of labour; but not so hard. I worked from eight till three with little intermission, but only accomplished four pages. Then I went out and made a visit or two, and looked in on Cadell. If I get two pages in the evening I will be satisfied, for volume II. may be concluded with the week, or run over to Sunday at most. Will it tell, this work? I doubt it, but there is no standing still.

A certain Mr. Mackay from Ireland called on me, an active agent, it would seem, about the reform of prisons. He exclaims, justly I have no doubt, about the state of our Lock-up House. For myself, I have some

distrust of the fanaticism — even of philanthropy. A good part of it arises in general from mere vanity and love of distinction, gilded over to others and to themselves with some show of benevolent sentiment. The philanthropy of Howard, mingled with his ill-usage of his son, seems to have risen to a pitch of insanity. Yet without such extraordinary men, who call attention to the subject by their own peculiarities, prisons would have remained the same dungeons which they were forty or fifty years ago. I do not see the propriety of making them dandy places of detention. They should be a place of punishment, and that can hardly be if men are lodged better, and fed better, than when they are at large. The separation of ranks is an excellent distinction, and is nominally provided for in all modern prisons. But the size of most of them is inadequate to the great increase of crime, and so the pack is shuffled together again for want of room to keep them separate. There are several prisons constructed on excellent principles, the economy of which becomes deranged so soon as the death takes place of some keen philanthropist who had the business of a whole committee, which, having lost him, remained like a carcass without a head. But I have never seen a plan for keeping in order these resorts of guilt and misery, without presupposing a superintendence of a kind which might perhaps be exercised, could we turn out upon the watch a guard of angels. But, alas! jailors and turnkeys are rather like angels of a different livery, nor do I see how it is possible to render them otherwise. Superintendence is all you can trust to, and superintendence, save in some rare cases, is hard to come by, where it is to be vigilantly and constantly exercised. Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? As to reformation, I have no great belief in it, when the ordinary class of culprits, who are vicious from ignorance or habit, are the subjects of the experiment. “A shave from a broken loaf” is thought as little of by the male set of delinquents as by the fair frail. The state of society now leads so much to great accumulations of humanity, that we cannot wonder if it ferment and reek like a compost dunghill. Nature intended that population should be diffused over the soil in proportion to its extent. We have accumulated in huge cities and smothering manufactories the numbers which should be spread over the face of a country; and what wonder that they should be corrupted? We have turned healthful and pleasant brooks into morasses and pestiferous lakes, — what wonder the soil should be unhealthy? A great deal, I think, might be done by executing the punishment of death, without a chance of escape, in all cases to which it

should be found properly applicable; of course these occasions being diminished to one out of twenty to which capital punishment is now assigned. Our ancestors brought the country to order by kilting thieves and banditti with strings. So did the French when at Naples, and bandits became for the time unheard of. When once the evil habit is altered — when men are taught a crime of a certain character is connected inseparably with death, the moral habits of a population become altered, and you may in the next age remit the punishment which in this it has been necessary to inflict with stern severity. I think whoever pretends to reform a corrupted nation, or a disorderly regiment, or an ill-ordered ship of war, must begin by severity, and only resort to gentleness when he has acquired the complete mastery by terror — the terror being always attached to the law; and, the impression once made, he can afford to govern with mildness, and lay the iron rule aside.

Mr. Mackay talked big of the excellent state of prisons in Ireland. J'en doute un peu. That the warm-hearted and generous Irish would hurry eagerly into any scheme which had benevolence for its motive, I readily believe; but that Pat should have been able to maintain that calm, all-seeing, all-enduring species of superintendence necessary to direct the working of the best plan of prison discipline, I greatly hesitate to believe.

Well, leaving all this, I wish Mr. Mackay good luck, with some little doubt of his success, but none of his intentions. I am come in my work to that point where a lady who works a stocking must count by threads, and bring the various loose ends of my story together. They are too many.

February 21. — Last night after dinner I rested from my work, and read third part of [Theodore Hook's] Sayings and Doings, which shows great knowledge of life in a certain sphere, and very considerable powers of wit, which somewhat damages the effect of the tragic parts. But he is an able writer, and so much of his work is well said, that it will carry through what is manqué. I hope the same good fortune for other folks.

I am watching and waiting till I hit on some quaint and clever mode of extricating, but do not see a glimpse of any one. James B., too, discourages me a good deal by his silence, waiting, I suppose, to be invited to disgorge a full allowance of his critical bile. But he may wait long enough, for I am discouraged enough. Now here is the advantage of Edinburgh. In the country, if a sense of inability once seizes me, it haunts me from morning to

night; but in Edinburgh the time is so occupied and frittered away by official duties and chance occupation, that you have not time to play Master Stephen and be gentlemanlike and melancholy. On the other hand, you never feel in town those spirit-stirring influences — those glances of sunshine that make amends for clouds and mist. The country is said to be quieter life; not to me, I am sure. In the town the business I have to do hardly costs me more thought than just occupies my mind, and I have as much of gossip and ladylike chat as consumes the time pleasantly enough. In the country I am thrown entirely on my own resources, and there is no medium betwixt happiness and the reverse.

February 22. — Went to Court, and remained there until one o'clock. Then to Mr. Colvin Smith's and sat to be stared at till three o'clock. This is a great bore even when you have a companion, sad when you are alone and can only disturb the painter by your chatter. After dinner I had proofs to the number of four. J.B. is outrageous about the death of Oliver Proudfoot, one of the characters; but I have a humour to be cruel.

> "His business 'tis to die."

Received a present from a Mr. Dobie of a candlestick said to be that of the Rev. Mr. Guthrie, minister of Fenwick in the seventeenth century, — very civil of a gentleman unknown, if there comes no request to look over poems, or to get made a gauger, or the like, for I have seen that kind of compliment made on the principle on which small balloons are sent up before a large one, to see how the wind sits. After dinner proof-sheets.

February 23. — Morning proof-sheets galore. Then to Parliament House. After that, at one, down to Sir William MacLeod Bannatyne, who has made some discoveries concerning Bannatyne the collector of poetry, and furnished me with some notes to that purpose. He informs me that the MacLeod, alias MacCruiskin, who met Dr. Johnson on the Isle of Skye, was Mr. Alexander MacLeod, Advocate, a son of MacLeod of Muiravonside. He was subject to fits of insanity at times, very clever at others. Sir William mentioned the old Laird of Bernera, who, summoned by his Chief to join him with all the men he could make, when the Chief was raising his men for Government, sent him a letter to this purpose: — "Dear Laird, — No man would like better to be at your back than I would; but on this occasion

it cannot be. I send my men, who are at your service; for myself, higher duties carry me elsewhere." He went off accordingly alone, and joined Raasay as a volunteer. I returned by the printing office and found J.B. in great feather. He tells me Cadell, on squaring his books and making allowance for bad debts, has made between £3000 and £4000, lodged in bank. He does nothing but with me. Thus we stand on velvet as to finance. Met Staffa, who walked with me and gave me some Gaelic words which I wanted.

I may mention that I saw at the printing-office a part of a review on Leigh Hunt's Anecdotes of Byron. It is written with power, apparently by Professor Wilson, but with a degree of passion which rather diminishes the effect; for nothing can more lessen the dignity of the satirist than being or seeming to be in a passion. I think it may come to a bloody arbitrament, for if L.H. should take it up as a gentleman, Wilson is the last man to flinch. I hope Lockhart will not be dragged in as second or otherwise. Went to Jeffrey's to dinner — there were Mrs. and Miss Sydney Smith, Lords Gillies and Corehouse, *etc. etc.*

February 24. — I fancy I had drunk a glass or two over much last night, for I have the heartburn this morning. But a little magnesia salves that sore. Meantime I have had an inspiration which shows me my good angel has not left me. For these two or three days I have been at what the "Critic" calls a deadlock — all my incidents and personages ran into a gordian knot of confusion, to which I could devise no possible extrication. I had thought on the subject several days with something like the despair which seized the fair princess, commanded by her ugly stepmother to assort a whole garret full of tangled silk threads of every kind and colour, when in comes Prince Percinet with a wand, whisks it over the miscellaneous mass, and lo! all the threads are as nicely arranged as in a seamstress' housewife. It has often happened to me that when I went to bed with my head as ignorant as my shoulders what I was to do next, I have waked in the morning with a distinct and accurate conception of the mode, good or bad, in which the plot might be extricated. It seems to me that the action of the intellect, on such occasions, is rather accelerated by the little fever which an extra glass of wine produces on the system. Of course excess is out of the question. Now this may seem strange, but it is quite true; and it is no less so that I have generally written to the middle of one of these novels, without having the

least idea how it was to end, in short in the hab nab at a venture style of composition. So now, this hitch being over, I fold my paper, lock up my journal, and proceed to labour with good hope.

February 25. — This being Monday, I carried on my work according to the new model. Dined at home and in quiet. But I may notice that yesterday Mr. Williams, the learned Rector of our new Academy, who now leaves us, took his dinner here. We had a long philological tête-à-tête. He is opinionative, as he has some title to be, but very learned, and with a juster view of his subject than is commonly entertained, for he traces words to the same source — not from sound but sense. He casts backwards thus to the root, while many compare the ends of the twigs without going further.

This night I went to the funeral of Mr. Henderson, late of Eildon Hall, a kindhearted man, who rose to great wealth by honest means, and will be missed and regretted.

In the evening I went to the promenade in the Exhibition of Pictures, which was splendidly lighted up and filled with fashionable company. I think there was a want of beauty, — or perhaps the gaslights were unfavourable to the ladies' looks.

February 26. — Business filled up the day till one, when I sat to Mr. Smith. Tedious work, even though Will Clerk chaperoned me. We dined at Archie Swinton's. Met Lord Lothian, Lord Cringletie, *etc.* This day I have wrought almost nothing, but I am nearly half a volume before the press. Lord Morton, married to a daughter of my friend Sir George Rose, is come to Edinburgh. He seems a very gentlemanlike man, and she pleasing and willing to be pleased. I had the pleasure to be of some little use to him in his election as one of the Scottish Peers. I owe Sir George Rose much for his attention to Walter at Berlin.

February 27. — At Court till halfpast two. Then to the Waterloo Tavern, where we had a final and totally unfructuous meeting with the Committee of the Coal Gas people. So now my journey to London is resolved on. I shall lose at least £500 by the job, and get little thanks from those I make the sacrifice for. But the sacrifice shall be made. Anything is better than to break one's word, or desert a sinking vessel. Heartily do I wish these "Colliers" had seen the matter in the best light for their own interest. But

there is no help. One thing is certain, that I shall see my whole family once more around me, and that is worth the £500. Anne too starts at the idea of the sea. I am horribly vexed, however. Gibson always expected they would come in, but there seemed to me little chance of it; perhaps they thought we were not serious in our proposal to push through the Act. Wrought a little in the evening, not much.

February 28. — At Court till four. When I came home I did work a little, but as we expected company it was not to much purpose. Lord Chief Commissioner dined with us with Miss Adam; Mr. Hutchinson, brother of Lord Donoughmore, and Miss Jones, Will Clerk and John Thomson made up the party, and we had a pleasant evening, as such a handful always secures. Stayed till wine-and-water time. Thus flew another day.

February 29. — I had my proof-sheets as usual in the morning and the Court as usual till two. Then one or two visits and corrected the discourses for Gordon. This is really a foolish scrape, but what could I do? It involved the poor lad's relief from something very like ruin. I got a letter from the young man Reynolds accepting on Heath's part my terms for article to The Keepsake, namely £500, — I to be at liberty to reprint the article in my works after three years. Mr. Heath to print it in The Keepsake as long and often as he pleases, but not in any other form. I shall close with them. If I make my proposed bargain with Murray, all pecuniary matters will be easy in an unusual degree. Dined at Robert Hamilton's with Lord and Lady Belhaven, Walter Campbell, and a number of Westlanders.

March

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March 1. — Wrought a little this morning; always creeping on. We had a hard pull at the Court, and after it I walked a little for exercise, as I fear indigestion from dining out so often.

Dined to-day with the bankers who went as delegates to London in Malachi Malagrowther's days. Sir John Hay Kinnear and Tom Allan were my only acquaintances of the party; the rest seemed shrewd capable men. I particularly remarked a Mr. Sandeman with as intellectual a head as I ever witnessed.

March 2. — A day of hard work with little interruption, and completed volume second. I am not much pleased with it. It wants what I desire it to have, and that is passion.

The two Ballantynes and Mr. Cadell dined with me quietly. Heard from London; all well.

March 3. — I set about clearing my desk of unanswered letters, which I had suffered to accumulate to an Augean heap. I daresay I wrote twenty cards that might have been written at the time without half-a-minute being lost. To do everything when it ought to be done is the soul of expedition. But then, if you are interrupted eternally with these petty avocations, the current of the mind is compelled to flow in shallows, and you lose the deep intensity of thought which alone can float plans of depth and magnitude. I sometimes wish I were one of those formalists who can assign each hour of the day its special occupations, not to be encroached upon; but it always returns upon my mind that I do better à la débandade, than I could with rules of regular study. A work begun is with me a stone turned over with the purpose of rolling it down hill. The first revolutions are made with difficulty — but vires acquirit eundo. Now, were the said stone arrested in its progress, the whole labour would be to commence again. To take a less conceited simile: I am like a spavined horse, who sets out lame and stiff, but when he warms in his gear makes a pretty good trot of it, so that it is better to take a good stage of him while you can get it. Besides, after all, I have known most of those formalists, who were not men of business or of office

to whom hours are prescribed as a part of duty, but who voluntarily make themselves

> "Slaves to an hour, and vassals to a bell," —

to be what I call very poor creatures.

General Ainslie looked in, and saddened me by talking of poor Don. The General is a medallist, and entertains an opinion that the bonnet-piece of James V. is the work of some Scottish artist who died young, and never did anything else. It is far superior to anything which the Mint produced since the Roman denarii. He also told me that the name of Andrea de Ferrara is famous in Italy as an armourer.

Dined at home, and went to the Royal Society in the evening after sending off my processes for the Sheriff Court. Also went after the Society to Mr. James Russell's symposium.

March 4. — A letter from Italy signed J.S. with many acute remarks on inaccuracies in the life of Bonaparte.

His tone is hostile decidedly, but that shall not prevent my making use of all his corrections where just.

The wretched publication of Leigh Hunt on the subject of Byron is to bring forward Tom Moore's life of that distinguished poet, and I am honoured and flattered by the information that he means to dedicate it to me.

A great deal of worry in the Court to-day, and I lost my spectacles, and was a dark and perplexed man — found them again though. Wrote to Lockhart and to Charles, and will do more if I can, but am sadly done up. An old friend came and pressed unmercifully some selfish request of his own to ask somebody to do something for his son. I shall be glad to be at Abbotsford to get rid of this town, where I have not, in the proper and social sense of the word, a single friend whose company pleases me. In the country I have always Tom Purdie.

Dined at the Lord Chief Commissioner's, where I met, the first time for thirty years, my old friend and boon companion, with whom I shared the wars of Bacchus, Venus, and sometimes of Mars. The past rushed on me like a flood and almost brought tears into my eyes. It is no very laudable exploit to record, but I once drank three bottles of wine with this same rogue — Sir William Forbes and Sir Alexander Wood being of the party.

David Erskine of Cardross keeps his looks better than most of our contemporaries. I hope we shall meet for a longer time.

March 5. — I corrected sheets, and, being a Teind Wednesday, began the second volume and proceeded as far as page fourth.

We dined at Hector Macdonald's with several Highlanders, most of whom were in their garb, intending to go to a great fancy ball in the evening. There were young Cluny Macpherson, Campbell Airds, Campbell Saddell, and others of the race of Diarmid. I went for an hour to the ball, where there were many gay and some grotesque figures. A dressed ball is, for the first half-hour, a splendid spectacle; you see youth and beauty dressed in their gayest attire, unlimited, save by their own taste, and enjoying the conscious power of charming, which gives such life and alacrity to the features. But the charm ceases in this like everything else. The want of masks takes away the audacity with which the disguised parties conduct themselves at a masquerade, and [leaves] the sullen sheepishness which makes them, I suppose, the worst maskers in Europe. At the only real masquerade which I have known in Edinburgh there were many, if not most, of those who had determined to sustain characters, who had more ill-breeding than facetiousness. The jests were chiefly calculated to give pain, and two or three quarrels were with difficulty prevented from ripening into duels. A fancy ball has no offence in it, therefore cannot be wrecked on this rock. But, on the other hand, it is horribly dull work when the first coup d'œil is over.

There were some good figures, and some grossly absurd. A very gay cavalier with a broad bright battleaxe was pointed out to me as an eminent distiller, and another knight in the black coarse armour of a cuirassier of the 17th century stalked about as if he thought himself the very mirror of chivalry. He was the son of a celebrated upholsterer, so might claim the broad axe from more titles than one. There was some good dancing; Cluny Macpherson footed it gallantly.

March 6. — Wrote two pages this morning before breakfast. Went to the Court, where I learned that the "Colliers" are in alarm at the determination shown by our Committee, and are willing to give better terms. I hope this is so — but Cogan na Shie — peace or war, I care not. I never felt less anxiety about where I went and what I did. A feather just lighted on the ground can

scarce be less concerned where the next blast may carry it. If I go, I shall see my children — if I stay, I shall mend my fortune. Dined at home and went to the play in the evening. Lady Torphichen had commanded the play, and there were all my Swinton cousins young and old. The play was "A Bold Stroke for a Wife," — Charles Kemble acting as Feignwell. The plot is extravagant nonsense, but with lively acting the ludicrousness of the situation bears it through, and few comedies act better. After this came Rob Roy, where the Bailie played with his usual excellence. The piece was not over until near one in the morning, yet I did not feel tired — which is much.

March 7. — To-day I wrought and corrected proof-sheets; went to the Court, and had a worry at the usual trashy small wares which are presented at the end of a Session. An official predecessor of mine, the facetious Robert Sinclair, was wont to say the three last days of the Session should be abolished by Act of Parliament. Came home late, and was a good deal broken in upon by visitors. Amongst others, John Swinton, now of Swinton, brought me the skull of his ancestor, Sir Allan Swinton, who flourished five hundred years ago. I will get a cast made of the stout old carle. It is rare to see a genuine relic of the mortal frame drawing so far back. Went to my Lord Gillies's to dinner, and witnessed a singular exhibition of personification.

Miss Stirling Grame, a lady of the Duntroon family, from which Clavers was descended, looks like thirty years old, and has a face of the Scottish cast, with a good expression in point of good sense and good humour. Her conversation, so far as I have had the advantage of hearing it, is shrewd and sensible, but no ways brilliant. She dined with us, went off as to the play, and returned in the character of an old Scottish lady. Her dress and behaviour were admirable, and the conversation unique. I was in the secret, of course, did my best to keep up the ball, but she cut me out of all feather. The prosing account she gave of her son, the antiquary, who found an auld wig in a slate quarry, was extremely ludicrous, and she puzzled the Professor of Agriculture with a merciless account of the succession of crops in the parks around her old mansion-house. No person to whom the secret was not intrusted had the least guess of an impostor, except one shrewd young lady present, who observed the hand narrowly and saw it was plumper than the age of the lady seemed to warrant. This lady, and Miss

Bell of Coldstream, have this gift of personification to a much higher degree than any person I ever saw.

March 8. — Wrote in the morning, then to Court, where we had a sederunt till nigh two o'clock. From thence to the Coal Gas Committee, with whom we held another, and, thank God, a final meeting. Gibson went with me. They had Mr. Munro, Trotter, Tom Burns, and Inglis. The scene put me in mind of Chichester Cheyne's story of a Shawnee Indian and himself, dodging each other from behind trees, for six or seven hours, each in the hope of a successful shot. There was bullying on both sides, but we bullied to best purpose, for we must have surrendered at discretion, notwithstanding the bold face we put on it. On the other hand, I am convinced they have got a capital bargain.

March 9. — I set about arranging my papers, a task which I always take up with the greatest possible illwill and which makes me cruelly nervous. I don't know why it should be so, for I have nothing particularly disagreeable to look at; far from it, I am better than I was at this time last year, my hopes firmer, my health stronger, my affairs bettered and bettering. Yet I feel an inexpressible nervousness in consequence of this employment. The memory, though it retains all that has passed, has closed sternly over it; and this rummaging, like a bucket dropped suddenly into a well, deranges and confuses the ideas which slumbered on the mind. I am nervous, and I am bilious, and, in a word, I am unhappy. This is wrong, very wrong; and it is reasonably to be apprehended that something of serious misfortune will be the deserved punishment of this pusillanimous lowness of spirits. Strange that one who, in most things, may be said to have enough of the 'care na by', should be subject to such vile weakness! Well, having written myself down an ass, I will daub it no farther, but e'en trifle till the humour of work comes.

Before the humour came I had two or three long visits. Drummond Hay, the antiquary and lyon-herald, came in. I do not know anything which relieves the mind so much from the sullens as trifling discussion about antiquarian oldwomanries. It is like knitting a stocking, diverting the mind without occupying it; or it is like, by Our Lady, a milldam, which leads one's thoughts gently and imperceptibly out of the channel in which they are chafing and boiling. To be sure, it is only conducting them to turn a

child's mill; what signifies that? — the diversion is a relief, though the object is of little importance. I cannot tell what we talked of; but I remember we concluded with a lamentation on the unlikelihood that Government would give the Museum £2000 to purchase the bronze Apollo lately discovered in France, although the God of Delos stands six feet two in his stocking-soles, and is perfectly entire, saving that on the right side he wants half a hip, and the leg from the knee, and that on the left his heel is much damaged. Colonel Ferguson just come to town — dines with us.

March 10. — I had a world of trumpery to do this morning: cards to write, and business to transact, visits to make, *etc.* Received letters from the youth who is to conduct The Keepsake, with blarney on a £200 Bank note. No blarney in that. I must set about doing something for these worthies. I was obliged to go alone to dine at Mr. Scott Gala's. Met the Sinclair family. Lady Sinclair told me a singular story of a decrepit man keeping a lonely toll at a place called the Rowan-tree, on the frontiers, as I understood, between Ayrshire and Dumfriesshire [Wigtownshire?]. It was a wild, lonely spot, and was formerly inhabited by robbers and assassins, who murdered passengers. They were discovered by a boy whom they had taken into the cottage as a menial. He had seen things which aroused his attention, and was finally enlightened as to the trade of his masters by hearing one of them, as he killed a goat, remark that the cries of the creature resembled those of the last man they had dealt with. The boy fled from the house, lodged an information, and the whole household was seized and executed. The present inhabitants Lady Sinclair described as interesting. The man's feet and legs had been frost-bitten while herding the cattle, and never recovered the strength of natural limbs. Yet he had acquired some education, and was a country schoolmaster for some time, till the distance and loneliness of the spot prevented pupils from attending. His daughter was a reader, and begged for some old magazines, newspapers, or any printed book, that she might enjoy reading. They might have been better had they been allowed to keep a cow. But if they had been in comfortable circumstances, they would have had visitors and lodgers, who might have carried guns to destroy the gentleman's creation, *i.e.* game; and for this risk the wretches were kept in absolute and abject poverty. I would rather be — himself than this brutal Earl. The daughter showed Lady Sinclair a well in the midst of a small bog, of great depth, into which, like Thurtell and

Probert, they used to thrust the bodies of their victims till they had an opportunity of burying them. Lady Sinclair stooped to taste the water, but the young woman said, with a strong expression of horror, "You would not drink it?" Such an impression had the tale, probably two centuries old, made upon the present inhabitants of this melancholy spot. The whole legend is curious; I will try to get hold of it.

March 11. — I sent Reynolds a sketch of two Scottish stories for subjects of art for his Keepsake — the death of the Laird's Jock the one, the other the adventure of Duncan Stuart with the stag.

Mr. Drummond Hay breakfasted with me — a good fellow, but a considerable bore. He brought me a beautiful bronze statue of Hercules, about ten inches or a foot in height, beautifully wrought. He bought it in France for 70 francs, and refused £300 from Payne Knight. It is certainly a most beautiful piece of art. The lion's hide which hung over the shoulders had been of silver, and, to turn it to account, the arm over which it hung was cut off; otherwise the statue was perfect and extremely well wrought. Allan Swinton's skull sent back to Archibald Swinton.

March 12. — The boy got four leaves of copy to-day, and I wrote three more. Received by Mr. Cadell from Treuttel and Wurtz for articles in Foreign Review £52, 10s., which is at my credit with him. Poor Gillies has therefore kept his word so far, but it is enough to have sacrificed £100 to him already in literary labour, which I make him welcome to. I cannot spare him more — which, besides, would do him no good.

March 13, [Abbotsford]. — I wrote a little in the morning and sent off some copy. We came off from Edinburgh at ten o'clock, and got to Abbotsford by four, where everything looks unusually advanced; the birds singing and the hedges budding, and all other prospects of spring too premature to be rejoiced in.

I found that, like the foolish virgins, the servants had omitted to get oil for my lamp, so I was obliged to be idle all the evening. But though I had a diverting book, the Tales of the Munster Festivals, yet an evening without writing hung heavy on my hands. The Tales are admirable. But they have one fault, that the crisis is in more cases than one protracted after a keen interest has been excited, to explain and to resume parts of the story which should have been told before. Scenes of mere amusement are often

introduced betwixt the crisis of the plot and the final catastrophe. This is impolitic. But the scenes and characters are traced by a firm, bold, and true pencil, and my very criticism shows that the catastrophe is interesting, — otherwise who would care for its being interrupted?

March 16. — The same record applies to these three days. From seven to halfpast nine writing — from halfpast nine to a quarter past ten a hearty breakfast. From eleven or thereby, to one or two, wrote again, and from one or two ride, drive, or walk till dinner-time — for two or three hours — five till seven, dine and rest yourself — seven till nine, wrote two pages more, from nine to quarter past ten lounge, read the papers, and then go to bed. If your story is tolerably forward you may, I think, keep at this rate for twelve days, which would be a volume. But no brain could hold it out longer. Wrote two additional leaves in the evening.

March 17. — Sent away copy this morning to J.B. with proofs. I then wrote all the day till two o'clock, walked round the thicket and by the waterside, and returning set to work again. So that I have finished five leaves before dinner, and may discuss two more if I can satisfy myself with the way of winding up the story. There are always at the end such a plaguey number of stitches to take up, which usually are never so well done but they make a botch. I will try if the cigar will inspire me. Hitherto I have been pretty clear, and I see my way well enough, only doubt of making others see it with sufficient simplicity. But it is near five, and I am too hungry to write more.

"Ego nunquam potui scribere jejunus."

March 18. — I was sorely worried by the black dog this morning, that vile palpitation of the heart — that tremor cordis — that hysterical passion which forces unbidden sighs and tears, and falls upon a contented life like a drop of ink on white paper, which is not the less a stain because it conveys no meaning. I wrought three leaves, however, and the story goes on. I dined at the Club of the Selkirkshire yeomanry, now disbanded.

"The Eldrich knight gave up his arms
With many a sorrowful sigh."

The dissolution of the Yeomanry was the act of the last ministry. The present did not alter the measure on account of the expense saved. I am one of the oldest, if not the very oldest Yeoman in Scotland, and have seen the rise, progress, and now the fall of this very constitutional part of the national force. Its efficacy, on occasions of insurrection, was sufficiently proved in the Radical time. But besides, it kept up a spirit of harmony between the proprietors of land and the occupiers, and made them known to and beloved by each other; and it gave to the young men a sort of military and highspirited character, which always does honour to a country. The manufacturers are in great glee on this occasion. I wish Parliament, as they have turned the Yeoman adrift somewhat scornfully, may not have occasion to roar them in again.

March 19. — I applied myself again to my labour, my mind flowing in a less, gloomy current than yesterday. I laboured with little interruption, excepting a walk as far as Faldonside with the dogs, and at night I had not finished more than three leaves. But, indeed, it is pretty fair; I must not work my brains too hard, in case of provoking the hypochondria which extreme exertion or entire indolence are equally unfavourable to.

March 20. — Thomson breakfasted. I left him soon, being desirous to finish my labours. The volume is finished, all but one fourth or somewhat shorter; four days should despatch it easily, but I have letters to write and things are getting into disorder. I took a drive with my daughter, for exercise, and called at Huntly Burn. This evening went on with work as usual; there was not above four pages finished, but my conscience is quiet on my exertions.

March 21. — I received young Whytbank to breakfast, and talked genealogy, which he understands well; I have not a head for it. I only value it as interspersed with anecdote. Whytbank's relationship and mine exists by the Shaws. A younger brother of Shaw of Sauchie, afterwards Greenock, chief of the name, was minister of the Kirk of Selkirk. My great-grandfather, John Rutherford, minister of the gospel at Yarrow, married one of this reverend gentleman's daughters; and John Pringle, rector of Fogo, great-grandfather of the present Whytbank, married another. It was Christian Shaw, my grandmother, who possessed the manuscript respecting

the murder of the Shaws by the Master of Sinclair. She could not, according to the reckoning of that age, be a distant relation. Whytbank parted, agreeing to return to dinner to meet the bride and bridegroom. I had little time to write, for Colonel Russell, my cousin, called between one and two, and he also agreed to stay dinner; so I had a walk of three hours with him in the plantations. At dinner we had Mr. and Mrs. Bruce, Mr. Scrope, Mrs. and Dr. Brewster, Whytbank, Russell, and young Nicol Milne, who will be a pleasant lad if he had a little polish. I was glad of the society, as I had rather felt the besoin de parler, which was perhaps one cause of my recent dumps. Scrope and Colonel Russell stayed all night; the rest went home.

March 22. — Had a packet from James — low about the novel; but I had another from Cadell equally uppish. He proposes for three novels in eighteen months, which would be £12,600. Well, I like the bookseller's predictions better than the printer's. Neither are bad judges; but James, who is the best, is not sensible of historical descriptions, and likes your novel style out and out.

Cadell's letter also contained a state of cash matters, since much improved. I will arrange them a day or two hence. I wrote to-day and took a long walk. The thought more than once passed over me, Why go to London? I shall but throw away £150 or £200 which were better saved. Then on the other hand, it is such a gratification to see all the children that I must be tempted. If I were alone, I could scrub it, but there's no doing that with Anne.

March 23. — I wrought regularly till one, and then took the wood and marked out to Tom the places I would have thinned, particularly at the Carlin's hole, which will require much thinning. I had a letter from Cadell stating that 3000 Tales of a Grandfather must go to press, bringing a return to me of £240, the price being £80 per thousand. This is snug enough, and will prettily cover my London journey, and I really think ought in fairness to silence my prudential remorse. With my usual delight in catching an apology for escaping the regular task of the day, I threw by the novel of St. Valentine's Eve and began to run through and correct the Grandfather's Tales for the press. If I live to finish them, they will be a good thing for my younger children. If I work to the amount of £10,000 a year for the creditors, I think I may gain a few hundreds for my own family at by-hours.

March 24. — Sent copy and proof to J.B. I continued my revision of the Tales of a Grandfather till halfpast one. Then went to Torwoodlee to wait on George Pringle and his bride. We did not see the young people, but the old Laird and Miss Pringle gave us a warm reception, and seemed very happy on the occasion. We had friends to dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Theobald, Charles Kerr and his wife, my old acquaintance Magdalen Hepburn, whose whole [kin] was known to me and mine. I have now seen the fifth generation of the family in Mrs. Kerr's little girl, who travels with them. Well — I partly wish we had been alone. Yet it is perhaps better. We made our day out tolerably well, having the advantage of Mr. Davidoff and his friend Mr. Collyer to assist us.

March 25. — Mr. and Mrs. Kerr left us, Mr. Davidoff and Mr. Collyer also. Mr. Davidoff showed himself a good deal affected. I hope well of this young nobleman, and trust the result will justify my expectations, but it may be doubted if his happiness be well considered by those who send a young person, destined to spend his life under a despotic government, to receive the ideas and opinions of such a people as we are:

> "where ignorance is bliss,
> 'Tis folly to be wise."

We drove as far as Yair with Mr. and Mrs. Theobald. The lady read after dinner — and read well.

March 26. — The Theobalds left us, giving me time to work a little. A walk of two hours diversified my day. I received Cadell's scheme for the new edition. I fear the trustees will think Cadell's plan expensive in the execution. Yet he is right; for, to ensure a return of speedy sale, the new edition should be both handsome and cheap. He proposes size a Royal 12mo, with a capital engraving to each volume from a design by the best artists. This infers a monstrous expense, but in the present humour of the public ensures the sale. The price will be 5s. per volume, and the whole set, 32 volumes, from Waverley to Woodstock included, will be £8.

March 27. — This also was a day of labour, affording only my usual interval of a walk. Five or six sheets was the result. We now appropinque an

end. My story has unhappily a divided interest; there are three distinct strands of the rope, and they are not well twisted together. “Ah, Sirs, a foul fawt,” as Captain Tommy says.

March 28. — The days have little to distinguish each other, very little. The morning study, the noontide walk, all monotonous and inclined to be melancholy; God help me! But I have not had any nervous attack. Read Tales of an Antiquary, one of the chime of bells which I have some hand in setting aringing. He is really entitled to the name of an antiquary; but he has too much description in proportion to the action. There is a capital wardrobe of properties, but the performers do not act up to their character.

March 29. — Finished volume third this morning. I have let no grass grow beneath my heels this bout.

Mr. Cadell with J. and A. Ballantyne came to dinner. Mr. and Mrs. George Pringle, new married, dined with us and old Torwoodlee. Sandy’s music made the evening go sweetly down.

March 30. — A long discourse with Cadell, canvassing his scheme. He proposes I should go on immediately with the new novel. This will furnish a fund from which may be supplied the advances necessary for the new work, which are considerable, and may reach from £4000 to £8000 — the last sum quite improbable — before it makes returns. Thus we can face the expenditure necessary to set on foot our great work. I have written to recommend the plan to John Gibson. This theme renewed from time to time during the forenoon. Dr. Clarkson dined with us. We smoked and had whisky and water after.

March 31. — The Ballantynes and Cadell left us in high spirits, expecting much from the new undertaking, and I believe they are not wrong. As for me, I became torpid after a great influx of morning visitors.

> “I grew vapourish and odd,
> And would not do the least right thing,
> Neither for goddess nor for god —
> Nor paint nor jest nor laugh, nor sing.”

I was quite reluctant to write letters, or do anything whatsoever, and yet I should surely write to Sir Cuthbert Sharp and Surtees. We dined alone. I was main stupid, indeed, and much disposed to sleep, though my dinner was very moderate.

April

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April 1. — All Fools' day, the only Saint that keeps up some degree of credit in the world; for fools we are with a vengeance. On this memorable festival we played the fool with great decorum at Colonel Ferguson's, going to visit them in a cold morning. In the evening I had a distressing letter from Mrs. MacBarnet, or some such name, the daughter of Captain Macpherson, smothered in a great snow storm. They are very angry at the Review for telling a raw-head and bloody bones story about him. I have given the right version of the tale willingly, but this does not satisfy. I almost wish they would turn out a clansman to be free of the cumber. The vexation of having to do with ladies, who on such a point must be unreasonable, is very great. With a man it would be soon ended or mended. It really hurts my sleep.

April 2. — I wrote the lady as civilly as I could, explaining why I made no further apology, which may do some good. Then a cursed morning of putting to rights, which drives me wellnigh mad. At two or three I must go to a funeral — a happy and interesting relief from my employment. It is a man I am sorry for, who married my old servant, Bell Ormiston. He was an excellent person in his way, and a capital mason — a great curler.

April 3. — Set off at eight o'clock, and fought forward to Carlisle — a sad place in my domestic remembrances, since here I married my poor Charlotte. She is gone, and I am following faster, perhaps, than I wot of. It is something to have lived and loved; and our poor children are so hopeful and affectionate, that it chastens the sadness attending the thoughts of our separation. We slept at Carlisle. I have not forgiven them for destroying their quiet old walls, and building two lumpy things like madhouses. The old gates had such a respectable appearance once,

> "When Scotsmen's heads did guard the wall."

Come, I'll write down the whole stanza, which is all that was known to exist of David Hume's poetry, as it was written on a pane of glass in the inn:

—

> “Here chicks in eggs for breakfast sprawl,
> Here godless boys God’s glories squall,
> Here Scotsmen’s heads do guard the wall,
> But Corby’s walks atone for all.”

The poetical works of David Hume, Esq., might, as bookmakers know now, be driven out to a handsome quarto. Line 1st admits of a descant upon eggs roasted, boiled or poached; 2d, a history of Carlisle Cathedral with some reasons why the choir there has been proverbially execrable; 3d, the whole history of 1745 with minute memoirs of such as mounted guard on the Scotch gate. I remember the spikes the heads stood upon; lastly, a description of Corby Castle with a plan, and the genealogy of the Howards. Gad, the booksellers would give me £500 for it. I have a mind to print it for the Bannatynians.

April 4. — In our stage to Penrith I introduced Anne to the ancient Petreia, called Old Penrith, and also to the grave of Sir Ewain Cæsarias, that knight with the puzzling name, which has got more indistinct. We breakfasted at Buchanan’s Inn, Penrith, one of the best on the road, and a fine stanch fellow owned it. He refused passage to some of the delegates who traversed the country during the Radical row, and when the worthies threatened him with popular vengeance, answered gallantly that he had not lived so long by the Crown to desert it at a pinch. The Crown is the sign of his inn. Slept at Garstang, an indifferent house. As a petty grievance, my ink-holder broke loose in the case, and spilt some of the ink on Anne’s pelisse. Misfortunes seldom come single. “‘Tis not alone the inky cloak, good daughter,” but I forgot at Garstang my two breastpins; one with Walter and Jane’s hair, another a harp of pure Irish gold, the gift of the ladies of Llangollen.

April 5. — Breakfasted at Chorley, and slept at Leek. We were in the neighbourhood of some fine rock-scenery, but the day was unfavourable; besides, I did not come from Scotland to see rocks, I trow.

April 6. — Easter Sunday. We breakfasted at Ashbourne and went from thence to Derby; and set off from thence to Drycot Hall (five miles) to visit Hugh Scott. But honest Hugh was, like ourselves, on the ramble; so we had

nothing to do but to drive back to Derby, and from thence to Tamworth, where we slept.

April 7. — We visited the Castle in the morning. It is inhabited by a brother-in-law of the proprietor; and who is the proprietor? "Why, Mr. Robbins," said the fat housekeeper. This was not a name quite according with the fine chivalrous old hall, in which there was no small quantity of armour, and odds and ends, which I would have been glad to possess. "Well, but madam, before Mr. Robbins bought the place, who was the proprietor?" "Lord Charles Townshend, sir." This would not do neither; but a genealogy hanging above the chimneypiece informed me that the Ferrars were the ancient possessors of the mansion, which, indeed, the horseshoes in the shield over the Castle gate might have intimated. Tamworth is a fine old place, neglected, but, therefore, more like hoar antiquity. The keep is round. The apartments appear to have been modernised tempore Jac. Imi*. There was a fine demipique saddle, said to have been that of James II. The pommel rose, and finished off in the form of a swan's crest, capital for a bad horseman to hold on by.

To show Anne what was well worth seeing, we visited Kenilworth. The relentless rain only allowed us a glimpse of this memorable ruin. Well, the last time I was here, in 1815, these trophies of time were quite neglected. Now they approach so much nearer the splendour of Thunder-ten-tronckh, as to have a door at least, if not windows. They are, in short, preserved and protected. So much for the novels. I observed decent children begging here, a thing uncommon in England: and I recollect the same unseemly practice formerly.

We went to Warwick Castle. The neighbourhood of Leamington, a watering-place of some celebrity, has obliged the family to decline showing the Castle after ten o'clock. I tried the virtue of an old acquaintance with Lord Warwick and wrote to him, he being in the Courthouse where the assizes were sitting. After some delay we were admitted, and I found my old friend Mrs. Hume, in the most perfect preservation, though, as she tells me, now eighty-eight. She went through her duty wonderfully, though now and then she complained of her memory. She has laid aside a mass of black plumes which she wore on her head, and which resembled the casque in the Castle of Otranto. Warwick Castle is still the noblest sight in England. Lord and Lady Warwick came home from the Court, and received us most kindly.

We lunched with them, but declined further hospitality. When I was last here, and for many years before, the unfortunate circumstances of the late Lord W. threw an air of neglect about everything. I believe the fine collection of pictures would have been sold by distress, if Mrs. Hume, my friend, had not redeemed them at her own cost. I was pleased to see Lord Warwick show my old friend kindness and attention. We visited the monuments of the Nevilles and Beauchamps, names which make the heart thrill. The monuments are highly preserved. We concluded the day at Stratford-upon-Avon.

April 8. — We visited the tomb of the mighty wizard. It is in the bad taste of James the First's reign; but what a magic does the locality possess! There are stately monuments of forgotten families; but when you have seen Shakspeare's what care we for the rest. All around is Shakspeare's exclusive property. I noticed the monument of his friend John a Combe immortalised as drawing forth a brief satirical notice of four lines.

After breakfast I asked after Mrs. Ormsby, the old mad woman who was for some time tenant of Shakspeare's house, and conceived herself to be descended from the immortal poet. I learned she was dying. I thought to send her a sovereign; but this extension of our tour has left me no more than will carry me through my journey, and I do not like to run short upon the road. So I take credit for my good intention, and — keep my sovereign — a cheap and not unusual mode of giving charity.

Learning from Washington Irving's description of Stratford that the hall of Sir Thomas Lucy, the justice who rendered Warwickshire too hot for Shakspeare, and drove him to London, was still extant, we went in quest of it.

Charlcote is in high preservation, and inhabited by Mr. Lucy, descendant of the worshipful Sir Thomas. The Hall is about three hundred years old, an old brick structure with a gatehouse in advance. It is surrounded by venerable oaks, realising the imagery which Shakspeare loved so well to dwell upon; rich verdant pastures extend on every side, and numerous herds of deer were reposing in the shade. All showed that the Lucy family had retained their "land and beeves." While we were surveying the antlered old hall, with its painted glass and family pictures, Mr. Lucy came to welcome us in person, and to show the house, with the collection of

paintings, which seems valuable, and to which he had made many valuable additions.

He told me the park from which Shakspeare stole the buck was not that which surrounds Charlcote, but belonged to a mansion at some distance where Sir Thomas Lucy resided at the time of the trespass. The tradition went that they hid the buck in a barn, part of which was standing a few years ago, but now totally decayed. This park no longer belongs to the Lucys. The house bears no marks of decay, but seems the abode of ease and opulence. There were some fine old books, and I was told of many more which were not in order. How odd if a folio Shakspeare should be found amongst them! Our early breakfast did not prevent my taking advantage of an excellent repast offered by the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Lucy, the last a lively Welshwoman. This visit gave me great pleasure; it really brought Justice Shallow freshly before my eyes; the luces in his arms "which do become an old coat well" were not more plainly portrayed in his own armorials in the hall-window than was his person in my mind's eye. There is a picture shown as that of the old Sir Thomas, but Mr. Lucy conjectures it represents his son. There were three descents of the same name of Thomas. The party hath "the eye severe, and beard of formal cut," which fills up with judicial austerity the otherwise social physiognomy of the worshipful presence, with his "fair round belly with fat capon lined."

We resumed our journey. I may mention among the pictures at Charlcote one called a Roman Knight, which seemed to me very fine; Teniers' marriage, in which, contrary to the painter's wont, only persons of distinction are represented, but much in the attitude in which he delights to present his boors; two hawking pieces by Wouvermans, very fine specimens, cum aliis.

We took our way by Edgehill, and looked over the splendid richness of the fine prospect from a sort of gazeeboo or modern antique tower, the place of a Mr. Miller. It is not easy to conceive a richer and more peaceful scene than that which stretched before us, and [one with which] strife, or the memory of strife, seems to have nothing to do.

> "But man records his own disgrace,
> And Edgehill lives in history."

We got on to Buckingham, an ugly though I suppose an ancient town. Thence to Aylesbury through the wealth of England, in the scene of the old

ballad —

> "Neither drunk nor sober, but neighbour to both,
> I met with a man in Aylesbury vale;
> I saw by his face that he was in good case,
> To speak no great harm of a pot of good ale."

We slept at Aylesbury. The landlord, who seemed sensible, told me that the land round the town, being the richest in England, lets at £3, or £3, 10s. and some so high as £4 per acre. But the poor-rates are 13s. to the pound. Now, my Whitehaugh at Huntly Burn yielded at last set £4 per acre.

April 9, [London], — We got to town about mid-day, and found Sophia, Lockhart, and the babies quite well — delighted with their companion Charles, and he enchanted with his occupation in the Foreign Office. I looked into my cash and found £53 had diminished on the journey down to about £3. In former days a journey to London cost about £30 or thirty guineas. It may now cost onefourth more. But I own I like to pay postilions and waiters rather more liberally than perhaps is right. I hate grumbling and sour faces; and the whole saving will not exceed a guinea or two for being cursed and damned from Dan to Beersheba. We had a joyful meeting, I promise you.

April 10. — I spent the morning in bringing up my journal; interrupted by two of these most sedulous visitants who had objects of their own to serve, and smelled out my arrival as the raven scents carrion — a vile comparison, though what better is an old fellow, mauled with rheumatism and other deplorables? Went out at two and saw Miss Dumergue and other old friends; Sotheby in particular, less changed than any one I have seen. Looked in at Murray's and renewed old habits. This great city seems almost a waste to me, so many of my friends are gone; Walter and Jane coming up, the whole family dined together, and were very happy. The children joined in our festivity. My name-son, a bright and blue-eyed rogue, with flaxen hair, screams and laughs like an April morning; and the baby is that species of dough which is called a fine baby. I care not for children till they care a little for me.

April 11. — Made calls, walked myself tired; saw Rogers, Sharp, Sotheby, and other old friends.

April 12. — Dinner at home; a little party of Sophia's in the evening. Sharp told me that one evening being at Sheridan's house with a large party, Tom S. came to him as the night drew late, and said in a whisper, "I advise you to secure a wax-light to go to bed with," shewing him at the same time a morsel which he had stolen from a sconce. Sharp followed his advice, and had reason to be thankful for the hint. Tired and sleepy, I make a bad night watcher.

April 13. — Amused myself by converting the Tale of the Mysterious Mirror into Aunt Margaret's Mirror, designed for Heath's what-dye-call-it. Cadell will not like this, but I cannot afford to have my goods thrown back upon my hands. The tale is a good one, and is said actually to have happened to Lady Primrose, my great-grandmother having attended her sister on the occasion. Dined with Miss Dumergue. My proofs from Edinburgh reached to-day and occupied me all the morning.

April 14. Laboured at proofs and got them sent off, per Mr. Freeling's cover. So there's an end of the Chronicles. James rejoices in the conclusion, where there is battle and homicide of all kinds. Always politic to keep a trot for the avenue, like the Irish postilions. J.B. always calls to the boys to flog before the carriage gets out of the innyard. How we have driven the stage I know not and care not — except with a view to extricating my difficulties. I have lost no time in beginning the second series of Grandfather's Tales, being determined to write as much as I can even here, and deserve by industry the soft pillow I sleep on for the moment.

There is a good scene supposed to have happened between Sam Rogers and a lady of fashion — the reporter, Lord Dudley. Sam enters, takes a stool, creeps close to the lady's side, who asks his opinion of the last new poem or novel. In a pathetic voice the spectre replies — "My opinion? I like it very much — but the world don't like it; but, indeed, I begin to think the world wrong in everything, except with regard to you." Now, Rogers either must have said this somewhere, or he has it yet to say. We dined at Lord Melville's.

April 15. — Got the lamentable news that Terry is totally bankrupt. This is a most unexpected blow, though his carelessness about money matters was very great. God help the poor fellow! he has been ill-advised to go abroad,

but now returns to stand the storm — old debts, it seems, with principal and interest accumulated, and all the items which load a falling man. And wife such a good and kind creature, and children. Alack! alack! I sought out his solicitor. There are £7000 or more to pay, and the only fund his share in the Adelphi Theatre, worth £5000 and upwards, and then so fine a chance of independence lost. That comes of not being explicit with his affairs. The theatre was a most flourishing concern. I looked at the books, and since have seen Yates. The ruin is inevitable, but I think they will not keep him in prison, but let him earn his bread by his very considerable talents. I shall lose the whole or part of £500 which I lent him, but that is the least of my concern. I hope the theatre is quite good for guaranteeing certain payments in 1829 and 1830. I judge they are in no danger.

I should have gone to the Club to-day, but Sir James Mackintosh had mistaken the day. I was glad of it, so stayed at home.

It is written that nothing shall flourish under my shadow — the Ballantynes, Terry, Nelson, Weber, all came to distress. Nature has written on my brow, "Your shade shall be broad, but there shall be no protection derived from it to aught you favour."

Sat and smoked and grumbled with Lockhart.

April 16. — We dined at Dr. Young's; saw Captain Parry, a handsome and pleasant man. In the evening at Mr. Cunliffe's, where I met sundry old friends — grown older.

April 17. — Made up my "Gurnal," which had fallen something behind. In this phantasmagorial place the objects of the day come and depart like shadows. Made calls. Gave [C.K.] Sharpe's memorial to Lord Leveson Gower. Went to Murray's, where I met a Mr. Jacob, a great economist. He is proposing a mode of supporting the poor, by compelling them to labour by military force, and under a species of military discipline. I see no objection to it, only it will make a rebellion to a certainty; and the tribes of Jacob will certainly cut Jacob's throat.

Canning's conversion from popular opinions was strangely brought round. While he was studying at the Temple, and rather entertaining revolutionary opinions, Godwin sent to say that he was coming to breakfast with him, to speak on a subject of the highest importance. Canning knew little of him, but received his visit, and learned to his astonishment, that in

expectation of a new order of things, the English Jacobins desired to place him, Canning, at the head of their expected revolution. He was much struck, and asked time to think what course he should take — and, having thought the matter over, he went to Mr. Pitt and made the Anti-Jacobin confession of faith, in which he persevered until — — . Canning himself mentioned this to Sir W. Knighton, upon occasion of giving a place in the Charterhouse, of some ten pounds a year, to Godwin's brother. He could scarce do less for one who had offered him the dictator's curule chair.

Dined with Rogers with all my own family, and met Sharp, Lord John Russell, Jekyll, and others. The conversation flagged as usual, and jokes were fired like minute guns, producing an effect not much less melancholy, — a wit should always have an atmosphere congenial to him, otherwise he will not shine. Went to Lady Davy's, where I saw the kind face, and heard the no less friendly greeting, of Lady Selkirk, who introduced all her children to me.

April 18. — Breakfasted with Joanna Baillie, and found that gifted person extremely well, and in the display of all her native knowledge of character and benevolence. She looks more aged, however. I would give as much to have a capital picture of her as for any portrait in the world. She gave me a manuscript play to read upon Witchcraft. Dined with the Dean of Chester, Dr. Phillpotts.

> "Where all above us was a solemn row
> Of priest and deacons, so were all below."

There were the amiable Bishop of London (Howley), Coplestone, whom I remember a first man at Oxford, now Bishop of Llandaff, the Dean of St. Paul's, and other dignitaries of whom I knew less. It was a very pleasant day — the wigs against the wits for a guinea in point of conversation. Anne looked queer, and much disposed to laugh at finding herself placed betwixt two prelates [in black petticoats].

April 19. — Breakfasted with Sir George Philips. Had his receipt against the blossoms being injured by frost. It consists in watering them plentifully before sunrise. This is like the mode of thawing beef. We had a pleasant morning, much the better that Morritt was with us. He has agreed to go to Hampton Court with us tomorrow.

Mr. Reynolds called on me about the drawing of the Laird's Jock; he is assiduous and attentive, but a little forward. Poor Gillies also called. Both asked me to dinner, but I refused. I do not incline to make what is called literary acquaintances; and as for poor G., it is wild to talk about his giving dinner to others, when he can hardly get credit for his own.

Dined with Sir Robert Henry Inglis, and met Sir Thomas

Acland, my old and kind friend. I was happy to see him. He may be considered now as the head of the religious party in the House of Commons, a powerful body which Wilberforce long commanded. It is a difficult situation; for the adaptation of religious motives to earthly policy is apt — among the infinite delusions of the human heart — to be a snare. But I could confide much in Sir T. Acland's honour and integrity. Bishop Blomfield [of Chester], one of the most learned prelates of the church, also dined.

Coming home, an Irish coachman drove us into a cul de sac, near Battersea Bridge. We were obliged to get out in the rain. The people admitted us into their houses, where they were having their bit of supper, assisted with lights, etc., and, to the honour of London, neither asked nor expected gratification.

April 20. — We went to Walter's quarters in a body, and saw Hampton Court, with which I was more struck than when I saw it for the first time, about 1806. The pictures are not very excellent, but they are curious, which is as interesting, except to connoisseurs. Two I particularly remarked, of James I. and Charles I. eating in public. The old part of the palace, built by Wolsey, is extremely fine. Two handsome halls are still preserved: one, the ceiling of which is garnished, at the crossing and combining of the arches, with the recurring heads of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn — great stinginess in Henry, for these ornaments must have been put up after Wolsey's fall. He could surely afford a diversity of this species of ornament if any man could. Formerly, when the palace was completely a fishing-house, it extended into, or rather over, the river. We had a good dinner from Walter, and wended merrily home.

April 21. — Dining is the principal act of the day in London. We took ours at Kensington with Croker. There were Theodore Hook and other witty

men. He looks unhealthy and bloated. There was something, I know not what, awanting to the cheerfulness of the party. And

> "Silence like a heavy cloud,
> O'er all the warriors hung."

If the general report of Croker's retiring be accurate, it may account for this.

April 22. — Sophia left this to take down poor Johnnie to Brighton. I fear — I fear — but we must hope the best. Anne went with her sister.

Lockhart and I dined with Sotheby, where we met a large dining party, the orator of which was that extraordinary man Coleridge. After eating a hearty dinner, during which he spoke not a word, he began a most learned harangue on the Samothracian Mysteries, which he considered as affording the germ of all tales about fairies past, present, and to come. He then diverged to Homer, whose Iliad he considered as a collection of poems by different authors, at different times during a century. There was, he said, the individuality of an age, but not of a country. Morritt, a zealous worshipper of the old bard, was incensed at a system which would turn him into a polytheist, gave battle with keenness, and was joined by Sotheby, our host. Mr. Coleridge behaved with the utmost complaisance and temper, but relaxed not from his exertions. "Zounds! I was never so bethumped with words." Morritt's impatience; must have cost him an extra sixpence worth of snuff.

We went to Lady Davy's in the evening, where there was a fashionable party.

April 23. — - Dined at Lady Davy's with Lord and Lady Lansdowne, and several other fashionable folks. My keys were sent to Bramah's with my desk, so I have not had the means of putting matters down regularly for several days; but who cares for the whipp'd cream of London society? Our poor little Johnnie is extremely ill. My fears have been uniform for this engaging child. We are in God's hands. But the comfortable and happy object of my journey is ended, — Seged, Emperor of Ethiopia, was right after all.

April 24. — Spent the day in rectifying a road bill which drew a turnpike road through all the Darnickers' cottages, and a good field of my own. I got

it put to rights. I was in some apprehension of being obliged to address the Committee. I did not fear them, for I suppose they are no wiser or better in their capacity of legislators than I find them every day at dinner. But I feared for my reputation. They would have expected something better than the occasion demanded, or the individual could produce, and there would have been a failure.

April 25. — Threatened to be carried down to vote at the election of a Collector of the Cess. Resolved if I did go to carry my son with me, which would give me a double vote.

Had some disagreeable correspondence about this with Lord Minto and the Sheriff.

We had one or two persons at home in great wretchedness to dinner. Lockhart's looks showed the misery he felt. I was not able to make any fight, and the evening went off as heavily as any I ever spent in the course of my life.

Finished my Turnpike business by getting the exceptionable clauses omitted, which would be good news to Darnick. Put all the Mirror in proof and corrected it. This is the contribution (part of it) to Mr. Reynolds' and Heath's Keepsake. We dined at Richardson's with the two chief Barons of England and Scotland. Odd enough, the one being a Scotsman and the other an Englishman. Far the pleasantest day we have had; I suppose I am partial, but I think the lawyers beat the bishops, and the bishops beat the wits.

April 26. — This morning I went to meet a remarkable man, Mr. Boyd of the house of Boyd, Benfield & Co., which broke for a very large sum at the beginning of the war. Benfield went to the devil, I believe. Boyd, a man of a very different stamp, went over to Paris to look after some large claims which his house had over the French Government. They were such as it seems they could not disavow, however they might be disposed to do so. But they used every effort, by foul means and fair, to induce Mr. Boyd to depart. He was reduced to poverty; he was thrown into prison; and the most flattering prospects were, on the other hand, held out to him if he would compromise his claims. His answer was uniform. It was the property, he said, of his creditors, and he would die ere he resigned it. His distresses were so great that a subscription was made among his Scottish friends, to which I was a contributor, through the request of poor Will Erskine. After

the peace of Paris the money was restored, and, faithful to the last, Boyd laid the whole at his creditors' disposal; stating, at the same time, that he was penniless unless they consented to allow him a moderate sum in name of percentage, in consideration of twenty years of danger, poverty, and [exile], all of which evils he might have escaped by surrendering their right to the money. Will it be believed that a muck-worm was base enough to refuse his consent to this deduction, alleging he had promised to his father, on his deathbed, never to compromise this debt. The wretch, however, was overpowered by the execrations of all around him, and concurred, with others, in setting apart for Mr. Boyd a sum of £40,000 or £50,000 out of half a million of money. This is a man to whom statues should be erected, and pilgrims should go to see him. He is good-looking, but old and infirm. Bright dark eyes and eyebrows contrast with his snowy hair, and all his features mark vigour of principle and resolution. Mr. Morritt dined with us, and we did as well as in the circumstances could be expected.

Released from the alarm of being summoned down to the election by a civil letter from Lord Minto. I am glad both of the relief and of the manner. I hate civil war amongst neighbours.

April 27. — Breakfasted this day with Charles Dumergue on a poulet à la tartare, and saw all his family, specially my godson. Called on Lady Stafford and others, and dined at Croker's in the Admiralty, with the Duke of Wellington, Huskisson, Wilmot Horton, and others, outs and ins. No politics of course, and every man disguising serious thoughts with a light brow. The Duke alone seemed open, though not letting out a word. He is one of the few whose lips are worth watching. I heard him say to-day that the best troops would run now and then. He thought nothing of men running, he said, provided they came back again. In war he had always his reserves. Poor Terry was here when I returned. He seems to see his matters in a delusive light.

April 28. — An attack this day or yesterday from poor Gillies, boring me hard to apply to Menzies of Pitfoddels to entreat him to lend him money. I could not get him to understand that I was decidedly averse to write to another gentleman, with whom I was hardly acquainted, to do that which I would not do myself. Tom Campbell is in miserable distress — his son

insane — his wife on the point of becoming so. I nunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.

We, *i.e.* Charles and I, dined at Sir Francis Freeling's with Colonel Harrison of the Board of Green Cloth, Dr. [Maltby] of Lincoln's Inn, and other pleasant people. Doctor Dibdin too, and Utterson, all old Roxburghe men. Pleasant party, were it not for a bad cold, which makes me bark like a dog.

April 29. — Anne and Lockhart are off with the children this morning at seven, and Charles and I left behind; and this is the promised meeting of my household! I went to Dr. Gilly's to-day to breakfast. Met Sir Thomas Acland, who is the youngest man of his age I ever saw. I was so much annoyed with cough, that, on returning, I took to my bed and had a siesta, to my considerable refreshment. Dr. Fergusson called, and advised caution in eating and drinking, which I will attend to.

Dined accordingly. Duke of Sussex had cold and did not come. A Mr. or Dr. Pettigrew made me speeches on his account, and invited me to see his Royal Highness's library, which I am told is a fine one. Sir Peter Laurie, late Sheriff, and in nomination to be Lord Mayor, bored me close, and asked more questions than would have been thought warrantable at the west end of the town.

April 30. — We had Mr. Adolphus and his father, the celebrated lawyer, to breakfast, and I was greatly delighted with the information of the latter. A barrister of extended practice, if he has any talents at all, is the best companion in the world.

Dined with Lord Alvanley and a fashionable party, Lord Fitzroy Somerset, Marquis and Marchioness of Worcester, *etc.* Lord Alvanley's wit made the party very pleasant, as well as the kind reception of my friends the Misses Arden.

May

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May 1. — Breakfasted with Lord and Lady Leveson Gower, and enjoyed the splendid treat of hearing Mrs. Arkwright sing her own music, which is of the highest order — no forced vagaries of the voice, no caprices of tone, but all telling upon and increasing the feeling the words require. This is "marrying music to immortal verse." Most people place them on separate maintenance.

I met the Roxburghe Club, and settled to dine with them on 15th curt. Lord Spencer in the chair. We voted Lord Olive a member.

May 2. — I breakfasted with a Mr. Bell, Great Ormond Street, a lawyer, and narrowly escaped Mr. Irving, the celebrated preacher. The two ladies of the house seemed devoted to his opinions, and quoted him at every word. Mr. Bell himself made some apologies for the Millennium. He is a smart little antiquary, who thinks he ought to have been a man of letters, and that his genius has been misdirected in turning towards the law. I endeavoured to combat this idea, which his handsome house and fine family should have checked. Compare his dwelling, his comforts, with poor Tom Campbell's!

I dined with the Literary Society; rather heavy work, though some excellent men were there. I saw, for the first time, Archdeacon Nares, long conductor of the British Critic, a gentlemanlike and pleasing man. Sir Henry Robert Inglis presided.

May 3. — Breakfasted at my old friend Gally Knight's, with whom, in former days, I used to make little parties to see poor Monk Lewis. After breakfast I drove to Lee and Kennedy's, and commissioned seeds and flowers for about £10, including some specimens of the Corsican and other pines. Their collection is very splendid, but wants, I think, the neatness that I would have expected in the first nursery-garden in or near London. The essentials were admirably cared for. I saw one specimen of the Norfolk Island pine, the only one, young Lee said, which has been raised from all the seed that was sent home. It is not treated conformably to its dignity, for they cut the top off every year to prevent its growing out at the top of the

conservatory. Sure it were worth while to raise the house alongst with the plant.

Looked in at Murray's — wrote some letters, etc., and walked home with the Dean of Chester, who saw me to my own door. I had but a few minutes to dress, and go to the Royal Academy, to which I am attached in capacity of Professor of Antiquities. I was too late to see the paintings, but in perfect time to sit half-an-hour waiting for dinner, as the President, Sir Thomas Lawrence, expected a prince of the blood. He came not, but there were enough of grandees besides. Sir Thomas Lawrence did the honours very well, and compliments flew about like sugarplums at an Italian carnival. I had my share, and pleaded the immunities of a sinecurist for declining to answer.

After the dinner I went to Mrs. Scott of Harden, to see and be seen by her nieces, the Herbert ladies. I don't know how their part of the entertainment turned out, but I saw two or three pretty girls.

May 4. — I breakfasted this morning with Sir Coutts Trotter, and had some Scottish talk. Visited Cooper, who kindly undertook to make my inquiries in Lyons. I was at home afterwards for three hours, but too much tired to do the least right thing. The distances in London are so great that no exertions, excepting those which a bird might make, can contend with them. You return weary and exhausted, fitter for a siesta than anything else. In the evening I dined with Mr. Peel, a great Cabinet affair, and too dignified to be very amusing, though the landlord and the pretty landlady did all to make us easy.

May 5. — Breakfasted with Haydon, and sat for my head. I hope this artist is on his legs again. The King has given him a lift by buying his clever picture of the election in the Fleet prison, to which he is adding a second part, representing the chairing of the member at the moment it was interrupted by the entry of the guards. Haydon was once a great admirer and companion of the champions of the Cockney school, and is now disposed to renounce them and their opinions. To this kind of conversation I did not give much way. A painter should have nothing to do with politics. He is certainly a clever fellow, but somewhat too enthusiastic, which distress seems to have cured in some degree. His wife, a pretty woman, looked

happy to see me, and that is something. Yet it was very little I could do to help them.

Dined at Lord Bathurst's, in company with the Duke. There are better accounts of Johnnie. But, alas!

May 7. — Breakfasted with Lord Francis Gower, and again enjoyed the great pleasure of meeting Mrs. Arkwright, and hearing her sing. She is, I understand, quite a heaven-born genius, having scarce skill enough in music to write down the tunes she composes. I can easily believe this. There is a pedantry among great musicians that deprives their performances of much that is graceful and beautiful. It is the same in the other fine arts, where fashion always prefers cant and slang to nature and simplicity.

Dined at Mr. Watson Taylor's, where plate, etc., shone in great and somewhat ostentatious quantity. C[roker] was there, and very decisive and overbearing to a great degree. Strange so clever a fellow should let his wit outrun his judgment! In general, the English understand conversation well. There is that ready deference for the claims of every one who wishes to speak time about, and it is seldom now-a-days that "a la stoccata" carries it away thus.

I should have gone to the Duchess of Northumberland's to hear music tonight, but I felt completely fagged, and betook myself home to bed.

I learned a curious thing from Emily, Lady Londonderry, namely, that in feeding all animals with your hand, you should never wear a glove, which always affronts them. It is good authority for this peculiarity.

May 8. — Breakfasted at Somerset House with Davies Gilbert, the new preses of the Royal Society. Tea, coffee, and bread and butter, which is poor work. Certainly a slice of ham, a plate of shrimps, some broiled fish, or a mutton chop, would have been becoming so learned a body. I was most kindly received, however, by Dr. D. Gilbert, and a number of the members. I saw Sir John Sievwright — a singular personage; he told me his uniform plan was to support Ministers, but he always found himself voting in Opposition. I told him his deference to Ministers was like that of the Frenchman to the enemy, who, being at his mercy, asked for his life: — "Anything in my power excepting that, sir," said Monsieur. Sir John has made progress in teaching animals without severity or beating. I should have liked to have heard him on this topic.

Called at Northumberland House and saw the Duke. According to his report I lost much by not hearing the two rival nightingales, Sontag and Pasta, last night, but I care not for it.

Met Sir W. K[nighton], returned from the Continent. He gives me to understand I will be commanded for Sunday. Sir W.K. asked me to sit for him to Northcote, and to meet him there at one tomorrow. I cannot refuse this, but it is a great bore.

Dined with Mrs. Alexander of Ballochmyle, Lord and Lady Meath, who were kind to us in Ireland, and a Scottish party, — pleasant, from hearing the broad accents and honest thoughts of my native land. A large party in the evening. A gentleman came up to me and asked "if I had seen the 'Casket,' a curious work, the most beautiful, the most highly ornamented — and then the editor or editress — a female so interesting, — might he ask a very great favour," and out he pulled a piece of this pic-nic. I was really angry, and said for a subscription he might command me — for a contribution no; that I had given to a great many of these things last year, and finding the labour occupied some considerable portion of my time, I had done a considerable article for a single collection this year, taking a valuable consideration for it, and engaged not to support any other. This may be misrepresented, but I care not. Suppose this patron of the Muses gives five guineas to his distressed lady, he will think he does a great deal, yet takes fifty from me with the calmest air in the world, for the communication is worth that if it be worth anything. There is no equality in the proposal.

I saw to-day at Northumberland House, Bridge the jeweller, having and holding a George, richly ornamented with diamonds, being that which Queen Anne gave to the Duke of Marlborough, which his present representative pawned or sold, and which the present king bought and presented to the Duke of Wellington. His Grace seemed to think this interesting jewel was one of two which had been preserved since the first institution of that order. That, from the form and taste, I greatly doubt. Mr. Bridge put it again into his coat pocket, and walked through the street with £10,000 in his pocket. I wonder he is not hustled and robbed. I have sometimes envied rich citizens, but it was a mean and erroneous feeling. This man, who, I suppose, must be as rich as a Jew, had a shabby look in the Duke's presence, and seemed just a better sort of pedlar. Better be a poor gentleman after all.

May 9. — Grounds of Foote's farce of the Cozeners. Lady — — . A certain Mrs. Phipps audaciously set up in a fashionable quarter of the town as a person through whose influence, properly propitiated, favours and situations of importance might certainly be obtained — always for a consideration. She cheated many people, and maintained the trick for many months. One trick was to get the equipage of Lord North, and other persons of importance, to halt before her door as if the owners were within. With respect to most of them, this was effected by bribing the drivers. But a gentleman, who watched her closely, observed that Charles J. Fox actually left his carriage and went into the house, and this more than once. He was then, it must be noticed, in the Ministry. When Mrs. Phipps was blown up, this circumstance was recollected as deserving explanation, which Fox readily gave at Brooks's and elsewhere. It seems Mrs. Phipps had the art to persuade him that she had the disposal of what was then called a hyæna — that is, an heiress — an immense Jamaica heiress, in whom she was willing to give or sell her interest to Charles Fox. Without having perfect confidence in the obliging proposal, the great statesman thought the thing worth looking after, and became so earnest in it, that Mrs. Phipps was desirous to back out of it for fear of discovery. With this view she made confession one fine morning, with many professions of the deepest feelings, that the hyæna had proved a frail monster, and given birth to a girl or boy — no matter which. Even this did not make Charles quit chase of the hyæna. He intimated that if the cash was plenty and certain, the circumstance might be overlooked. Mrs. Phipps had nothing for it but to double the disgusting dose. "The poor child," she said, "was unfortunately of a mixed colour, somewhat tinged with the blood of Africa; no doubt Mr. Fox was himself very dark, and the circumstance might not draw attention," *etc. etc.* This singular anecdote was touched upon by Foote, and is the cause of introducing the negress into the Cozeners, though no express allusion to Charles Fox was admitted. Lady — — — tells me that, in her youth, the laugh was universal so soon as the black woman appeared. It is one of the numerous hits that will be lost to posterity. Jack Fuller, celebrated for his attempt on the Speaker's wig, told me he was editing Foote, but I think he has hardly taste enough. He told me Colman was to be his assistant.

Went down in the morning to Montagu House, where I found the Duke going out to suffer a recovery. I had some fancy to see the ceremony, but

more to get my breakfast, which I took at a coffeehouse at Charing Cross.

I sat to Northcote, who is to introduce himself in the same piece in the act of painting me, like some pictures of the Venetian school. The artist is an old man, low in stature, and bent with years — fourscore at least. But the eye is quick and the countenance noble. A pleasant companion, familiar with recollections of Sir Joshua, Samuel Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, *etc.* His account of the last confirms all that we have heard of his oddities.

Dined with Mr. Arbuthnot, where met Duke of Rutland, Lord and Lady Londonderry, *etc. etc.* Went to hear Mrs. Arkwright at Lady Charlotte Greville's. Lockhart came home to-day.

May 10. — Another long sitting to the old Wizard Northcote. He really resembles an animated mummy. He has altered my ideas of Sir Joshua Reynolds, whom, from the expressions used by Goldsmith, Johnson, and others, I used to think an amiable and benevolent character. But though not void of generosity, he was cold, unfeeling, and indifferent to his family: so much so that his sister, Miss Reynolds, after expressing her wonder at the general acceptance which Sir Joshua met with in society, concluded with, "For me, I only see in him a dark gloomy tyrant." I own this view of his character hurt me, by depriving me of the pleasing vision of the highest talents united with the kindest temper. But Northcote says his disagreeable points were rather negative than positive — more a want of feeling than any desire to hurt or tyrannise. They arose from his exclusive attachment to art.

Dined with a pleasant party at Lord Gower's. Lady Gower is a beautiful woman, and extremely courteous. Mrs. Arkwright was of the party. I am getting well acquainted with her, and think I can see a great deal of sense mixed with her accomplishment.

May 11. — Breakfasted with Dr. Maltby, preacher in Lincoln's Inn. He was to have been the next Bishop, if the Whigs had held their ground. His person, manners, and attainments would have suited the lawn sleeves well. I heard service in the chapel, which is a very handsome place of worship; it is upstairs, which seems extraordinary, and the space beneath forms cloisters, in which the ancient Benchers of this Society of Lincoln's Inn are entered. I met my old friend Sir William Grant, and had some conversation with him. Dr. Maltby gave us a good sermon upon the introduction of the Gospel. There was only one monument in the chapel, a handsome tablet to the

memory of Perceval. The circumstance that it was the only monument in the chapel of a society which had produced so many men of talents and distinction was striking — it was a tribute due to the suddenness of his strange catastrophe. There is nothing very particular in the hall of Lincoln's Inn, nor its parlour, which are like those of a college. Indeed the whole establishment has a monastic look.

Sat to Northcote, who only requires (Deo gratias) another sitting. Dined with his Majesty in a very private party — five or six only being present. I was received most kindly as usual. It is impossible to conceive a more friendly manner than his Majesty used towards me. I spoke to S.W.K. about the dedication of the collected works, and he says it will be highly well taken.

I went after the party broke up to Mrs. Scott of Harden, where I made acquaintance with her beautiful kinswoman, Lady Sarah Ponsonby, whose countenance is really seraphic and totally devoid of affectation.

May 12. — Old George II. was, as is well known, extremely passionate. On these occasions his small stock of English totally failed him, and he used to express his indignation in the following form: "G — d — n me, who I am? Got d — n you, who you be?" Lockhart and I visited a Mrs. Quillinan, with whom Wordsworth and his wife have pitched their tent. I was glad to see my old friend, whose conversation has so much that is fresh and manly in it. I do not at all acquiesce in his system of poetry, and I think he has injured his own fame by adhering to it. But a better or more sensible man I do not know than W.W.

Afterwards Lockhart and I called on Miss Nicolson, and from thence I wandered down into that immense hash of a city to see Heath, and fortunately caught hold on him. All this made me too late for Northcote, — who was placable, however.

Dined at Sir John Shelley's, à petit couvert. Here were the Duke of Wellington, Duke of Rutland, and only one or two more, particularly Mr. and Mrs. Arbuthnot. The evening was very pleasant, and did not break up till twelve at night.

May 13. — Breakfasted with Sir George Philips — there was Sydney Smith, full of fun and spirit, and his daughter, who is a good-humoured agreeable girl. We had a pleasant breakfast party.

The Catholics have carried their question, which I suppose will be thrown out in the Lords. I think they had better concede this oft-disputed point, and dissolve the league which binds so many people in opposition to Government. It is a matter of great consequence that men should not acquire the habit of opposing. No earthly advantage would arise to Ireland from ceding what is retained, where so much has been already yielded up. Indeed the Catholic gentry do not pretend that the granting the immunities they require would tranquillise the country, but only that it would remove from men of honour all pretext for countenancing them. This is on the principle of the solicitor of the unhappy Rajah Nuncomar, who after extorting as much money as he could, under pretence of bribing persons to procure his pardon, facilitate his escape, etc., found himself pressed by his victim for a final answer. "The preparations for death are ready," said the Rajah; "I fear, notwithstanding all you have told me, their intention is to take my life." "By G — d," replied the trusty solicitor, "if they do I will never forgive them." So if there are further disturbances after the Catholic claims are granted, I suppose those by whom they are now advocated will never forgive their friends the Pats; and that will be all John Bull will get for it. I dined with Lady Stafford, for whom I have much regard. I recollect her ever since she stood at her aunt Lady Glenorchy's window, in George Square, reviewing her regiment of Sutherland giants. She was, as she ever is, most attentive and kind.

May 14. — I carried Lockhart to Lady Francis Gower's to hear Mrs. Arkwright sing, and I think he admired her as much as his nature permits him to love anything musical, for he certainly is not quickly moved by concord of sweet sounds. I do not understand them better than he, but the voce del petto always affects me, and Mrs. A. has it in perfection. I have received as much pleasure from that lady's music as sound could ever give me. Lockhart goes off for Brighton. I had a round of men in office. I waited on the Duke at Downing St., and I think put L. right there, if he will look to himself. But I can only tee the ball; he must strike the blow with the golf club himself. I saw Mr. Renton, and he promised to look after Harper's business favourably. Good gracious, what a solicitor we are grown!

Dined with Lady Davy — a pleasant party; but I was out of spirits; I think partly on Johnnie's account, partly from fatigue. There was William Henry Lyttelton amongst others; much of his oddity has rubbed off, and he

is an honoured courtly gentleman, with a great deal of wit; and not one of the fine people who perplex you by shutting their mouths if you begin to speak. I never fear quizzing, so am not afraid of this species of lying-in-wait. Lord have mercy on me if I were!

May 15. — Dined at the Roxburghe Club. Lord Spencer presided, but had a cold which limited his exertions. Lord Clive, beside whom I sat, was deaf, though intelligent and good-humoured. The Duke of Devonshire was still deafer. There were many little chirruping men who might have talked but went into committee. There was little general conversation. I should have mentioned that I breakfasted with kind, good Mr. Hughes, and met the Bishop of Llandaff — strongly intelligent. I do not understand his politics about the Catholic question. He seems disposed to concede, yet is Toryissimus. Perhaps they wish the question ended, but the present opinions of the Sovereign are too much interested to permit them to quit it.

May 16. — Breakfasted with Mr. Reynolds; a miscellaneous party. Wordsworth, right welcome unto me was there. I had also a sight of Godwin the philosopher, grown old and thin — of Douglas Kinnaird, whom I asked about Byron's statue, which is going forward — of Luttrell, and others whom I knew not. I stayed an instant at Pickering's, a young publisher's, and bought some dramatic reprints. I love them very much, but I would [not] advise a young man to undertake them. They are of course dear, and as they have not the dignity of scarcity, the bibliomaniacs pass them by as if they were plated candlesticks. They may hold as good a light for all that as if they were real silver, and therefore I buy them when I can light on them. But here I am spending money when I have more need to make it. On Monday, the 26th, it shall be Northward ho!

Dined at Lady Georgiana and Mr. Agar Ellis's. There were Lord and Lady Stafford there, and others to whom I am sincerely attached.

May 17. — A day of busy idleness. Richardson came and breakfasted with me like a good fellow. Then I went to Mr. Chantrey, and sat for an hour to finish the bust. Thereafter, about twelve o'clock, I went to breakfast the second, at Lady Shelley's, where there was a great morning party. A young lady begged a lock of my hair, which was not worth refusing. I stipulated for a kiss, which I was permitted to take. From this I went to the Duke of

Wellington, who gave me some hints or rather details. Afterwards I drove out to Chiswick, where I had never been before. A numerous and gay party were assembled to walk and enjoy the beauties of that Palladian [dome?]; the place and highly ornamented gardens belonging to it resemble a picture of Watteau. There is some affectation in the picture, but in the ensemble the original looked very well. The Duke of Devonshire received every one with the best possible manners. The scene was dignified by the presence of an immense elephant, who, under charge of a groom, wandered up and down, giving an air of Asiatic pageantry to the entertainment. I was never before sensible of the dignity which largeness of size and freedom of movement give to this otherwise very ugly animal. As I was to dine at Holland House, I did not partake in the magnificent repast which was offered to us, and took myself off about five o'clock. I contrived to make a demi-toilette at Holland House rather than drive all the way to London. Rogers came to dinner, which was very entertaining. The Duke of Manchester was there, whom I remember having seen long ago. He had left a part of his brain in Jamaica by a terrible fracture, yet, notwithstanding the accident and the bad climate, was still a fine-looking man. Lady Holland pressed me to stay all night, which I did accordingly.

May 18. — The freshness of the air, the singing of the birds, the beautiful aspect of nature, the size of the venerable trees, all gave me a delightful feeling this morning. It seemed there was pleasure even in living and breathing, without anything else. We (i.e. Rogers and I) wandered into a green lane bordered with fine trees, which might have been twenty miles from a town. It will be a great pity when this ancient house must come down and give way to brick works and brick-houses. It is not that Holland House is fine as a building; on the contrary, it has a tumble-down look; and, although decorated with the bastard Gothic of James I.'s time, the front is heavy. But it resembles many respectable matrons, who, having been absolutely ugly during youth, acquire by age an air of dignity; — though one is chiefly affected by the air of deep seclusion which is spread around the domain. I called on Mr. Peel as I returned home, and after that on Lord Melville. The latter undertook for Allan Cunningham's son's cadetship, for which I am right glad.

Dined at Mr. and Lady Sarah Ponsonby's, who called on us last year at Abbotsford. The party was very pleasant, having Lord and Lady Gower,

whom I like, Mr. and Lady Georgiana Ellis, and other persons of distinction. Saw Wordsworth too, and learned that Tom Moore was come to town.

May 19. — A morning of business. Breakfasted with Dumergue and one or two friends. Dined by command with the Duchess of Kent. I was very kindly recognised by Prince Leopold. I was presented to the little Princess Victoria, — I hope they will change her name, — the heir apparent to the Crown as things now stand. How strange that so large and fine a family as that of his late Majesty should have died off and decayed into old age with so few descendants! Prince George of Cumberland is, they say, a fine boy about nine years old — a bit of a pickle, swears and romps like a brat that has been bred in a barrack yard. This little lady is educated with much care, and watched so closely by the Duchess and the principal governess, that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, "You are heir of England." I suspect if we could dissect the little head, we should find that some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter. She is fair, like the Royal Family, but does not look as if she would be pretty. The Duchess herself is very pleasing and affable in her manners. I sat by Mr. Spring Rice, a very agreeable man. He is a great leader among the Pro-Catholics. I saw also Charles Wynn and his lady — and the evening, for a Court evening, went agreeably off. I am commanded for two days by Prince Leopold, but will send excuses.

May 20. — I set out for Brighton this morning in a light coach, which performed the distance in six hours — otherwise the journey was uncomfortable. Three women, the very specimens of womankind, — I mean trumpery, — a child who was sick, but afterwards looked and smiled, and was the only thing like company. The road is pleasant enough till it gets into the Wealds of Sussex, a huge succession of green downs which sweep along the seacoast for many miles. Brighton seems grown twice as large since 1815. It is a city of loiterers and invalids — a Vanity Pair for pipers, dancing of bears, and for the feats of Mr. Punch. I found all my family well excepting the poor pale Johnnie; and he is really a thing to break one's heart by looking at — yet he is better. The rest are in high kelter.

My old friend Will Rose dined with us, also a Doctor Yates and his wife — the Esculapius of Brighton, who seems a sensible man. I was entertained

with the empire he exerted over him as protector of his health. I was very happy to find myself at Sophia's quiet table, and am only sorry that I must quit her so soon.

May 21. — This being a fine day, we made some visits in the morning, in the course of which I waited on Mrs. Davies, sister of Mrs. Charlotte Smith, and herself the author of the Peacock at Home, one of the prettiest and liveliest jeux d'esprit in our language. She is a fine stately old lady — not a bit of a literary person, — I mean having none of the affectation of it, but like a lady of considerable rank. I am glad I have seen her. Renewed my acquaintance with Lady Charlotte Hamilton, née Lady Charlotte Hume, and talked over some stories thirty years old at least. We then took a fly, as they call the light carriages, and drove as far as the Devil's Ditch. A rampart it is of great strength and depth, enclosing, I presume, the precincts of a British town that must have held 30,000 men at least. I could not discover where they got water.

We got home at four, and dined at five, and smoked cigars till eight. Will Rose came in with his man Hinvaes, who is as much a piece of Rose as Trim was of Uncle Toby. We laughed over tales "both old and new" till ten o'clock came, and then broke up.

May 22. — Left Brighton this morning with a heavy heart. Poor Johnnie looks so very poorly that I cannot but regard his case as desperate, and then God help the child's parents! Amen!

We took the whole of one of the post-coaches, and so came rapidly to town, Sophia coming along with us about a new servant. This enabled me to dine with Mr. Adolphus, the celebrated barrister, the father to my young friend who wrote so like a gentleman on my matters. I met Mr. Gurney, Archdeacon Wrangham, and a lawyer or two besides. I may be partial, but the conversation of intelligent barristers amuses me more than that of other professional persons. There is more of real life in it, with which, in all its phases, people of business get so well acquainted. Mr. Adolphus is a man of varied information, and very amusing. He told me a gipsy told him of the success he should have in life, and how it would be endangered by his own heat of temper, alluding, I believe, to a quarrel betwixt him and a brother barrister.

May 23. — I breakfasted with Chantrey, and met the celebrated Coke of Norfolk, a very pleasing man, who gave me some account of his plantations. I understand from him that, like every wise man, he planted land that would not let for 5s. per acre, but which now produces £3000 a year in wood. He talked of the trees which he had planted as being so thick that a man could not fathom them. Withers, he said, was never employed save upon one or two small jobs of about twenty acres on which every expense was bestowed with a view to early growth. So much for Withers. I shall have a rod in pickle for him if worth while. After sitting to Chantrey for the last time, I called on Lady Shelley, P.P.C., and was sorry to find her worse than she had been. Dined with Lady Stafford, where I met the two Lochs, John and James. The former gave me his promise for a cadetship to Allan Cunningham's son; I have a similar promise from Lord Melville, and thus I am in the situation in which I have been at Gladdies Wiel, where I have caught two trouts, one with the fly, the other with the bobber. I have landed both, and so I will now. Mr. Loch also promised me to get out Shortreed as a free mariner. Tom Grenville was at dinner.

May 24. — This day we dined at Richmond Park with Lord Sidmouth. Before dinner his Lordship showed me letters which passed between the great Lord Chatham and Dr. Addington, Lord Sidmouth's [father]. There was much of that familiar friendship which arises, and must arise, between an invalid, the head of an invalid family, and their medical adviser, supposing the last to be a wise and wellbred man. The character of Lord Chatham's handwriting is strong and bold, and his expressions short and manly. There are intimations of his partiality for William, whose health seems to have been precarious during boyhood. He talks of William imitating him in all he did, and calling for ale because his father was recommended to drink it. "If I should smoke," he said, "William would instantly call for a pipe;" and, he wisely infers, "I must take care what I do." The letters of the late William Pitt are of great curiosity, but as, like all real letters of business, they only allude to matters with which his correspondent is well acquainted, and do not enter into details, they would require an ample commentary. I hope Lord Sidmouth will supply this, and have urged it as much as I can. I think, though I hate letters and abominate interference, I will write to him on this subject.

I have bought a certain quantity of reprints from a bookseller in Chancery Lane, Pickering by name. I urged him to print the controversy between Greene and the Harveys. He wished me to write a third part to a fine edition of Cotton's Angler, for which I am quite incompetent.

I met at Richmond my old and much esteemed friend Lord Stowell, looking very frail and even comatose. Quantum mutatus! He was one of the pleasantest men I ever knew.

Respecting the letters, I picked up from those of Pitt that he was always extremely desirous of peace with France, and even reckoned upon it at a moment when he ought to have despaired. I suspect this false view of the state of France (for such it was), which induced the British Minister to look for peace when there was no chance of it, damped his ardour in maintaining the war. He wanted the lofty ideas of his father — you read it in his handwriting, great statesman as he was. I saw a letter or two of Burke's in which there is an épanchement du cœur not visible in those of Pitt, who writes like a Premier to his colleague. Burke was under the strange hallucination that his son, who predeceased him, was a man of greater talents than himself. On the contrary, he had little talent and no resolution. On moving some resolutions in favour of the Catholics, which were ill-received by the House of Commons, young Burke actually ran away, which an Orangeman compared to a cross-reading in the newspapers: — Yesterday the Catholic resolutions were moved, etc., but, the pistol missing fire, the villains ran off!

May 25. — After a morning of letter-writing, leave-taking, papers destroying, and God knows what trumpery, Sophia and I set out for Hampton Court, carrying with us the following lions and lionesses — Samuel Rogers, Tom Moore, Wordsworth, with wife and daughter. We were very kindly and properly received by Walter and his wife, and a very pleasant party.

May 26. — An awful confusion with paying of bills, writing of cards, and all species of trumpery business. Southey, who is just come to town, breakfasted with us. He looks, I think, but poorly, but it may be owing to family misfortune. One is always tempted to compare Wordsworth and Southey. The latter is unquestionably the greater scholar — I mean possesses the most extensive stock of information, but there is a freshness,

vivacity, and spring about Wordsworth's mind, which, if we may compare two men of uncommon powers, shows more originality. I say nothing of their poetry. Wordsworth has a system which disposes him to take the bull by the horns and offend public taste, which, right or wrong, will always be the taste of the public; yet he could be popular if he would, — witness the Feast at Brougham Castle, — Song of the Cliffords, I think, is the name.

I walked down to call, with Rogers, on Mrs. D'Arblay. She showed me some notes which she was making about her novels, which she induced me to believe had been recollected and jotted down in compliance with my suggestions on a former occasion. It is curious how she contrived to get Evelina printed and published without her father's knowledge. Her brother placed it in the hands of one Lowndes, who, after its success, bought it for £20!!! and had the magnanimity to add £10 — the price, I think, of Paradise Lost. One of her sisters betrayed the secret to her father, who then eagerly lent his ears to hear what was said of the new novel, and the first opinion which saluted his delighted ears was the voice of Johnson energetically recommending it to the perusal of Mrs Thrale.

At parting, Rogers gave me a gold-mounted pair of glasses, which I will not part with in a hurry. I really like Rogers, and have always found him most friendly. After many petty delays we set off at last and reached Bushy Grove to dine with my kind and worthy family friend and relative, David Haliburton. I am delighted to find him in all the enjoyment of life, with the vivacity of youth in his sentiments and enjoyments. Mr. and Mrs. Campbell Marjoribanks are the only company here, with Miss Parker.

May 27. — Well, my retreat from London is now accomplished, and I may fairly balance the advantage and loss of this London trip. It has cost me a good deal of money, and Johnnie's illness has taken away much of the pleasure I had promised myself. But if I can judge from the reception I have met with, I have the pleasure to know that I stand as fair with the public, and as high with my personal friends, as in any period of my life. And this has enabled me to forward the following objects to myself and others: —

1st. I have been able to place Lockhart on the right footing in the right quarter, leaving the improvement of his place of vantage to himself as circumstances should occur.

2d. I have put the Chancery suit in the right train, which without me could not have been done.

3d. I picked up some knowledge of the state of existing matters, which is interesting and may be useful.

4th. I have succeeded in helping to get a commission for James Skene.

5th. I have got two cadetships for the sons of Allan Cunningham.

6th. I have got leave to Andrew Shortreed to go out to India.

7th. I have put John Eckford into correspondence with Mr. Loch, who thinks he can do something for his claim.

8th. I have been of material assistance to poor Terry in his affairs.

9th. I have effectually protected my Darnick neighbours and myself against the New Road Bill.

Other advantages there are, besides the great one of scouring up one's own mind a little and renewing intercourse with old friends, bringing one's-self nearer in short to the currency of the time.

All this may weigh against the expenditure of £200 or £250, when money is fortunately not very scarce with me.

We went out for a most agreeable drive through the Hertfordshire Lanes — a strange intricate combination of narrow roads passing through the country, winding and turning among oaks and other large timber, just like pathways cut through a forest. They wind and turn in so singular a manner, and resemble each other so much, that a stranger would have difficulty to make way amongst them. We visited Moor Park (not the house of Sir William Temple, but that where the Duke and Duchess of Monmouth lived). Having rather a commanding situation, you look down on the valley, which, being divided into small enclosures bordered with wood, resembles a forest when so looked down on. The house has a handsome entrance-hall, painted by Sir James Thornhill, in a very French taste, yet handsome. He was Hogarth's fatherin-law, and not easily reconciled to the match. Thornhill's paintings are certainly not of the first class, yet the practice of painting the walls and roof of a dwellinghouse gives, in my eyes, a warm and rich air to the apartments. Lord Grosvenor has now bought this fine place, once Lord Anson's — hence the Moor Park apricot is also called Ansoniana. After seeing Moor Park we went to the Grove, the Earl of Clarendon's country-

seat. The house looks small and of little consequence, but contains many good portraits, as I was told, of the Hyde family. The park has fine views and magnificent trees.

We went to Cashiobury, belonging to the Earl of Essex, an old mansion, apparently, with a fine park. The Colne runs through the grounds, or rather creeps through them.

> "For the Colne
> Is black and swollen,
> Snake-like, he winds his way,
> Unlike the burns
> From Highland urns
> That dance by crag and brae."

Borthwickbrae came to dinner from town, and we had a very pleasant evening. My excellent old friend reminded me of the old and bitter feud between the Scotts and the Haliburtons, and observed it was curious I should have united the blood of two hostile clans.

May 28. — We took leave of our kind old host after breakfast, and set out for our own land. Our elegant researches carried us out of the highroad and through a labyrinth of intricate lanes, — which seem made on purpose to afford strangers the full benefit of a dark night and a drunk driver, — in order to visit Gill's Hill, famous for the murder of Mr. Weare.

The place has the strongest title to the description of Wordsworth: —

> "A merry spot, 'tis said, in days of yore,
> But something ails it now — - the place is cursed."

The principal part of the house has been destroyed, and only the kitchen remains standing. The garden has been dismantled, though a few laurels and garden shrubs, run wild, continue to mark the spot. The fatal pond is now only a green swamp, but so near the house that one cannot conceive how it was ever chosen as a place of temporary concealment of the murdered body. Indeed the whole history of the murder, and the scenes which ensued, are strange pictures of desperate and shortsighted wickedness. The feasting — the singing — the murderer with his hands still bloody hanging round the neck of one of the females — the watch-chain of the murdered man, argue

the utmost apathy. Even Probert, the most frightened of the party, fled no further for relief than to the brandy bottle, and is found in the very lane, and at the spot of the murder, seeking for the murderous weapon, and exposing himself to the view of the passengers. Another singular mark of stupid audacity was their venturing to wear the clothes of their victim. There was a want of foresight in the whole arrangement of the deed, and the attempts to conceal it, which argued strange inconsideration, which a professed robber would not have exhibited. There was just one single shade of redeeming character about a business so brutal, perpetrated by men above the very lowest rank of life — it was the mixture of revenge which afforded some relief to the circumstances of treachery and premeditation which accompanied it. But Weare was a cheat, and had no doubt pillaged Thurtell, who therefore deemed he might take greater liberties with him than with others.

The dirt of the present habitation equalled its wretched desolation, and a truculent-looking hag, who showed us the place, and received half-a-crown, looked not unlike the natural inmate of such a mansion. She indicated as much herself, saying the landlord had dismantled the place because no respectable person would live there. She seems to live entirely alone, and fears no ghosts, she says.

One thing about this mysterious tragedy was never explained. It is said that Weare, as is the habit of such men, always carried about his person, and between his flannel waistcoat and shirt, a sum of ready money, equal to £1500 or £2000. No such money was ever recovered, and as the sum divided by Thurtell among his accomplices was only about £20, he must, in slang phrase, have bucketed his pals.

We came on as far as Alconbury, where we slept comfortably.

May 29. — We travelled from Alconbury Hill to Ferry Bridge, upwards of a hundred miles, amid all the beauties of "flourish" and verdure which spring awakens at her first approach in the midland counties of England, but without any variety save those of the season's making. I do believe this great north road is the dullest in the world, as well as the most convenient for the traveller. Nothing seems to me to have been altered within twenty or thirty years, save the noses of the landlords, which have bloomed and given place to another set of proboscises as germane us the old ones to the very welcome, — please to light — 'Orses forward, and ready out. The skeleton

at Barnby Moor has deserted his gibbet, and that is the only change I recollect.

I have amused myself to-day with reading Lockhart's Life of Burns, which is very well written — in fact, an admirable thing. He has judiciously slurred over his vices and follies; for although Currie, I myself, and others, have not said a word more on that subject than is true, yet as the dead corpse is straightened, swathed, and made decent, so ought the character of such an inimitable genius as Burns to be tenderly handled after death. The knowledge of his vicious weaknesses or vices is only a subject of sorrow to the well-disposed, and of triumph to the profligate.

May 30. — We left Ferry Bridge at seven, and turning westwards, or rather northwestward, at Borough Bridge, we roach Rokeby at past three. A mile from the house we met Morritt looking for us. I had great pleasure at finding myself at Rokeby, and recollecting a hundred passages of past time. Morritt looks well and easy in his mind, which I am delighted to see. He is now one of my oldest, and, I believe, one of my most sincere, friends, a man unequalled in the mixture of sound good sense, high literary cultivation, and the kindest and sweetest temper that ever graced a human bosom. His nieces are much attached to him, and are deserving and elegant, as well as beautiful young women. What there is in our partiality to female beauty that commands a species of temperate homage from the aged, as well as ecstatic admiration from the young, I cannot conceive, but it is certain that a very large proportion of some other amiable quality is too little to counterbalance the absolute want of this advantage. I, to whom beauty is and shall henceforth be a picture, still look upon it with the quiet devotion of an old worshipper, who no longer offers incense on the shrine, but peaceably presents his inch of taper, taking special care in doing so not to burn his own fingers. Nothing in life can be more ludicrous or contemptible than an old man aping the passions of his youth.

Talking of youth, there was a certain professor at Cambridge who used to keep sketches of all the youths who, from their conduct at college, seemed to bid fair for distinction in life. He showed them, one day, to an old shrewd sarcastic Master of Arts, who looked over the collection, and then observed, "A promising nest of eggs; what a pity the great part will turn out addle!" And so they do; looking round amongst the young men, one sees to all appearance fine flourish — but it ripens not.

May 31. — I have finished Napier's War in the Peninsula. It is written in the spirit of a Liberal, but the narrative is distinct and clear, and I should suppose accurate. He has, however, given a bad sample of accuracy in the case of Lord Strangford, where his pointed affirmation has been as pointedly repelled. It is evident he would require probing. His defence of Moore is spirited and well argued, though it is evident he defends the statesman as much as the general. As a Liberal and a military man, Colonel Napier finds it difficult to steer his course. The former character calls on him to plead for the insurgent Spaniards; the latter induces him to palliate the cruelties of the French. Good-even to him until next volume, which I shall long to see. This was a day of pleasure and nothing else. After breakfast I walked with Morritt in the new path he has made up the Tees. When last here, his poor nephew was of the party. It hangs on my mind, and perhaps on Morritt's. When we returned we took a short drive as far as Barnard Castle; and the business of eating and drinking took up the remainder of the evening, excepting a dip into the Greta Walk.

June

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June 1. — We took leave of our friends at Rokeby after breakfast, and pursued our wellknown path over Stanmore to Brough, Appleby, Penrith, and Carlisle. As I have this road by heart, I have little amusement save the melancholy task of recalling the sensations with which I have traced it in former times, all of which refer to decay of animal strength, and abatement if not of mental powers, at least of mental energy. The non est tanti grows fast at my time of life. We reached Carlisle at seven o'clock, and were housed for the night. My books being exhausted, I lighted on an odd volume of the Gentleman's Magazine, a work in which, as in a pawnbroker's shop, much of real curiosity and value are stowed away and concealed amid the frippery and trumpery of those reverend old gentlewomen who were the regular correspondents of the work.

June 2. — We intended to walk to the Castle, but were baffled by rainy weather. I was obliged to wait for a certificate from the parish register — Hei mihi!! I cannot have it till ten o'clock, or rather, as it chanced, till past eleven, when I got the paper for which I waited. We lunched at Hawick, and concluded our pilgrimage at Abbotsford about nine at night, where the joyful barking of the dogs, with the sight of the kind familiar faces of our domestics, gave us welcome, and I enjoyed a sound repose on my own bed. I remark that in this journey I have never once experienced depression of spirits, or the tremor cordis of which I have sometimes such unpleasant visits. Dissipation, and a succession of trifling engagements, prevent the mind from throwing itself out in the manner calculated to exhaust the owner, and to entertain other people. There is a lesson in this.

June 3, [Abbotsford]. — This was a very idle day. I waked to walk about my beautiful young woods with old Tom and the dogs. The sun shone bright, and the wind fanned my cheek as if it were a welcoming. I did not do the least right thing, except packing a few books necessary for writing the continuation of the Tales. In this merry mood I wandered as far as Huntly Burn, where I found the Miss Fergusons well and happy; then I sauntered back to Abbotsford, sitting on every bench by the way, and thus

"It grew to dinner in conclusion."

A good appetite made my simple meal relish better than the magnificent cheer which I have lately partaken of. I smoked a cigar, slept away an hour, and read Mure of Auchendrane's trial, and thus ended the day. I cannot afford to spend many such, nor would they seem so pleasant.

June 4, [Edinburgh]. — The former part of this day was employed much as yesterday, but some packing was inevitable. Will Laidlaw came to dinner, of which we partook at three o'clock. Started at halfpast four, and arrived at home, if we must call it so, at nine o'clock in the evening. I employed my leisure in the chaise to peruse Mure of Auchendrane's trial, out of which something might be coopered up for the public. It is one of the wildest stories I ever read. Something might surely be twisted out of it.

June 5. — Cadell breakfasted; in great spirits with the success of the Fair Maid of Perth. A disappointment being always to be apprehended, I too am greatly pleased that the evil day is adjourned, for the time must come — and yet I can spin a tough yarn still with any one now going.

I was much distressed to find that the last of the Macdonald Buchanans, a fine lad of about twenty-one, is now decidedly infected by the same pulmonary complaint which carried off his four brothers in succession. This is indeed a cruel stroke, and it is melancholy to witness the undaunted Highland courage of the father.

I went to Court, and when I returned did some work upon the Tales.

"And now again, boys, to the oar."

June 6. — I have determined to work sans intermission for lost time, and to make up at least my task every day. J. Gibson called on me with good hopes that the trustees will authorise the grand opus to be set afloat. They are scrupulous a little about the expense of engravings, but I fear the taste of the town will not be satisfied without them. It is time these things were settled. I wrought both before and after dinner, and finished five pages, which is two above bargain.

June 7. — Saturday was another working day, and nothing occurred to disturb me.

June 8. — I finished five sheets this day. Will Clerk and Francis Scott of Harden came to dinner, and we spent a pleasant evening.

June 9. — I laboured till about one, and was then obliged to go to attend a meeting of the Oil Gas Company, — as I devoutly hope for the last time.

After that I was obliged to go to sit to Colvin Smith, which is an atrocious bore, but cannot be helped.

Cadell rendered me report of accounts paid for me with vouchers, which very nearly puts me out of all shop debts. God grant me grace to keep so!

June 10-14. — During these five days almost nothing occurred to diversify the ordinary task of the day, which, I must own, was dull enough. I rose to my task by seven, and, less or more, wrought it out in the course of the day, far exceeding the ordinary average of three leaves per day. I have attended the Parliament House with the most strict regularity, and returned to dine alone with Anne. Also, I gave three sittings to Mr. Colvin Smith, who I think has improved since I saw him.

Of important intelligence nothing occurs save the termination of all suspense on the subject of poor James Macdonald Buchanan. He died at Malta. The celebrated Dugald Stewart is also dead, famous for his intimate acquaintance with the history and philosophy of the human mind. There is much of water-painting in all metaphysics, which consist rather of words than ideas. But Stewart was most impressive and eloquent. In former days I was frequently with him, but not for many years. Latterly, I am told, he had lost not the power of thinking, but the power of expressing his thoughts by speech. This is like the Metamorphosis of Ovid, the bark binding in and hardening the living flesh.

June 15. — W. Clerk, Francis Scott, and Charles Sharpe dined with me, but my task had been concluded before dinner.

June 16. — Dined at Dalmahoy, with the young Earl and Countess of Morton. I like these young noble folks particularly well. Their manners and style of living are easy and unaffected, and I should like to see them often. Came home at night. The task finished to-day. I should mention that the plan about the new edition of the novels was considered at a meeting of trustees, and finally approved of. I trust it will answer; yet, who can warrant

the continuance of popularity? Old Corri, who entered into many projects, and could never set the sails of a windmill so as to catch the aura popularis, used to say that he believed that were he to turn baker, it would put bread out of fashion. I have had the better luck to dress my sails to every wind; and so blow on, good wind, and spin round, whirligig.

June 17. — Violent rheumatic headache all day. Wrought, however. But what difference this troublesome addition may make on the quality of the stuff produced, truly I do not know. I finished five leaves.

June 18. — Some Italian gentlemen landed here, under the conveyance of the Misses Haig of Bemerside. They were gentlemanlike men; but as I did not dare to speak bad French, I had not much to say to foreigners. Gave them and their pretty guides a good breakfast, however. The scene seemed to me to resemble Sheridan's scene in the Critic. There are a number of very civil gentlemen trying to make themselves understood, and I do not know which is the interpreter. After all, it is not my fault. They who wish to see me should be able to speak my language. I called on Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie. She received me with all the kindness of former days, and I was delighted to see her. I sat about an hour with her. My head aches, for all that, and I have heavy fits of drowsiness. Well, I have finished my task, and have a right to sleep if I have a mind.

I dine to-day with Lord Mackenzie, where I hope to meet Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie again, for I love her warm heart and lively fancy. Accordingly I enjoyed this pleasure.

June 19. — Scribbled away lustily. Went to the P.H. Wrote when I came home, both before and after dinner — that's all, I think. I am become a sort of writing automaton, and truly the joints of my knees, especially the left, are so stiff and painful in rising and sitting down, that I can hardly help screaming — I that was so robust and active; I get into a carriage with great difficulty. My head, too, is bothered with rheumatic headaches. Why not? I got headaches by my folly when I was young, and now I am old they come uncalled. Infirmity gives what indiscretion bought.

June 20. — My course is still the same. But I have a painful letter from Lockhart, which takes away the last hope of poor Johnnie's recovery. It is

no surprise to me. The poor child, so amiable in its disposition, and so promising from its talents, was not formed to be long with us, and I have long expected that it must needs come to this. I hope I shall not outlive my children in other cases, and I think there is little chance of it. My father did not long survive the threescore and ten; it will be wonderful if I reach that goal of ordinary mortality. God send it may find me prepared; and, whatever I may have been formerly, high spirits are not now like to carry me away.

June, 21. — At Court, and called on Ballantyne on my return. I was obliged to go to the Register Office at one, where I waited nearly an hour without meeting my brethren. But I wrote a letter to Lockhart in the meantime. My niece Ann arrived, to my great satisfaction. I am glad that Anne, my daughter, has such a sensible and clever companion. Dined at Baron Hume's.

June 22. — Wrought. Had a note from Ballantyne complaining of my manuscript, and requesting me to read it over. I would give £1000 if I could; but it would take me longer to read than to write. I cannot trace my pieds de mouche but with great labour and trouble; so e'en take your own share of the burden, my old friend; and, since I cannot read, be thankful I can write. I will look at his proof, however, and then be quiet and idle for the rest of the evening. I am come to Charles the First's trial, and though I have it by heart, I must refresh myself with a reading of Clarendon. Charles Sharpe and Francis Scott came in the evening.

June 23. — This morning the two Annes and I went to Sir Robert Liston at Milburn Tower — a beautiful retreat. The travels of the venerable diplomatist are indicated by the various articles of curiosity which he has picked up in different corners of the world, and put together with much taste. The conservatory and gardens are very fine, and contain, I suppose, very curious plants; — I am sure, hard names enough. But then the little Gothic tower, embowered amid trees and bushes, surrounded by these pleasant gardens, offering many a sunny walk for winter, many a shade for summer, are inexpressibly pleasing. The good old knight and his lady are worthy of it, for they enjoy it. The artificial piece of water is a failure, like most things of the kind. The offices, without being on an extravagant scale,

are most substantial; the piggery, in particular, is quite a palace, and the animals clean and comfortable. I think I have caught from them a fit of piggish obstinacy. I came at one, and cannot prevail upon myself to go to work. I answer the calls of duty as Caliban does those of Prospero, "There's wood enough within." To be sure, I have not got the Clarendon.

June 24. — It was my father's own son, as John Hielandman said, who did little both yesterday and to-day — I mean little in the way of literary work, for, as to positive work, I have been writing letters about Chancery business till I am sick of it. There was a long hearing, and while Jeffrey exerted his eloquence in the Inner House, I plied my eloquence de billet in the Library. So, on the whole, I am no bad boy. Besides, the day is not yet over.

June 25. — I was surprised to hear that our Academy Rector, Williams, has renounced the chair of Roman learning in the new London University. His alarm was excited by the interest taken by the prelates in opposing a High Church institution to that desired by Mr. Brougham. Both the Bishops and Williams have been unwise. The former have manoeuvred ill. They should, in the outset, have taken the establishment out of the hands of the Whigs, without suffering them to reinforce themselves by support from [others]. And Williams was equally precipitate in joining an institution which a small degree of foresight might have assured him would be opposed by his spiritual superiors. However, there he stands, deprived of his professorship by his resignation, and of his rectorship by our having engaged with a successor. I think it very doubtful whether the Bishops will now [admit] him into their alliance. He has in that case offended both parties. But if they are wise, they will be glad to pick up the best schoolmaster in Europe, though he comes for the present Graiâ ex urbe. I accomplished more than my task to-day.

June, 26. — Wrote a long letter to Lockhart about Williams' situation, saying how, by sitting betwixt two stools, he

> " — — - Had fallen with heavy thump
> Upon his reverential rump,"

and how the Bishops should pick him up if they wanted their establishment to succeed. It is an awkward position in which Williams has placed himself.

He loses the Whig chair, and has perhaps no chance of favour from the High Church for having been willing to accept it. Even if they now give him promotion, there will be a great outcry on his having left one institution to join another. He would be thick-skinned if he stands the clamour. Yet he has to all appearance rather sacrificed than advanced his interest. However, I say again, the Bishops ought not to omit securing him.

Mr. Macintosh Mackay breakfasted with me, modest, intelligent, and gentle. I did my duty and more in the course of the day.

I am vexed about Mackay missing the church of Cupar in Angus. It is in the Crown's gift, and Peel, finding that two parties in the town recommended two opposite candidates, very wisely chose to disappoint them both, and was desirous of bestowing the presentation on public grounds. I heard of this, and applied to Mr. Peel for Macintosh Mackay, whose quiet patience and learning are accompanied by a most excellent character as a preacher and a clergyman, but unhappily Mr. Peel had previously put himself into the hands of Sir George Murray, who applied to Sir Peter his brother, who naturally applied to certain leaders of the Church at Edinburgh, and these reverend gentlemen have recommended that the church which the minister desired to fill up on public grounds should be bestowed on a boy, the nephew of one of their number, of whom the best that can be said is that nothing is known, since he has only been a few months in orders. This comes of kith, kin, and ally, but Peel shall know of it, and may perhaps judge for himself another time.

June 27. — I came out after Court to Blair Adam, with our excellent friend the Rev. John Thomson of Duddingston, so modest and so accomplished; — delightful drive and passage at the ferry. We found at Blair Adam the C.C. and family, Admiral Adam and lady, James Thomson of Charlton, and Miss T., Will Clerk, and last, not least, Lord Chief Baron Shepherd — all in high spirits for our excursions.

Thomson described to me a fine dungeon in the old tower at Cassillis in Ayrshire. There is an outer and inner vaulted [chamber], each secured with iron doors. At the upper end of the innermost are two great stones or blocks to which the staples and chains used in securing the prisoners are still attached. Between these stone seats is an opening like the mouth of a still deeper dungeon. The entrance descends like the mouth of a draw-well or shaft of a mine, and deep below is heard the sullen roar of the river Doon,

one branch of which, passing through the bottom of the shaft, has probably swept away the body of many a captive, whose body after death may have been thus summarily disposed of. I may find use for such a place — Story of [Kittleclarkie?]

June 28. — Off we go to Castle Campbell after breakfast, *i.e.* Will Clerk, Admiral Adam, J. Thomson, and myself. Tremendous hot is the day, and the steep ascent of the Castle, which rises for two miles up a rugged and broken path, was fatiguing enough, yet not so much so as the streets in London. Castle Campbell is unaltered; the window, of which the disjointed stone projects at an angle from the wall, and seems at the point of falling, has still found power to resist the laws of gravitation. Whoever built that tottering piece of masonry has been long in a forgotten grave, and yet what he has made seems to survive in spite of nature itself. The curious cleft called Kemp's Score, which gave the garrison access to the water in case of siege, is obviously natural, but had been improved by steps, now choked up. A girl who came with us recollected she had shown me the way down to the bottom of this terrible gulf seven years ago. I am not able for it now.

> "Wont to do's awa frae me,
> Frae silly auld John Ochiltree."

June 29. — Being Sunday we kept about the doors, and after two took the drosky and drove over the hill and round by the Kiery Craigs. I should have said Williams came out in the morning to ask my advice about staying another year in Edinburgh. I advised him if possible to gain a few days' time till I should hear from Lockhart. He has made a pretty mess for himself, but if the Bishops are wise, they may profit by it. The sound, practical advice of Williams at the first concoction would be of the last consequence. I suspect their systems of eating-houses are the most objectionable part of the college discipline. When their attentions are to be given to the departments of the cook and the butler, all zeal in the nobler paths of education is apt to decay.

Well, to return to the woods. I think, notwithstanding Lord Chief Commissioner's assiduity, they are in some places too thick. I saw a fine larch, felled seventy-two years old, value about five pounds.

Hereditary descent in the Highlands. A clergyman showed J.T. the island of Inch Mahome in the Port of Monteith, and pointed out the boatman as a remarkable person, the representative of the hereditary gardeners of the Earls of Monteith, while these Earls existed. His son, a priggish boy, follows up the theme — ”Feyther, when Donald MacCorkindale dees will not the family be extinct?” Father — ”No; I believe there is a man in Balquhidder who takes up the succession.”

June 30. — We made our pleasant excursion to-day round the hill of Bennarty par terre, and returned par mer. Our route by land led us past Lochore, where we made a pause for a few moments. Then proceeded to Ballingray or Bingray, and so by Kirkness, where late ravages are supplied by the force of vegetation down to the shores of Lochleven. We embarked and went upon Saint Serf’s Island, supposed to have been anciently a cell of the Culdees. An old pinfold, or rather a modern pinfold, constructed out of the ancient chapel, is all that attests its former sanctity. We landed on Queen Mary’s Island, a miserable scene, considering the purpose for which the Castle was appointed. And yet the captivity and surrender of the Percy was even a worse tale, since it was an eternal blight on the name of Douglas. Well, we got to Blair Adam in due time, and our fine company began to separate, Lord Chief Baron going off after dinner. We had wine and wassail, and John Thomson’s delightful flute to help us through the evening.

Thus end the delectations of the Blair Adam Club for this year. Mrs. Thomson of Charlton talks of Beaton’s House, and other Fife wonders for the next year, but who knows what one year may bring forth? Our Club has been hitherto fortunate. It has subsisted twelve years.

July

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> "Up in the morning's no for me."

Yet here I am up at five — no horses come from the North Ferry yet.

> "O Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Mitchell,
> Your promises and time keep stitch ill."

July I, [Edinburgh]. — Got home, however, by nine, and went to the Parliament House, where we were detained till four o'clock. Miss — — — dined with us, a professed lion-huntress, who travels the country to rouse the peaceful beasts out of their lair, and insists on being hand and glove with all the leonine race. She is very plain, besides frightfully red-haired, and out-Lydia-ing even my poor friend Lydia White. An awful visitation! I think I see her with javelin raised and buskined foot, a second Diana, roaming the hills of Westmoreland in quest of the lakers. Would to God she were there or anywhere but here! Affectation is a painful thing to witness, and this poor woman has the bad taste to think direct flattery is the way to make her advances to friendship and intimacy.

July 2. — I believe I was cross yesterday. I am at any rate very ill to-day with a rheumatic headache, and a still more vile hypochondriacal affection, which fills my head with pain, my heart with sadness, and my eyes with tears. I do not wonder at the awful feelings which visited men less educated and less firm than I may call myself. It is a most hangdog cast of feeling, but it may be chased away by study or by exercise. The last I have always found most successful, but the first is most convenient. I wrought therefore, and endured all this forenoon, being a Teind Wednesday. I am now in such a state that I would hardly be surprised at the worst news which could be brought to me. And all this without any rational cause why to-day should be sadder than yesterday.

Two things to lighten my spirits — First, Cadell comes to assure me that the stock of 12mo novels is diminished from 3800, which was the quantity in the publishers' hands in March 1827, to 600 or 700. This argues gallant room for the publication of the New Series. Second, said Cadell is setting

off straight for London to set affairs a-going. If I have success in this, it will greatly assist in extricating my affairs.

My aches of the heart terminated in a cruel aching of the head — rheumatic, I suppose. But Sir Adam and Clerk came to dinner, and laughed and talked the sense of pain and oppression away. We cannot at times work ourselves into a gay humour, any more than we can tickle ourselves into a fit of laughter; foreign agency is necessary. My huntress of lions again dined with us. I have subscribed to her Album, and done what was civil.

July 3. — Corrected proofs in the morning, and wrote a little. I was forced to crop vol. i. as thirty pages too long; there is the less to write behind. We were kept late at the Court, and when I came out I bethought me, like Christian in the Castle of Giant Despair, "Wherefore should I walk along the broiling and stifling streets when I have a little key in my bosom which can open any lock in Princes Street Walks, and be thus on the Castle banks, rocks, and trees in a few minutes?" I made use of my key accordingly, and walked from the Castle Hill down to Wallace's Tower, and thence to the west end of Princes Street, through a scene of grandeur and beauty perhaps unequalled, whether the foreground or distant view is considered — all down hill, too. Foolish never to think of this before. I chatted with the girls a good while after dinner, but wrote a trifle when we had tea.

July 4. — The two Annes set off to Abbotsford, though the weather was somewhat lowering for an open carriage, but the day cleared up finely. Hamilton is unwell, so we had a long hearing of his on our hands. It was four ere I got home, but I had taken my newly discovered path by rock, bush, and ruin. I question if Europe has such another path. We owe this to the taste of James Skene. But I must dress to go to Dr. Hope's, who makes chère exquise, and does not understand being kept late.

July 5. — Saturday, corrected proofs and wrought hard. Went out to dinner at Oxenfoord Castle, and returned in the company of Lord Alloway, Chief Baron, Clerk, etc., and Mr. Bouverie, the English Commissioner.

July 6. — A day of hard work. The second volume is now well advanced — wellnigh one half. Dined alone, and pursued my course after dinner. Seven pages were finished. Solitude's a fine thing for work, but then you must lie

by like a spider, till you collect materials to continue your web. Began Simond's Switzerland — clever and intelligent, but rather conceited, as the manner of an American Frenchman. I hope to knock something out of him though.

July 7. — Williams seems in uncertainty again, and I can't guess what he will be at. Surely it is a misery to be so indecisive; he will certainly gain the ill word of both parties and might have had the good word of all; and, indeed, deserves it. We received his resignation to-day, but if the King's College are disposed to thrive, they will keep eyes on this very able man.

July 8. — Hard work in the Court, the sederunts turn long and burthensome. I fear they will require some abridgment of vacation.

[From July 8, 1828, to January 10, 1829, there are no entries in the Journal.]

1829 — January

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Having omitted to carry on my Diary for two or three days, I lost heart to make it up, and left it unfilled for many a month and day. During this period nothing has happened worth particular notice. The same occupations, the same amusements, the same occasional alternations of spirits, gay or depressed, the same absence of all sensible or rational cause for the one or the other. I half grieve to take up my pen, and doubt if it is worth while to record such an infinite quantity of nothing, but hang it! I hate to be beat, so here goes for better behaviour.

January 10. — I resume my task at Abbotsford. We are here alone, except Lockhart, on a flying visit. Morritt, his niece, Sir James Stuart, Skene, and an occasional friend or two, have been my guests since 31st December. I cannot say I have been happy, for the feeling of increasing weakness in my lame leg is a great affliction. I walk now with pain and difficulty at all times, and it sinks my soul to think how soon I may be altogether a disabled cripple. I am tedious to my friends, and I doubt the sense of it makes me fretful.

Everything else goes off well enough. My cash affairs are clearing, and though last year was an expensive one, I have been paying debt. Yet I have a dull contest before me which will probably outlast my life. If well maintained, however, it will be an honourable one, and if the Magnum Opus succeed, it will afford me some repose.

January 11. — I did not write above a page yesterday; most weary, stale, and unprofitable have been my labours. Received a letter I suppose from Mad. T. — — , proposing a string of historical subjects not proper for my purpose. People will not consider that a thing may already be so well told in history, that romance ought not in prudence to meddle with it.

The ground covered with snow, which, by slipperiness and the pain occasioned by my lameness, renders walking unpleasant.

January 12. — This is the third day I have not walked out, pain and lameness being the cause. This bodes very ill for my future life. I made a

search yesterday and to-day for letters of Lord Byron to send to Tom Moore, but I could only find two. I had several others, and am shocked at missing them. The one which he sent me with a silver cup I regret particularly. It was stolen out of the cup itself by some vile inhospitable scoundrel, for a servant would not have thought such a theft worth while.

My spirits are low, yet I wot not why. I have been writing to my sons. Walter's majority was like to be reduced, but is spared for the present. Charles is going on well I trust at the Foreign Office, so I hope all is well.

Loitered out a useless day, half arranging half disarranging books and papers, and packing the things I shall want. Der Abschiedstag ist da.

January 13. — The day of return to Edinburgh is come. I don't know why, but I am more happy at the change than usual. I am not working hard, and it is what I ought to do, and must do. Every hour of laziness cries fie upon me. But there is a perplexing sinking of the heart which one cannot always overcome. At such times I have wished myself a clerk, quill-driving for twopence per page. You have at least application, and that is all that is necessary, whereas unless your lively faculties are awake and propitious, your application will do you as little good as if you strained your sinews to lift Arthur's Seat.

January 14, [Edinburgh]. — Got home last night after a freezing journey. This morning I got back some of the last copy, and tugged as hard as ever did soutar to make ends meet. Then I will be reconciled to my task, which at present disgusts me. Visited Lady Jane, then called on Mr. Robison and instructed him to call a meeting of the Council of the Royal Society, as Mr. Knox proposes to read an essay on some dissections. A bold proposal truly from one who has had so lately the boldness of trading so deep in human flesh! I will oppose his reading in the present circumstances if I should stand alone, but I hope he will be wrought upon to withdraw his essay or postpone it at least. It is very bad taste to push himself forward just now. Lockhart dined with us, which made the evening a pleasant but an idle one. Well! I must rouse myself.

"Awake! Arise, or be for ever fallen."

January 15. — Day began with beggars as usual, and John Nicolson has not sense to keep them out. I never yield, however, to this importunity,

thinking it wrong that what I can spare to meritorious poverty, of which I hear and see too much, should be diverted by impudent importunity. I was detained at the Parliament House till nearly three by the great case concerning prescription, Maule v. Maule. This was made up to me by hearing an excellent opinion from Lord Corehouse, with a curious discussion in apicibus juris. I disappointed Graham of a sitting for my picture.

I went to the Council of the Royal Society, which was convened at my request, to consider whether we ought to hear a paper on anatomical subjects read by Mr. Knox, whose name has of late been deeply implicated in a criminal prosecution against certain wretches, who had murdered many persons and sold their bodies to professors of the anatomical science. Some thought that our declining to receive the paper would be a declaration unfavourable to Dr. Knox. I think hearing it before Mr. Knox has made any defence (as he is stated to have in view) would be an intimation of our preference of the cause of science to those of morality and common humanity. Mr. Knox's friends undertook to deal with him about suffering the paper to be omitted for the present, while adhuc coram judice lis est.

January 16. — Nothing on the roll to-day, so I did not go to the Parliament House, but fagged at my desk till two.

Dr. Ross called to relieve me of a corn, which, though my lameness needs no addition, had tormented me vilely. I again met the Royal Society Council. Dr. Knox consents to withdraw his paper, or rather suffers the reading to be postponed. There is some great error in the law on the subject. If it was left to itself many bodies would be imported from France and Ireland, and doubtless many would be found in our hospitals for the service of the anatomical science. But the total and severe exclusion of foreign supplies of this kind raises the price of the "subjects," as they are called technically, to such a height, that wretches are found willing to break into "the bloody house of life," merely to supply the anatomists' table. The law which, as a deeper sentence on the guilt of murder, declares that the body of the convicted criminal should be given up to anatomy, is certainly not without effect, for criminals have been known to shrink from that part of the sentence which seems to affect them more than the doom of death itself, with all its terrors here and hereafter. On the other hand, while this idea of the infamy attending the exposition of the person is thus recognised by the

law, it is impossible to adopt regulations which would effectually prevent such horrid crimes as the murder of vagrant wretches who can be snatched from society without their being missed, as in the case of the late conspiracy. For instance, if it was now to be enacted, as seems reasonable, that persons dying in hospitals and almshouses, who die without their friends claiming their remains, should be given up to the men of science, this would be subjecting poverty to the penalty of these atrocious criminals whom law distinguishes by the heaviest posthumous disgrace which it can inflict. Even cultivated minds revolt from the exposure on an anatomical table, when the case is supposed to be that of one who is dear to them. I should, I am conscious, be willing that I myself should be dissected in public, if doing so could produce any advantage to society, but when I think on relations and friends being rent from the grave the case is very different, and I would fight knee-deep to prevent or punish such an exposure. So inconsistent we are all upon matters of this nature.

I dined quietly at home with the girls, and wrote after dinner.

January 17. — Nothing in the roll; corrected proofs, and went off at 12 o'clock in the Hamilton stage to William Lockhart's at Auchinrath. My companions, Mr. Livingstone, the clergyman of Camnethan, a Bailie Hamilton, the king of trumps, I am told, in the Burgh of Hamilton, and a Mr. Davie Martin qui gaudet equis et canibus. Got to Auchinrath by six, and met Lord Douglas, his brother, Captain Douglas, E.N., John G-. Lockhart also, who had a large communication from Duke of W. upon the subject of the bullion. The Duke scouts the economist's ideas about paper credit, after the proposition that all men shall be entitled to require gold.

January 18. — We went, the two Lockharts and I, to William's new purchase of Milton. We found on his ground a cottage, where a man called Greenshields, a sensible, powerful-minded person, had at twenty-eight (rather too late a week) taken up the art of sculpture. He had disposed of the person of the King most admirably, according to my poor thoughts, and had attained a wonderful expression of ease and majesty at the same time. He was desirous of engaging on Burns' Jolly Beggars, which I dissuaded. Caricature is not the object of sculpture.

We went to Milton on as fine a day as could consist with snow on the ground. The situation is eminently beautiful; a fine promontory round

which the Clyde makes a magnificent bend. We fixed on a situation where the sitting-room should command the upper view, and, with an ornamental garden, I think it may be made the prettiest place in Scotland.

January 19. — Posted to Edinburgh with John Lockhart. We stopped at Allanton to see a tree transplanted, which was performed with great ease. Sir Henry is a sad coxcomb, and lifted beyond the solid earth by the effect of his book's success. But the book well deserves it. He is in practice particularly anxious to keep the roots of the tree near the surface, and only covers them with about a foot of earth.

Note. — Lime rubbish dug in among the roots of ivy encourages it much.

The operation delayed us three hours, so it was seven o'clock before we reached our dinner and a good fire in Shandwick Place, and we were wellnigh frozen to death. During this excursion I walked very ill — with more pain, in fact, than I ever remember to have felt — and, even leaning on John Lockhart, could hardly get on. Baad that, vara baad — it might be the severe weather though, and the numbing effect of the sitting in the carriage. Be it what it will, I can't help myself.

January 20. — I had little to do at the Court, and returned home soon. Honest old Mr. Ferrier is dead, at extreme old age. I confess I should not wish to live so long. He was a man with strong passions and strong prejudices, but with generous and manly sentiments at the same time. We used to call him Uncle Adam, after that character in his gifted daughter's novel of the Heiress [Inheritance]. I wrote a long letter after I came home to my Lord Elgin about Greenshields, the sculptor. I am afraid he is going into the burlesque line, to which sculpture is peculiarly ill adapted. So I have expressed my veto to his patron, valeat quantum. Also a letter to Mrs. Professor Sandford at Glasgow about reprinting Macaulay's History of St. Kilda, advising them to insert the history of Lady Grange who was kidnapped and banished thither.

I corrected my proofs, moreover, and prepared to dine. After dinner we go to Euphemia Erskine's marriage. Mr. Dallas came in and presented me with an old pedigree of the M'Intoshes. The wedding took place with the usual April weather of smiles and tears. The bridegroom's name is Dawson. As he, as well as the bride, is very tall, they have every chance of bringing

up a family of giants. The bridegroom has an excellent character. He is only a captain, but economy does wonders in the army, where there are many facilities for practising it. I sincerely wish them happiness.

January 21. — Went out to Dalkeith House to dine and stay all night. Found Marquis of Lothian and a family party. I liked the sense and spirit displayed by this young nobleman, who reminds me strongly of his parents, whom I valued so highly.

January 22. — Left Dalkeith after breakfast, and gained the Parliament House, where there was almost nothing to do, at eleven o'clock. Afterwards sat to Graham, who is making a good thing of it. Mr. Colvin Smith has made a better in one sense, having sold ten or twelve copies of the portrait to different friends. The Solicitor came to dine with me — we drank a bottle of champagne, and two bottles of claret, which, in former days, I should have thought a very sober allowance, since, Lockhart included, there were three persons to drink it. But I felt I had drunk too much, and was uncomfortable. The young men stood it like young men. Skene and his wife and daughter looked in in the evening. I suppose I am turning to my second childhood, for not only am I filled drunk, or made stupid at least, with one bottle of wine, but I am disabled from writing by chilblains on my fingers — a most babyish complaint. They say that the character is indicated by the handwriting; if so, mine is crabbed enough.

January 23. — Still severe frost, annoying to sore fingers. Nothing on the roll. I sat at home and wrote letters to Wilkie, Landseer, Mrs. Hughes, Charles, *etc.* Went out to old Mr. Ferrier's funeral, and saw the last duty rendered to my old friend, whose age was

> " — — Like a lusty winter,
> Frosty, but kindly,"

I mean in a moral as well as a physical sense. I then went to Cadell's for some few minutes.

I carried out Lockhart to Dalkeith, where we dined, supped, and returned through a clinking frost, with snow on the ground. Lord Ramsay and the Miss Kerrs were at Dalkeith. The Duke shows, for so young a man, a great deal of character, and seems to have a proper feeling of the part he

has to play. The evening was pleasant, but the thought that I was now the visitor and friend of the family in the third generation lay somewhat heavy on me. Every thing around me seemed to say that beauty, power, wealth, honour were but things of a day.

January 24. — Heavy fall of snow. Lockhart is off in the mail. I hope he will not be blockaded. The day bitter cold. I went to the Court, and with great difficulty returned along the slippery street. I ought to have taken the carriage, but I have a superstitious dread of giving up the habit of walking, and would willingly stick to the last by my old hardy customs.

Little but trifles to do at the Court. My hands are so covered with chilblains that I can hardly use a pen — my feet ditto.

We bowled away at six o'clock to Mr. Wardlaw Ramsay's. Found we were a week too early, and went back as if our noses had been bleeding.

January 25. — Worked seriously all morning, expecting the Fergusons to dinner. Alas! instead of that, I learn that my poor innocent friend Mary is no more. She was a person of some odd and peculiar habits, wore a singular dress, and affected wild and solitary haunts, but she was, at the same time, a woman of talent, and even genius. She used often to take long walks with me up through the glens; and I believe her sincere good wishes attended me, as I was always glad of an opportunity to show her kindness. I shall long think of her when at Abbotsford. This sad event breaks up our little party. Will Clerk came, however, and his tête-à-tête was, of course, interesting and amusing in the highest degree. We drank some whisky and water, and smoked a cigar or two, till nine at night.

> "No after friendships ere can raise
> The endearments of our early days."

January 26. — I muzzed on — I can call it little better — with Anne of Geierstein. The materials are excellent, but the power of using them is failing. Yet I wrote out about three pages, sleeping at intervals.

January 27. — A great and general thaw, the streets afloat, the snow descending on one's head from the roofs. Went to the Court. There was little to do. Left about twelve, and took a sitting with Graham, who begs for

another. Sir James Stuart stood bottleholder on this occasion. Had rather an unfavourable account of the pictures of James Stuart of Dunearn, which are to be sold. I had promised to pick up one or two for the Duke of Buccleuch. Came home and wrote a leaf or two. I shall be soon done with the second volume of Anne of Geierstein. I cannot persuade myself to the obvious risk of satisfying the public, although I cannot so well satisfy myself. I am like Beaumont and Fletcher's old Merrythought who could not be persuaded that there was a chance of his wanting meat. I never came into my parlour, said he, but I found the cloth laid and dinner ready; surely it will be always thus. Use makes perfectness.

My reflections are of the same kind; and if they are unlogical they are perhaps not the less comfortable. Fretting and struggling does no good. Wrote to Miss Margaret Ferguson a letter of condolence.

January 28. — Breakfasted, for a wonder, abroad with Hay Drummond, whose wife appears a pretty and agreeable little woman. We worshipped his tutelar deity, the Hercules, and saw a good model of the Hercules Bibax, or the drunken Hercules. Graham and Sir James Stuart were there. Home-baked bread and soldier's coffee were the treat. I came home; and Sir Robert Dundas having taken my duty at the Court, I wrote for some time, but not much. Burke the murderer hanged this morning. The mob, which was immense, demanded Knox and Hare, but though greedy for more victims, received with shouts the solitary wretch who found his way to the gallows out of five or six who seem not less guilty than he. But the story begins to be stale, although I believe a doggerel ballad upon it would be popular, how brutal soever the wit. This is the progress of human passions. We ejaculate, exclaim, hold up to Heaven our hand, like the rustic Phidyle — next morning the mood changes, and we dance a jig to the tune which moved us to tears. Mr. Bell sends me a specimen of a historical novel, but he goes not the way to write it; he is too general, and not sufficiently minute. It is not easy to convey this to an author, with the necessary attention to his feelings; and yet, in good faith and sincerity, it must be done.

January 29. — I had a vacant day once more by the kindness of Sir Robert, unasked, but most kindly afforded. I have not employed it to much purpose. I wrote six pages to Croker, who is busied with a new edition of Boswell's

Life of Johnson, to which most entertaining book he hopes to make large additions from Mrs. Piozzi, Hawkins and other sources. I am bound by many obligations to do as much for him as I can, which can only respect the Scottish Tour. I wrote only two or three pages of Anne. I am

> " — — - as one who in a darksome way
> Doth walk with fear and dread."

But walk I must, and walk forward too, or I shall be benighted with a vengeance. After dinner, to compromise matters with my conscience, I wrote letters to Mr. Bell, Mrs. Hughes, and so forth; thus I concluded the day with a sort of busy idleness. This will not do. By cock and pye it will not.

January 30. — Mr. Stuart breakfasted with me, a grand-nephew of Lady Louisa's, a very pleasing young gentleman. The coach surprised me by not calling. Will it be for the Martyrdom? I trow it will, yet, strange to say, I cannot recollect if it is a regular holiday or not.

> "Uprouse ye then, my merry, merry men,
> And use it as ye may."

I wrote in the morning, and went at one o'clock to a meeting of country gentlemen, about bringing the direct road from London down by Jedburgh, said to be the nearest line by fifty miles. It is proposed the pleasant men of Teviotdale should pay, not only their own share, — that is, the expense of making the road through our own country, but also the expense of making the road under the Ellsdon Trust in Northumberland, where the English would positively do nothing. I stated this to the meeting as an act of Quixotry. If it be an advantage, which, unless to individuals, may be doubted, it is equally one to Northumberland as to Roxburgh, therefore I am clear that we should go "acquals."

I think I have maybe put a spoke in the wheel. The raising the statute labour of Roxburgh to an oppressive extent, to make roads in England, is, I think, jimp legal, and will be much complained of by the poorer heritors. Henry of Harden dines with me tête-à-tête, excepting the girls.

January 31. — I thought I had opened a vein this morning and that it came

freely, but the demands of art have been more than I can bear. I corrected proofs before breakfast, went to Court after that meal; was busy till near one o'clock. Then I went to Cadell's, where they are preparing to circulate the prospectus of the magnum, which will have all the effect of surprise on most people. I sat to Mr. Graham till I was quite tired, then went to Lady Jane, who is getting better. Then here at four, but fit for nothing but to bring up this silly Diary.

The corpse of the murderer Burke is now lying in state at the College, in the anatomical class, and all the world flock to see him. Who is he that says that we are not ill to please in our objects of curiosity? The strange means by which the wretch made money are scarce more disgusting than the eager curiosity with which the public have licked up all the carrion details of this business.

I trifled with my work. I wonder how Johnson set himself doggedly to it — to a work of imagination it seems quite impossible, and one's brain is at times fairly addled. And yet I have felt times when sudden and strong exertion would throw off all this mistiness of mind, as a north wind would disperse it.

"Blow, blow, thou northern wind."

Nothing more than about two or three pages. I went to the Parliament House to-day, but had little to do. I sat to Mr. Graham the last time, Heaven be praised! If I be not known in another age, it will not be for want of pictures. We dined with Mr. Wardlaw Ramsay and Lady Anne — a fine family. There was little done in the way of work except correcting proofs. The bile affects me, and makes me vilely drowsy when I should be most awake. Met at Mr. Wardlaw's several people I did not know. Looked over Cumnor Hall by Mr. Usher Tighe of Oxford. I see from the inscription on Tony Foster's tomb that he was a skilful planter, amongst other fashionable accomplishments.

February

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February 1. — Domum mansi, lanam feci, — stayed at home videlicet, and laboured without interruption except from intolerable drowsiness; finished eight leaves, however, the best day's work I have made this long time. No interruption, and I got pleased with my work, which ends the second volume of Anne of Geierstein. After dinner had a letter from Lockhart, with happy tidings about the probability of the commission on the Stewart papers being dissolved. The Duke of W. says commissions never either did or will do any good. John will in that case be sole editor of these papers with an apartment at St. James's cum plurimis aliis. It will be a grand coup if it takes place.

February 2. — Sent off yesterday's work with proofs. Could I do as toughly for a week — and many a day I have done more — I should be soon out of the scrape. I wrote letters, and put over the day till one, when I went down with Sir James Stuart to see Stuart of Dunearn's pictures now on sale. I did not see much which my poor taste covets; a Hobbema much admired is, I think, as tame a piece of work as I ever saw. I promised to try to get a good picture or two for the young Duke.

Dined with the old Club, instituted forty years ago. There were present Lord Justice-Clerk, Lord Advocate, Sir Peter Murray, John Irving, William Clerk, and I. It was a party such as the meeting of fellow scholars and fellow students alone could occasion. We told old stories; laughed and quaffed, and resolved, rashly perhaps, that we would hold the Club at least once a year, if possible twice. We will see how this will fudge. Our mirth was more unexpected as Sir Adam, our first fiddle, was wanting, owing to his family loss.

February 3. — Rose at eight — felt my revel a little in my head. The Court business light, returned by Cadell, and made one or two calls, at Skene's especially. Dinner and evening at home; laboriously employed.

February 4. — To-day I was free from duty, and made good use of my leisure at home, finishing the second volume of Anne, and writing several

letters, one to recommend Captain Pringle to Lord Beresford, which I send tomorrow through Morritt. “My mother whips me and I whip the top.” The girls went to the play.

February 5. — Attended the Court as usual, got dismissed about one. Finished and sent off volume ii. of Anne. Dined with Robert Rutherford, my cousin, and the whole clan of Swinton.

February 6. — Corrected proofs in the morning, then to the Court; thence to Cadell’s, where I found some business cut out for me, in the way of notes, which delayed me. Walked home, the weary way giving my feet the ancient twinges of agony: such a journey is as severe a penance as if I had walked the same length with peas in my shoes to atone for some horrible crime by beating my toes into a jelly. I wrote some and corrected a good deal. We dined alone, and I partly wrought partly slept in the evening. It’s now pretty clear that the Duke of W. intends to have a Catholic Bill. He probably expects to neutralise and divide the Catholic body by bringing a few into Parliament, where they will probably be tractable enough, rather than a large proportion of them rioting in Ireland, where they will be to a certain degree unanimous.

February 7. — Up and wrought a little. I had at breakfast a son of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, a very quick, smart-looking young fellow, who is on his way to the Continent with a tutor. Dined at Mrs. George Swinton’s with the whole clan.

February 8. — I wrought the whole day and finished about six pages of manuscript of vol. iii. [Anne of Geierstein]. Sat cito si sat bene. The Skenes came in to supper like the olden world.

February 9. — Was up in good time (say halfpast seven), and employed the morning in correcting proofs. At twelve I went to Stuart of Dunearn’s sale of pictures. This poor man fell, like myself, a victim to speculation. And though I had no knowledge of him personally, and disliked him as the cause of poor Sir Alexander Boswell’s death, yet “had he been slaughterman to all my kin,” I could but pity the miserable sight of his splendid establishment broken up, and his treasures of art exposed to public

and unsparing sale. I wanted a picture of the Earl of Rothes for the Duke of Buccleuch, a fine Sir Joshua, but Balfour of Balbirnie fancied it also, and followed it to 160 guineas. Charles Sharpe's account is, that I may think myself in luck, for the face has been repainted. There is, he says, a print taken from the picture at Leslie House which has quite a different countenance from the present.

This job, however, took me up the whole morning to little purpose. Captain and Mrs. Hall dined with us, also Sir James Stuart, Charles Sharpe, John Scott of Gala, *etc.*

February 10. — I was up at seven this morning, and will continue the practice, but the shoal of proofs took up all my leisure. I will not, I think, go after these secondrate pictures again to-day. If I could get a quiet day or two I would make a deep dint in the third volume; but hashed and smashed as my time is, who can make anything of it? I read over Henry's History of Henry VI. and Edward IV.; he is but a stupid historian after all. This took me up the whole day.

February 11. — Up as usual and wrought at proofs. Mr. Hay Drummond and Macintosh Mackay dined. The last brought me his history of the Blara Leine or White Battle (battle of the shirts). To the Court, and remained there till two, when we had some awkward business in the Council of the Royal Society.

February 12. — W. Lockhart came to breakfast, full of plans for his house, which will make a pretty and romantic habitation. After breakfast the Court claimed its vassal.

As I came out Mr. Chambers introduced a pretty little romantic girl to me who possessed a laudable zeal to know a live poet. I went with my fair admirer as far as the new rooms on the Mound, where I looked into the Royal Society's Rooms, then into the Exhibition, in mere unwillingness to work and desire to dawdle away time. Learned that Lord Haddington had bought the Sir Joshua. I wrought hard to-day and made out five pages.

February 13. — This morning Col. Hunter Blair breakfasted here with his wife, a very pretty woman, with a good deal of pleasant conversation. She had been in India, and had looked about her to purpose. I wrote for several

hours in the forenoon, but was nervous and drumlie; also I bothered myself about geography; in short, there was trouble, as miners say when the vein of metal is interrupted. Went out at two, and walked, thank God, better than in the winter, which gives me hopes that the failure of the unfortunate limb is only temporary, owing to severe weather. We dined at John Murray's with the Mansfield family. Lady Caroline Murray possesses, I think, the most pleasing taste for music, and is the best singer I ever heard. No temptation to display a very brilliant voice ever leads her aside from truth and simplicity, and besides, she looks beautiful when she sings.

February 14. — Wrote in the morning, which begins to be a regular act of duty. It was late ere I got home, and I did not do much. The letters I received were numerous and craved answers, yet the third volume is getting on hooly and fairly. I am twenty leaves before the printers; but Ballantyne's wife is ill, and it is his nature to indulge apprehensions of the worst, which incapacitates him for labour. I cannot help regarding this amiable weakness of the mind with something too nearly allied to contempt. I keep the press behind me at a good distance, and I, like the

> "Postboy's horse, am glad to miss
> The lumber of the wheels."

February 15. — I wrought to-day, but not much — rather dawdled, and took to reading Chambers's Beauties of Scotland, which would be admirable if they were more accurate. He is a clever young fellow, but hurts himself by too much haste. I am not making too much myself I know, and I know, too, it is time I were making it. Unhappily there is such a thing as more haste and less speed. I can very seldom think to purpose by lying perfectly idle, but when I take an idle book, or a walk, my mind strays back to its task out of contradiction as it were; the things I read become mingled with those I have been writing, and something is concocted. I cannot compare this process of the mind to anything save that of a woman to whom the mechanical operation of spinning serves as a running bass to the songs she sings, or the course of ideas she pursues. The phrase Hoc age, often quoted by my father, does not jump with my humour. I cannot nail my mind to one subject of contemplation, and it is by nourishing two trains of ideas that I can bring one into order.

Colin Mackenzie came in to see me, poor fellow. He looks well in his retirement. Partly I envy him — partly I am better pleased as it is.

February 16. — Stayed at home and laboured all the forenoon. Young Invernahyle called to bid me interest myself about getting a lad of the house of Scott a commission — how is this possible? The last I tried for, there was about 3000 on the list — and they say the boy is too old, being twentyfour. I scribbled three or four pages, forbore smoking and whisky and water, and went to the Royal Society. There Sir William Hamilton read an essay, the result of some anatomical investigations, which contained a masked battery against the phrenologists.

February 17. — In the morning I sent off copy and proof. I received the melancholy news that James Ballantyne has lost his wife. With his domestic habits the blow is irretrievable. What can he do, poor fellow, at the head of such a family of children! I should not be surprised if he were to give way to despair.

I was at the Court, where there was little to do, but it diddled away my time till two. I went to the library, but not a book could I get to look at. It is, I think, a wrong system the lending books to private houses at all, and leads to immense annual losses. I called on Skene, and borrowed a volume of his Journal, to get some information about Burgundy and Provence. Something may be made out of King René, but I wish I had thought of him sooner. Dined alone with the girls.

February 18. — This being Teind Wednesday I had a holiday. Worked the whole day, interrupted by calls from Dr. Ross, Sir Hugh Palliser, Sir David Hunter Blair, and Colonel Blair. I made out about six pages before dinner, and go to Lord Gillies's to dine with a good conscience. Hay Drummond came in, and discharged a volley at me which Mons Meg could hardly have equalled. I will go to work with Skene's Journal. My head aches violently, and has done so several days. It is cold, I think.

At Lord Gillies's we found Sir John Dalrymple, Lady Dalrymple, and Miss Ferguson, Mr. Hope Vere of Craigiehall, and Lady Elizabeth, a sister of Lord Tweeddale, Sir Robert O'Callaghan, Captain Cathcart, and others — a gay party.

February 19. — An execrable day — half frost, half fresh, half sleet, half rain, and wholly abominable. Having made up my packet for the printing-house, and performed my duty at the Court, I had the firmness to walk round by the North Bridge, and face the weather for two miles, by way of exercise. Called on Skene, and saw some of his drawings of Aix. It was near two before I got home, and now I hear three strike; part of this hour has been consumed in a sound sleep by the fireside after putting on dry things. I met Baron Hume, and we praised each other's hardihood for daring to take exercise in such weather, agreeing that if a man relax the custom of his exercise in Scotland for a bad day he is not likely to resume it in a hurry. The other moiety of the time was employed in looking over the Mémoires de Fauche-Borel.

February 20. — The Court duly took me up from eleven till about three, but left some time for labour, which I employed to purpose, at least I hope so. I declined going to the exhibition of paintings tonight; neither the beauties of art nor of nature have their former charms for me. I finished, however, about seven pages of manuscript, which is a fair half of volume III. I wish I could command a little more time and I would soon find you something or other, but the plague is that time is wanting when I feel an aptitude to work, and when time abounds, the will, at least the real efficient power of the faculties, is awanting. Still, however, we make way by degrees. I glanced over some metrical romances published by Hartshorne, several of which have not seen the light. They are considerably curious, but I was surprised to see them mingled with Blanchefleur and Florês and one or two others which might have been spared. There is no great display of notes or prolegomena, and there is, moreover, no glossary. But the work is well edited.

February 21. — Colonel Ferguson breakfasted with us. I was detained at the Parliament House till the hour of poor Mrs. Ballantyne's funeral, then attended that melancholy ceremony. The husband was unable to appear; the sight of the poor children was piteous enough. James Ballantyne has taken his brother Sandy into the house, I mean the firm, about which there had formerly been some misunderstanding.

I attended the Bannatyne Club. We made a very good election, bringing in Lord Dalhousie and the Lord Clerk Register. Our dinner went pretty well off, but I have seen it merrier. To be sure old Dr. J., like an immense featherbed, was burking me, as the phrase now goes, during the whole time. I am sure that word will stick in the language for one while.

February 22. — Very rheumatic. I e'en turned my table to the fire and feagued it away, as Bayes says. Neither did I so much as cast my eyes round to see what sort of a day it was — the splashing on the windows gave all information that was necessary. Yet, with all my leisure, during the whole day I finished only four leaves of copy — somewhat of the least, master Matthew.

There was no interruption during the whole day, though the above is a poor account of it.

February 23. — Up and at it. After breakfast Mr. Hay Drummond came in enchanted about Mons Meg, and roaring as loud as she could have done for her life when she was in perfect voice.

James Ballantyne came in, to my surprise, about twelve o'clock. He was very serious, and spoke as if he had some idea of sudden and speedy death. He mentioned that he had named Cadell, Cowan, young Hughes, and his brother to be his trustees with myself. He has settled to go to the country, poor fellow, to Timpendean, as I think.

We dined at Skene's, where we met Mr. and Mrs. George Forbes, Colonel and Mrs. Blair, George Bell, *etc.* The party was a pleasant one. Colonel Blair said, that during the Battle of Waterloo there was at the commencement some trouble necessary to prevent the men from breaking their ranks. He expostulated with one man: "Why, my good fellow, you cannot propose to beat the French alone? — better keep your ranks." The man, who was one of the 71st, returned to his ranks, saying, "I believe you are very right, sir, but I am a man of very hot temper." There was much bonhomie in the reply.

February 24. — Snowy miserable morning. I corrected my proofs, but had no time to write anything. We, *i.e.* myself and the two Annes, went to breakfast with Mr. Drummond Hay, where we again met Colonel and Mrs. Blair, with Thomas Thomson. We looked over some most beautiful

drawings which Mrs. Blair had made in different parts of India, exhibiting a species of architecture so gorgeous, and on a scale so extensive, as to put to shame the magnificence of Europe. And yet, in most cases, as little is known of the people who wrought these wonders as of the kings who built the Pyramids. Fame depends on literature, not on architecture. We are more eager to see a broken column of Cicero's villa, than all those mighty labours of barbaric power. Mrs. Blair is full of enthusiasm. She told me that when she worked with her pencil she was glad to have some one to read to her as a sort of sedative, otherwise her excitement made her tremble, and burst out acrying. I can understand this very well, having often found the necessity of doing two things at once. She is a very pretty, dark woman too, and has been compared to Rebecca, daughter of the Jew, Isaac of York.

Detained in the Court till halfpast two bothering about Lady Essex Kerr's will without coming to a conclusion. I then got home too late to do anything, as I must prepare to go to Dalmahoy. Mr. Gibson came in for a little while; no news.

I went to Dalmahoy, where we were most kindly received. It is a point of friendship, however, to go eight miles to dinner and return in the evening; and my day has been cut up without a brush of work. Smoked a cigar on my return, being very cold.

February 25. — This morning I corrected my proofs. We get on, as John Ferguson said when they put him on a hunter. I fear there is too much historical detail, and the catastrophe will be vilely huddled up. "And who can help it, Dick?" Visited James Ballantyne, and found him bearing his distress sensibly and like a man. I called in at Cadell's, and also inquired after Lady Jane Stuart, who is complaining. Three o'clock placed me at home, and from that hour till ten, deduct two hours for dinner, I was feaguing it away.

February 26. — Sent off ten pages this morning, with a revise; we spy land, but how to get my catastrophe packed into the compass allotted for it —

> "It sticks like a pistol half out of its holster,
> Or rather indeed like an obstinate bolster,

Which I think I have seen you attempting, my dear,
In vain to cram into a small pillowbeer."

There is no help for it — I must make a tour de force, and annihilate both time and space. Dined at home; nevertheless made small progress. But I must prepare my dough before I can light my oven. I would fain think I am in the right road.

February 27. — The last post brought a letter from Mr. Heath, proposing to set off his engravings for the Magnum Opus against my contributions for the Keepsake. A pretty mode of accounting that would be; he be — — . I wrote him declining his proposal; and, as he says I am still in his debt, I will send him the old drama of the House of Aspen, which I wrote some thirty years ago, and offered to the stage. This will make up my contribution, and a good deal more, if, as I recollect, there are five acts. Besides, it will save me further trouble about Heath and his Annual. Secondly, There are several manuscript copies of the play abroad, and some of them will be popping out one of these days in a contraband manner. Thirdly, If I am right as to the length of the piece, there is £100 extra work at least which will not be inconvenient at all.

Dined at Sir John Hay's with Ramsay of Barnton and his young bride, Sir David and Lady Hunter Blair, *etc.*

I should mention that Cadell breakfasted with me, and entirely approved of my rejecting Heath's letter. There was one funny part of it, in which he assured me that the success of the new edition of the Waverley Novels depended entirely on the excellence of the illustrations — vous êtes joaillier, *Mons.* Josse. He touches a point which alarms me; he greatly undervalues the portrait which Wilkie has prepared to give me for this edition. If it is as little of a likeness as he says, it is a scrape. But a scrape be it. Wilkie behaved in the kindest way, considering his very bad health, in agreeing to work for me at all, and I will treat him with due delicacy, and not wound his feelings by rejecting what he has given in such kindness. And so farewell to Mr. Heath, and the conceited vulgar Cockney his Editor.

February 28. — Finished my proofs this morning, and read part of a curious work, called Memoirs of Vidocq; a fellow who was at the head of Bonaparte's police. It is a pickaresque tale; in other words, a romance of

roguery. The whole seems much exaggerated, and got up; but I suppose there is truth au fond. I came home about two o'clock, and wrought hard and fast till night.

March

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March 1. — I laboured hard the whole day, and, between hands, refreshed myself with Vidocq's Memoirs. No one called except Hay Drummond, who had something to say about Mons Meg. So I wrote before and after dinner, till no less than ten pages were finished.

March 2. — I wrought but little to-day. I was not in the vein, and felt sleepy. I thought to go out, but disgust of the pavement kept me at home, O rus, *etc.* It is pleasant to think that the 11th March sets us on the route for Abbotsford. I shall be done long before with this confounded novel. I wish I were, for I find trouble in bringing it to a conclusion. People compliment me sometimes on the extent of my labour; but if I could employ to purpose the hours that indolence and lassitude steal away from me, they would have cause to wonder indeed. But day must have night, vigilance must have sleep, and labour, bodily or mental, must have rest. As Edgar says, I cannot fool it further. Anne is gone to Hopetoun House for two days.

Dined at the Royal Society Club, and went to the Society in the evening.

March 3. — Began this day with labour as usual, and made up my packet. Then to the Court, where there is a deal of business. Hamilton, having now a serious fit of the gout, is not expected to aid any more this season. I wrote a little both before and after dinner. Niece Anne and I dined alone. Three poets called, each bawling louder than the other — subscribe, subscribe! I generally do, if the work be under 10s.; but the wares were every one so much worse than another, that I declined in the three instances before me. I got cross at the repeated demands, and could have used Richard's apology —

> "Thou troubl'st me: I am not in the vein."

March 4. — Being Teind Wednesday, I settled myself at my desk and laboured the whole forenoon. Got on to page seventy-two, so there cannot be more than twenty pages wanted. Mr. Drummond Hay, who has an

alertness in making business out of nothing, came to call once more about Mons Meg. He is a good-humoured gentlemanlike man, but I would Meg were in his belly or he in hers. William Laidlaw also called, whom I asked to dinner. At four o'clock arrives Mr. Cadell, with his horn charged with good news. The prospectus of the Magnum, already issued only a week, has produced such a demand among the trade, that he thinks he must add a large number of copies, that the present edition of 7000 may be increased to the demand; he talks of raising it to 10,000 or 12,000. If so, I shall have a constant income to bear on my unfortunate debts to a large amount yearly, and may fairly hope to put them in a secure way of payment, even if I should be cut off in life, or in health, and the power of labour. I hope to be able, in a year or two, to make proposals for eating with my own spoons, and using my own books, which, if I can give value for them, can hardly, I think, be refused to me. In the meantime I have enough, and something to bequeath to my poor children. This is a great mercy, but I must prepare for disappointment, and I will not be elated.

Laidlaw dined with me, and, poor fellow, was as much elated with the news as I am, for it is not of a nature to be kept secret. I hope I shall have him once more at Kaeside to debate, as we used to do, on religion and politics. Meanwhile, patience, cousin, and shuffle the cards.

I must do what I can to get Cadell's discharge from his creditors; this I have always done, and so far effectually, but it would be most inconvenient to be at the mercy of creditors who may at any moment make inquiry into his affairs and so stop his operations. The Old Bank of Scotland are the only parties whose consent has not been obtained to his discharge, and they must see their interest in consenting to it for the expediting of my affairs; since to what purpose oppose it, for they have not the least chance of mending their own by refusing it.

March 5. — Proofs arranged in the morning. Sir Patrick Walker, that Solomon the second, came to propose to me that some benefit society, which he patronises, should attend upon Mons Meg; but, with the Celts at my disposal, I have every reason to think they would be affronted at being marched along with Sir Peter and his tail of trades' lads. I went to the Court, which detained me till two, then to poor old Lady Seaforth's funeral, which was numerously attended. It was near four ere I got home, bringing Skene with me. We called at Cadell's; the edition of the Magnum is raised from

7000 to 10,000. There will really be a clearance in a year or two if R.C. is not too sanguine. I never saw so much reason for indulging hope. By the bye, I am admitted a member of the Maitland Club, a Society on the principle of the Roxburghe and Bannatyne. What a tail of the alphabet I should draw after me were I to sign with the indications of the different societies I belong to, beginning with President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and ended with umpire of the Six-foot-high Club! Dined at home, and in quiet, with the girls.

March 6. — Made some considerable additions to the Appendix to General Preface. I am in the sentiments towards the public that the buffoon player expresses towards his patron —

> "Go tell my young lord, said this modest young man,
> If he will but invite me to dinner,
> I'll be as diverting as ever I can —
> I will, on the faith of a sinner."

I will multiply the notes, therefore, when there is a chance of giving pleasure and variety. There is a stronger gleam of hope on my affairs than has yet touched on them; it is not steady or certain, but it is bright and conspicuous. Ten years may last with me, though I have little chance of it. At the end of this time these works will have operated a clearance of debt, especially as Cadell offers to accommodate with such money as their house can save to pay off what presses. I hope to save, rather than otherwise, and if I leave my literary property to my children, it will make a very good thing for them, and Abbotsford must in any event go to my family, so, on the whole, I have only to pray for quiet times, for how can men mind their serious business — that is, according to Cadell's views — buying Waverley Novels when they are going mad about the Catholic question. Dined at Mr. Nairne's, where there was a great meeting of Bannatynians, rather too numerous, being on the part of our host an Election dinner.

March 7. — Sent away proofs. This extrication of my affairs, though only a Pisgah prospect, occupies my mind more than is fitting; but without some such hope I must have felt like one of the victims of the wretch Burke, struggling against a smothering weight on my bosom, till nature could endure it no longer. No; I will not be the sport of circumstances. Come of it

what will, “I’ll bend my brows like Highland trows” and make a bold fight of it.

> “The best o’t, the warst o’t,
> Is only just to die.”

And die I think I shall, though I am not such a coward as mortem conscire me ipso. But I ‘gin to grow aweary of the sun, and when the plant no longer receives nourishment from light and air, there is a speedy prospect of its withering.

Dined with the Banking Club of Scotland, in virtue of Sir Malachi Malagrowther; splendid entertainment, of course. Sir John Hay in the chair.

March 8. — Spent the morning in reading proofs and additions to Magnum. I got a note from Cadell, in which Ballantyne, by a letter enclosed, totally condemns Anne of Geierstein — three volumes nearly finished — a pretty thing, truly, for I will be expected to do it all over again. Great dishonour in this, as Trinculo says, besides an infinite loss. Sent for Cadell to attend me next morning that we may consult about this business. Peel has made his motion on the Catholic question, with a speech of three hours. It is almost a complete surrender to the Catholics, and so it should be, for half measures do but linger out the feud. This will, or rather ought to, satisfy all men who sincerely love peace, and therefore all men of property. But will this satisfy Pat, who, with all his virtues, is certainly not the most sensible person in the world? Perhaps not; and if not, it is but fighting them at last. I smoked away, and thought of ticklish politics and bad novels. Skene supped with us.

March 9. — Cadell came to breakfast. We resolved in Privy Council to refer the question whether Anne of G — — n be seaworthy or not to further consideration, which, as the book cannot be published, at any rate, during the full rage of the Catholic question, may be easily managed. After breakfast I went to Sir William Arbuthnot’s, and met there a select party of Tories, to decide whether we should act with the Whigs by owning their petition in favour of the Catholics. I was not free from apprehension that the petition might be put into such general language as I, at least, was unwilling to authenticate by my subscription. The Solicitor was voucher that they would keep the terms quite general; whereupon we subscribed the

requisition for a meeting, with a slight alteration, affirming that it was our desire not to have intermeddled, had not the anti-Catholics pursued that course; and so the Whigs and we are embarked in the same boat, vogue la galère.

Went about one o'clock to the Castle, where we saw the auld murderess Mons Meg brought up there in solemn procession to reoccupy her ancient place on the Argyle battery. Lady Hopetoun was my belle. The day was cold but serene, and I think the ladies must have been cold enough, not to mention the Celts, who turned out upon the occasion, under the leading of Cluny Macpherson, a fine spirited lad. Mons Meg is a monument of our pride and poverty. The size is immense, but six smaller guns would have been made at the same expense, and done six times as much execution as she could have done. There was immense interest taken in the show by the people of the town, and the numbers who crowded the Castlehill had a magnificent appearance. About thirty of our Celts attended in costume; and as there was a Highland regiment on duty, with dragoons and artillerymen, the whole made a splendid show. The dexterity with which the last manned and wrought the windlass which raised old Meg, weighing seven or eight tons, from her temporary carriage to that which has been her basis for many years, was singularly beautiful as a combined exhibition of skill and strength. My daughter had what might have proved a frightful accident. Some rockets were let off, one of which lighted upon her head, and set her bonnet on fire. She neither screamed nor ran, but quietly permitted Charles K. Sharpe to extinguish the fire, which he did with great coolness and dexterity. All who saw her, especially the friendly Celts, gave her merit for her steadiness, and said she came of good blood. I was very glad and proud of her presence of mind. My own courage was not put to the test, for being at some distance, escorting the beautiful and lively Countess of Hopetoun, I did not hear of the accident till it was over. We lunched with the regiment (73d) now in the Castle. The little entertainment gave me an opportunity of observing what I have often before remarked — the improvement in the character of the young and subaltern officers in the army, which in the course of a long and bloody war had been, in point of rank and manners, something deteriorated. The number of persons applying for commissions (3000 being now on the lists) gives an opportunity of selection, and officers should certainly be gentlemen, with a complete opening to all who can rise

by merit. The style in which duty, and the knowledge of their profession, is enforced, prevents fainéants from long remaining in the profession.

In the evening I presided at the Celtic Club, who received me with their usual partiality. I like this society, and willingly give myself to be excited by the sight of handsome young men with plaids and claymores, and all the alertness and spirit of Highlanders in their native garb. There was the usual degree of excitation — excellent dancing, capital songs, a general inclination to please and to be pleased. A severe cold, caught on the battlements of the Castle, prevented me from playing first fiddle so well as usual, but what I could do was received with the usual partiality of the Celts. I got home, fatigued and vino gravatus, about eleven o'clock. We had many guests, some of whom, English officers, seemed both amused and surprised at our wild ways, especially at the dancing without ladies, and the mode of drinking favourite toasts, by springing up with one foot on the bench and one on the table, and the peculiar shriek of applause so unlike English cheering.

March 10. — This may be a short day in the diary, though a busy one to me. I arranged books and papers in the morning, and went to Court after breakfast, where, as Sir Robert Dundas and I had the whole business to discharge, I remained till two or three. Then visited Cadell, and transacted some pecuniary matters.

March 11, [Abbotsford]. — I had, as usual, a sort of levée the day I was to leave town, all petty bills and petty business being reserved to the last by those who might as well have applied any one day of the present month. But I need not complain of what happens to my betters, for on the last day of the Session there pours into the Court a succession of trifles which give the Court, and especially the Clerks, much trouble, insomuch that a cidevant brother of mine proposed that the last day of the Session should be abolished by Statute. We got out of Court at a quarter-past one, and got to Abbotsford at halfpast seven, cold and hungry enough to make Scots broth, English roast beef, and a large fire very acceptable.

March 12. — I set apart this day for trifles and dawdling; yet I meditate doing something on the Popish and Protestant affray. I think I could do some good, and I have the sincere wish to do it. I heard the merry birds sing, reviewed my dogs, and was cheerful. I also unpacked books. Deuce

take arrangement! I think it the most complete bore in the world; but I will try a little of it. I afterwards went out and walked till dinner-time. I read Reginald Heber's Journal after dinner. I spent some merry days with him at Oxford when he was writing his prize poem. He was then a gay young fellow, a wit, and a satirist, and burning for literary fame. My laurels were beginning to bloom, and we were both madcaps. Who would have foretold our future lot?

> "Oh, little did my mither ken
> The day she cradled me
> The land I was to travel in,
> Or the death I was to die."

March 13. — Wrought at a review of Fraser Tytler's History of Scotland. It is somewhat saucy towards Lord Hailes. I had almost stuck myself into the controversy Slough of Despond — the controversy, that is, between the Gothic and Celtic system — but cast myself, like Christian, with a strong struggle or two to the further side of this Slough; and now will I walk on my way rejoicing — not on my article, however, but to the fields. Came home and rejoiced at dinner. After tea I worked a little more. I began to warm in my gear, and am about to awake the whole controversy of Goth and Celt. I wish I may not make some careless blunders.

March 14. — Up at eight, rather of the latest — then fagged at my review, both before and after breakfast. I walked from one o'clock till near three. I make it out, I think, rather better than of late I have been able to do in the streets of Edinburgh, where I am ashamed to walk so slow as would suit me. Indeed nothing but a certain suspicion, that once drawn up on the beach I would soon break up, prevents me renouncing pedestrian exercises altogether, for it is positive suffering, and of an acute kind too.

March 15. — Altogether like yesterday. Wrote in the morning — breakfasted — wrote again till one — out and walked about two hours — to the quills once more — dinner — smoked a brace of cigars and looked on the fire — a page of writing, and so to bed.

March 16. — Day sullen and bitter cold. I fear it brings chilblains on its

wings. A dashing of snow, in thin flakes, wandering from the horizon, and threatening a serious fall. As the murderer says to Banquo, “Let it come down!” — we shall have the better chance of fair weather hereafter. It cleared up, however, and I walked from one, or thereabout, till within a quarter of four. A card from Mr. Dempster of Skibo, whose uncle, George Dempster, I knew many years since, a friend of Johnson, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and all that set — a fine good-humoured old gentleman. Young Mrs. Dempster is a daughter of my early friend and patron, Robert Dundas of Arniston, Lord Advocate, and I like her for his sake. Mr. Dempster is hunting, and I should have liked to have given his wife and sister refuge during the time he must spend over moss and moor. But the two Annes going to Edinburgh to a fancy ball makes it impossible till they return on Friday night.

March 17. — The Annes went off at eight, morning. After breakfast I drove down to Melrose and waited on Mrs. and Miss Dempster, and engaged them for Saturday. Weather bitter cold; yea, atrociously so. Naboclish — the better for work. Ladies whose husbands love foxhunting are in a poor way. Here are two pleasant and pretty women pegged up the whole day

> “In the worst inn’s worst room”

for the whole twentyfour hours without interruption. They manage the matter otherwise in France, where ladies are the lords of the ascendant. I returned from my visit to my solitary work and solitary meal. I eked out the last two hours’ length by dint of smoking, which I find a sedative without being a stimulant.

March 18. — I like the hermit life indifferent well, nor would, I sometimes think, break my heart, were I to be in that magic mountain where food was regularly supplied by ministering genii, and plenty of books were accessible without the least intervention of human society. But this is thinking like a fool. Solitude is only agreeable when the power of having society is removed to a short space, and can be commanded at pleasure. “It is not good for man to be alone.” It blunts our faculties and freezes our active virtues. And now, my watch pointing to noon, I think after four hours’ work I may indulge myself with a walk. The dogs see me about to shut my desk, and intimate their happiness by caresses and whining. By your leave,

Messrs. Genii of the Mountain library, if I come to your retreat I'll bring my dogs with me.

The day was showery, but not unpleasant — soft dropping rains, attended by a mild atmosphere, that spoke of flowers in their seasons, and a chirping of birds that had a touch of Spring in it. I had the patience to get fully wet, and the grace to be thankful for it.

Come! a leetle flourish on the trumpet. Let us rouse the genius of this same red mountain, so called because it is all the year covered with roses. There can be no difficulty in finding it, for it lies towards the Caspian, and is quoted in the Persian tales. Well, I open my Ephemerides, form my scheme under the suitable planet, and the genie obeys the invocation and appears.

Genie is a misshapen dwarf, with a huge jolterhead like that of Boerhave on the Bridge, his limbs and body marvellously shrunk and disproportioned.

> "Sir Dwarf," said I, undauntedly, "thy head is very large, and thy feet and limbs somewhat small in proportion."

Genie. "I have crammed my head, even to the overflowing, with knowledge; I have starved my limbs by disuse of exercise and denial of sustenance!"

Author. "Can I acquire wisdom in thy solitary library?"

G. "Thou mayest!"

A. "On what conditions?"

G. "Renounce all gross and fleshly pleasure, eat pulse and drink water, converse with none but the wise and learned, alive and dead!"

A. "Why, this were to die in the cause of wisdom."

G. "If you desire to draw from our library only the advantage of seeming wise, you may have it consistent with all your favourite enjoyments!"

A. "How much sleep?"

G. "A Lapland night — eight months out of the twelve!"

A. "Enough for a dormouse, most generous Genius. — A bottle of wine?"

G. "Two, if you please; but you must not seem to care for them — cigars in loads, whisky in lashings; but they must be taken with an air of

contempt, a floccipaucinihilipilification of all that can gratify the outward man."

A. "I am about to ask you a serious question — When you have stuffed your stomach, drunk your bottle, smoked your cigar, how are you to keep yourself awake?"

G. "Either by cephalic snuff or castle-building!"

A. "Do you approve of castle-building as a frequent exercise?"

G. "Life were not life without it!
'Give me the joy that sickens not the heart,
Give me the wealth that has no wings to fly.'"

A. "I reckon myself one of the best aërial architects now living, and nil me pænitet hujus."

G. "Nec est cur te pæniteat; most of your novels have previously been subjects for airy castles."

A. "You have me — and moreover a man of imagination derives experience from such imaginary situations. There are few situations in which I have not in fancy figured, and there are few, of course, which I am not previously prepared to take some part in."

G. "True, but I am afraid your having fancied yourself victorious in many a fight would be of little use were you suddenly called to the field, and your personal infirmities and nervous agitations both rushing upon you and incapacitating you."

A. "My nervous agitations! — away with thee! Down, down to Limbo and the burning lake! False fiend, avoid!"

So there ends the tale,
With a hey, with a hoy,
So there ends the tale,
With a ho.
There is a moral. If you fail
To seize it by the tail,
Its import will exhale,
You must know.

March 19. — The above was written yesterday before dinner, though appearances are to the contrary. I only meant that the studious solitude I have sometimes dreamed of, unless practised with rare stoicism and privation, was apt to degenerate into secret sensual indulgences of coarser appetites, which, when the cares and restraints of social life are removed, are apt to make us think, with Dr. Johnson, our dinner the most important event of the day. So much in the way of explanation — a humour which I love not. Go to.

My girls returned from Edinburgh with full news of their bal paré.

March 20. — We spent this day on the same terms as formerly. I wrought, walked, dined, drank, and smoked upon the same pattern.

March 21. — To-day brought Mrs. Dempster and her sister-in-law. To dinner came Robert Dundas of Arniston from the hunting-field, and with him Mr. Dempster of Skibo, both favourites of mine. Mr. Stuart, the grand-nephew of my dear friend Lady Louisa, also dined with us, together with the Lyons from Gattonside, and the day passed over in hospitality and social happiness.

March 22. — Being Sunday, I read prayers to our guests, then went a long walk by the lake to Huntly Burn. It is somewhat uncomfortable to feel difficulties increase and the strength to meet them diminish. But why should man fret? While iron is dissolved by rust, and brass corrodes, can our dreams be of flesh and blood enduring? But I will not dwell on this depressing subject. My liking to my two young guests is founded on "things that are long enough ago." The first statesman of celebrity whom I personally knew was Mr. Dempster's granduncle, George Dempster of Dunnichen, celebrated in his time, and Dundas's father was, when Lord Advocate, the first man of influence who showed kindness to me.

March 23. — Arrived to breakfast one of the Courland nobility, Baron A. von Meyersdorff, a fine, lively, spirited young man, fond of his country and incensed at its degradation under Russia. He talked much of the orders of chivalry who had been feudal lords of Livonia, especially the order of Porte Glaive, to which his own ancestors had belonged. If he report correctly,

there is a deep principle of action at work in Germany, Poland, Russia, etc., which, if it does "not die in thinking," will one day make an explosion. The Germans are a nation, however, apt to exhaust themselves in speculation. The Baron has enthusiasm, and is well read in English and foreign literature. I kept my state till one, and wrote notes to Croker upon Boswell's Scottish tour. It was an act of friendship, for time is something of a scarce article with me. But Croker has been at all times personally kind and actively serviceable to me, and he must always command my best assistance. Then I walked with the Baron as far as the Lake. Our sportsmen came in good time to dinner, and our afternoon was pleasant.

March 24. — This morning our sportsmen took leave, and their ladykind (to renchérir on Anthony a-Wood and Mr. Oldbuck) followed after breakfast, and I went to my work till one, and at that hour treated the Baron to another long walk, with which he seemed highly delighted. He tells me that my old friend the Princess Galitzin is dead. After dinner I had a passing visit from Kinnear, to bid me farewell. This very able and intelligent young man, so able to throw a grace over commercial pursuits, by uniting them with literature, is going with his family to settle in London. I do not wonder at it. His parts are of a kind superior to the confined sphere in which he moves in Scotland. In London, he says, there is a rapid increase of business and its opportunities. Thus London licks the butter off our bread, by opening a better market for ambition. Were it not for the difference of the religion and laws, poor Scotland could hardly keep a man that is worth having; and yet men will not see this. I took leave of Kinnear, with hopes for his happiness and fortune, but yet with some regret for the sake of the country which loses him. The Baron agreed to go with Kinnear to Kelso: and exit with the usual demonstrations of German enthusiasm.

March 25. — I worked in the morning, and think I have sent Croker a packet which may be useful, and to Lockhart a critique on rather a dry topic, viz.: the ancient Scottish History. I remember E. Ainslie, commonly called the plain man, who piqued himself on his powers of conversation, striving to strike fire from some old flinty wretch whom he found in a corner of a public coach, at length addressed him: "Friend, I have tried you on politics, literary matters, religion, fashionable news, *etc.* etc., and all to no purpose." The dry old rogue, twisting his muzzle into an infernal grin,

replied, “Can you claver about bend leather?” The man, be it understood, was a leather merchant. The early history of Caledonia is almost as hopeless a subject, but off it goes. I walked up the Glen with Tom for my companion. Dined, heard Anne reading a paper of anecdotes about Cluny Macpherson, and so to bed.

March 26. — As I have been so lately Johnsonizing, I should derive, if possible, some personal use. Johnson advises Boswell to keep a diary, and to omit registers of the weather, and like trumpery. I am resolved in future not to register what is yet more futile — my gleams of bright and clouded temper. Boswell — whose nerves were, one half madness, and half affectation — has thrummed upon this topic till it is threadbare. I have at this moment forty things to do, and great inclination to do none of them. I ended by working till two, walking till five, writing letters, and so to bed.

March 27. — Letters again. Let me see. I wrote to Lord Montagu about Scott of Beirlaw’s commission, in which Invernahyle interests himself. Item, to a lady who is pestering me about a Miss Campbell sentenced to transportation for stealing a silver spoon. Item, to John Eckford. Item, to James Loch, to get an appointment for Sandie Ballantyne’s son. Not one, as Dangle says, about any business of my own. My correspondence is on a most disinterested footing. This lasts till past eleven, then enters my cousin R., and remains for two hours, till politics, family news, talk of the neighbourhood are all exhausted, and two or three reputations torn to pieces in the scouring of them. At length I walk him out about a mile, and come back from that empêchement. But it is only to find Mr. [Henry] C[ranstoun], my neighbour, in the parlour with the girls, and there is another sederunt of an hour. Well, such things must be, and our friends mean them as civility, and we must take and give the currency of the country. But I am diddled out of a day all the same. The ladies came from Huntly Burn, and cut off the evening.

March 28. — In spite of the temptation of a fine morning, I toiled manfully at the review till two o’clock, commencing at seven. I fear it will be uninteresting, but I like the muddling work of antiquities, and, besides, wish to record my sentiments with regard to the Gothic question. No one that has not laboured as I have done on imaginary topics can judge of the comfort

afforded by walking on all-fours, and being grave and dull. I dare say, when the clown of the pantomime escapes from his nightly task of vivacity, it is his special comfort to smoke a pipe and be prosy with some goodnatured fellow, the dullest of his acquaintance. I have seen such a tendency in Sir Adam Ferguson, the gayest man I ever knew; and poor Tom Sheridan has complained to me of the fatigue of supporting the character of an agreeable companion.

March 29. — I wrote, read, and walked with the most stoical regularity. This muddling among old books has the quality of a sedative, and saves the tear and wear of an overwrought brain. I wandered on the hills pleasantly enough and concluded a pleasant and laborious day.

March 30. — I finished the remainder of the criticism and sent it off. Pray Heaven it break not the mail coach down.

Lord and Lady Dalhousie, and their relation, Miss Hawthorne, came to dinner, to meet whom we had Dr. and Mrs. Brewster. Lord Dalhousie has more of the Caledonian prisca fides than any man I know now alive. He has served his country in all quarters of the world and in every climate; yet, though my contemporary, looks ten years my junior. He laughed at the idea of rigid temperance, and held an occasional skirmish no bad thing even in the West Indies, thinking, perhaps, with Armstrong, of "the rare debauch". In all incidents of life he has been the same steady, honest, truehearted Lord Dalhousie, that Lordie Ramsay promised to be when at the High School. How few such can I remember, and how poorly have honesty and valour been rewarded! Here, at the time when most men think of repose, he is bundled off to command in India. Would it had been the Chief Governorship! But to have remained at home would have been bare livelihood, and that is all. I asked him what he thought of "strangling a nabob, and rifling his jewel closet," and he answered, "No, no, an honest man." I fear we must add, a poor one. Lady Dalhousie, formerly Miss Brown of Coalstoun, is an amiable, intelligent, and lively woman, who does not permit society to "cream and mantle like a standing pool."

The weather, drifting and surly, does not permit us to think of Melrose, and I could only fight round the thicket with Dr. Brewster and his lordship. Lord Dalhousie gave me some interesting accounts of the American Indians. They are, according to his lordship, decaying fast in numbers and

principle. Lord Selkirk's property now makes large returns, from the stock of the North West Company and Hudson's Bay Companies having united. I learned from Lord Dalhousie that he had been keeping a diary since the year 1800. Should his narrative ever see the light, what a contrast will it form to the flourishing vapouring accounts of most of the French merchants! Mr. and Mrs. Skene with their daughter Kitty, who has been indisposed, came to dinner, and the party was a well-assorted one.

April

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April 1. — A pretty first of April truly; the hills white with snow, I myself as bilious as a dog. My noble guests left about noon. I wrote letters, as if I had not bile enough in my bosom already, and did not go out to face the snow wreaths till halfpast two, when I am resolved to make a brush for exercise. There will be fine howling among the dogs, for I am about to shut my desk. Found Mrs. Skene disposed to walk, so I had the advantage of her company. The snow lay three inches thick on the ground; but we had the better appetite for dinner, after which we talked and read without my lifting a pen.

April 2. — Begins with same brilliant prospect of snow and sunshine dazzling to the eyes and chilling to the fingers, a beastly disagreeable coldness in the air. I stuck by the pen till one, then took a drive with the ladies as far as Chiefswood and walked home. Young William Forbes came, and along with him a Southron, Mr. Cleasby.

April 3. — Still the same party. I fagged at writing letters to Lockhart, to Charles, and to John Gibson, to Mr. Cadell, Croker, Lord Haddington, and others. Lockhart has had an overture through Croker requesting him to communicate with some newspaper on the part of the Government, which he has wisely declined. Nothing but a thorough-going blackguard ought to attempt the daily press, unless it is some quiet country diurnal. Lockhart has also a wicked wit which would make an office of this kind more dangerous to him than to downright dulness. I am heartily glad he has refused it.

Sir James Mackintosh and Lord Haddington have spoken very handsomely of my accession to the Catholic Petition, and I think it has done some good; yet I am not confident that the measure will disarm the Catholic spleen. And I was not entirely easy at finding myself allied to the Whigs, even in this instance, where I agree with them. This is witless prejudice, however.

My walk to-day was up the Rhymer's Glen with Skene. Colonel Ferguson dined with us.

April 4. — Mr. Cleasby left this morning. He has travelled much, and is a young man of copious conversation and ready language, aiming I suppose at Parliament. William Forbes is singing like an angel in the next room, but he sings only Italian music, which says naught to me. I have a letter from one David Patterson, who was Dr. Knox's jackal for buying murdered bodies, suggesting that I should write on the subject of Burke and Hare, and offering me his invaluable collection of anecdotes! "Curse him imperance and him dam insurance," as Mungo says in the farce. Did ever one hear the like? The scoundrel has been the companion and patron of such atrocious murderers and kidnappers, and he has the impudence to write to any decent man!

Corrected proof-sheets and dedication of the Magnum and sent them off.

April 5. — Read prayers to what remains of our party: being Anne, my niece Anne, the four Skenes, and William Forbes. We then walked, and I returned time enough to work a little at the criticism. Thus it drew towards dinner in conclusion, after which we smoked, told stories, and drank tea.

April 6. — Worked at the review for three or four hours; yet hang it, I can't get on. I wonder if I am turning clumsy in other matters; certainly I cannot write against time as I used to do. My thoughts will not be duly regulated; my pen declares for itself, will neither write nor spell, and goes under independent colours. I went out with the child Kitty Skene on her pony. I don't much love children, I suppose from want of habit, but this is a fine merry little girl.

William Forbes sang in the evening with a feeling and taste indescribably fine, but as he had no Scottish or English songs, my ears were not much gratified. I have no sense beyond Mungo: "What signify me hear if me no understand!"

William Forbes leaves us. As to the old story, scribble till two, then walk for exercise till four. Deil hae it else, for company eats up the afternoon, so nothing can be done that is not achieved in the forenoon.

April 7. — We had a gay scene this morning — the foxhounds and merry hunters in my little base court, which rung with trampling steeds, and

rejoiced in scarlet jackets and ringing horns. I have seen the day worlds would not have bribed me to stay behind them; but that is over, and I walked a sober pace up to the Abbot's Knowe, from which I saw them draw my woods, but without finding a fox. I watched them with that mixture of interest, affection, and compassion which old men feel at looking on the amusements of the young. I was so far interested in the chase itself as to be sorry they did not find. I had so far the advantage of the visit, that it gave me an object for the morning exercise, which I would otherwise only have been prompted to by health and habit. It is pleasant to have one's walk, — as heralds say, with a difference. By the way, the foxhunters hunted the cover far too fast. When they found a path they ran through it pell-mell without beating at all. They had hardly left the hare-hole cover, when a fox, which they had overrun, stole away. This is the consequence of breeding dogs too speedy.

April 8. — We have the news of the Catholic question being carried in the House of Lords, by a majority of 105 upon the second reading. This is decisive, and the balsam of Fierabras must be swallowed. It remains to see how it will work. Since it was indubitably necessary, I am glad the decision on the case has been complete. On these last three days I have finished my review of Tytler for Lockhart and sent it off by this post. I may have offended Peter by censuring him for a sort of petulance towards his predecessor Lord Hailes. This day visited by Mr. Carr, who is a sensible, clever young man, and by his two sisters — beautiful singer the youngest — and to my taste, and English music.

April 9. — Laboured correcting proofs and revising; the day infinitely bad. Worked till three o'clock; then tried a late walk, and a wet one.

I hear bad news of James Ballantyne. Hypochondriac I am afraid, and religiously distressed in mind.

I got a book from the Duke de Lévis, the same gentleman with whom I had an awkward meeting at Abbotsford, owing to his having forgot his credentials, which left me at an unpleasant doubt as to his character and identity. His book is inscribed to me with hyperbolical praises. Now I don't like to have, like the Persian poets who have the luck to please the Sun of the Universe, my mouth crammed with sugar-candy, which politeness will not permit me to spit out, and my stomach is indisposed to swallow. The

book is better than would be expected from the exaggerated nonsense of the dedication.

April 10. — Left Abbotsford at seven to attend the Circuit. *Nota bene* — halfpast six is the better hour; waters are extremely flooded. Lord Meadowbank at the Circuit. Nothing tried but a few trumpery assaults. Meadowbank announces he will breakfast with me tomorrow, so I shall return tonight. Promised to my cousin Charles Scott to interest myself about his getting the farm of Milsington upon Borthwick Water and mentioned him to Colonel Riddell as a proposed offerer. The tender was well received. I saw James the piper and my cousin Anne; sent to James Veitch the spyglass of Professor Ferguson to be repaired. Dined with the Judge and returned in the evening.

April 11. — Meadowbank breakfasted with us, and then went on to Edinburgh, pressed by bad news of his family. His wife (daughter of my early patron, President Blair) is very ill; indeed I fear fatally so. I am sorry to think it is so. When the King was here she was the finest woman I saw at Holyrood. My proofs kept me working till two; then I had a fatiguing and watery walk. After dinner we smoked, and I talked with Mr. Carr over criminal jurisprudence, the choicest of conversation to an old lawyer; and the delightful music of Miss Isabella Carr closed the day. Still, I don't get to my task; but I will, tomorrow or next day.

April 12. — Read prayers, put my books in order and made some progress in putting papers in order which have been multiplying on my table. I have a letter from that impudent lad Reynolds about my contribution to the Keepsake. Sent to him the House of Aspen, as I had previously determined. This will give them a lumping pennyworth in point of extent, but that's the side I would have the bargain rest upon. It shall be a warning after this to keep out of such a scrape.

April 13. — In the morning before breakfast I corrected the proof of the critique on the life of Lord Pitsligo in Blackwood's Magazine. After breakfast Skene and his lady and family, and Mr. Carr and his sisters, took their departure. Time was dawdled away till nearly twelve o'clock and then I could not work much. I finished, however, a painful letter to J. Ballantyne,

which I hope will have effect upon the nervous disorder he complains of. He must "awake, arise, or be for ever fallen." I walked happily and pleasantly from two o'clock till four. And now I must look to Anne of Geierstein. Hang it! it is not so bad after all, though I fear it will not be popular. In fact, I am almost expended; but while I exhort others to exertion I will not fail to exert myself. I have a letter from R.P. G[illies] proposing to subscribe to assist him from £25 to £50. It will do no good, but yet I cannot help giving him something.

> "A daimen-icker in a thrave's a sma' request:
> I'll get a blessing wi' the lave, and never miss't."

I will try a review for the Foreign and he shall have the proceeds.

April 14. — I sent off proofs of the review of Tytler for John Lockhart. Then set a stout heart to a stay brae, and took up Anne of Geierstein. I had five sheets standing by me, which I read with care, and satisfied myself that worse had succeeded, but it was while the fashion of the thing was new. I retrenched a good deal about the Troubadours, which was really hors de place. As to King René, I retained him as a historical character. In short, I will let the sheets go nearly as they are, for though J.B. be an excellent judge of this species of composition, he is not infallible, and has been in circumstances which may cross his mind. I might have taken this determination a month since, and I wish I had. But I thought I might strike out something better by the braes and burnsides. Alas! I walk along them with painful and feeble steps, and invoke their influence in vain. But my health is excellent, and it were ungrateful to complain either of mental or bodily decay. We called at Elliston to-day and made up for some illbred delay. In the evening I corrected two sheets of the Magnum, as we call it.

April 15. — I took up Anne, and wrote, with interruption of a nap (in which my readers may do well to imitate me), till two o'clock. I wrote with care, having digested Comines. Whether I succeed or not, it would be dastardly to give in. A bold countenance often carries off an indifferent cause, but no one will defend him who shows the white feather. At two I walked till near four. Dined with the girls, smoked two cigars, and to work again till supper-time. Slept like a top. Amount of the day's work, eight pages — a round task.

April 16. — I meant to go out with Bogie to plant some shrubs in front of the old quarry, but it rains cats and dogs as they say, a rare day for grinding away at the old mill of imagination, yet somehow I have no great will to the task. After all, however, the morning proved a true April one, sunshine and shower, and I both worked to some purpose, and moreover walked and directed about planting the quarry.

The post brought matter for a May or April morning — a letter from Sir James Mackintosh, telling me that Moore and he were engaged as contributors to Longman's Encyclopædia, and asking me to do a volume at £1000, the subject to be the History of Scotland in one volume. This would be very easy work. I have the whole stuff in my head, and could write currente calamo. The size is as I compute it about onethird larger than The Tales of my Grandfather. There is much to be said on both sides. Let me balance pros and cons after the fashion of honest Robinson Crusoe. Pro. — It is the sum I have been wishing for, sufficient to enable me to break the invisible but magic circle which petty debts of myself and others have traced round me. With common prudence I need no longer go from hand to mouth, or what is worse, anticipate my means. I may also pay off some small shop debts, etc., belonging to the Trust, clear off all Anne's embarrassment, and even make some foundation of a purse for her. N.B. — I think this whacking reason is like to prove the gallon of Cognac brandy, which a lady recommended as the foundation of a Liqueur. "Stop, dear madam, if you please," said my grandfather, Dr. Rutherford, "you can [add] nothing to that; it is flaconnadé with £1000," and a capital hit, egad. Contra. — It is terribly like a hack author to make an abridgement of what I have written so lately. Pro. — But a difference may be taken. A history may be written of the same country on a different plan, general where the other is detailed, and philosophical where it is popular. I think I can do this, and do it with unwashed hands too. For being hacked, what is it but another word for being an author? I will take care of my name doubtless, but the five letters which form it must take care of me in turn. I never knew name or fame burn brighter by over chary keeping of it. Besides, there are two gallant hacks to pull with me. Contra. — I have a monstrous deal on hand. Let me see: Life of Argyll, and Life of Peterborough for Lockhart. Third series Tales of my Grandfather — review for Gillies — new novel — end of Anne of Geierstein. Pro. — But I have just finished too long reviews for

Lockhart. The third series is soon discussed. The review may be finished in three or four days, and the novel is within a week and less of conclusion. For the next, we must first see how this goes off. In fine, within six weeks, I am sure I can do the work and secure the independence I sigh for. Must I not make hay while the sun shines? Who can tell what leisure, health, and life may be destined to me?

Adjourned the debate till tomorrow morning.

April 17. — I resumed the discussion of the bargain about the history. The ayes to the right, the noes to the left. The ayes have it — so I will write to Sir James of this date. But I will take a walk first, that I will. A little shaken with the conflict, for after all were I as I have been — — . "My poverty but not my will consents."

I have been out in a most delicious real spring day. I returned with my nerves strung and my mind determined. I will make this plunge, and with little doubt of coming off no loser in character. What is given in detail may be suppressed, general views may be enlarged upon, and a bird's-eye prospect given, not the less interesting, that we have seen its prominent points nearer and in detail. I have been of late in a great degree free from wafered letters, sums to make up, notes of hand wanted, and all the worry of an embarrassed man's life. This last struggle will free me entirely, and so help me Heaven it shall be made! I have written to Sir James, stating that I apprehend the terms to be £1000, namely, for one volume containing about onethird more than one of the volumes of Tales of my Grandfather, and agreeing to do so. Certes, few men can win a thousand pounds so readily.

We dine with the Fergusons to-day at four. So off we went and safely returned.

April 18. — Corrected proofs. I find J.B. has not returned to his business, though I wrote him how necessary it was. My pity begins to give way to anger. Must he sit there and squander his thoughts and senses upon cloudy metaphysics and abstruse theology till he addles his brains entirely, and ruins his business? I have written to him again, letter third and, I am determined, last.

Wrote also to the fop Reynolds, with preface to the House of Aspen, then to honest Joseph Train desiring he would give me some notion how to

serve him with Messrs. Carr, and to take care to make his ambition moderate and feasible.

My neighbour, Mr. Kerr of Kippielaw, struck with a palsy while he was looking at the hounds; his pony remained standing by his side. A sudden call if a final one.

That strange desire to leave a prescribed task and set about something else seized me irresistibly. I yielded to it, and sat down to try at what speed and in what manner I could execute this job of Sir James Mackintosh's, and I wrote three leaves before rising, well enough, I think. The girls made a round with me. We drove to Chiefswood, and from that to Janeswood, up the Rhymer's Glen, and so home. This occupied from one to four. In the evening I heard Anne read Mr. Peel's excellent Bill on the Police of the Metropolis, which goes to disband the whole generation of Dogberry and Verges. Wrote after tea.

April 19. — I made this a busy day. I wrote on at the history until two o'clock, then took a gallant walk, then began reading for Gillies's article. James Ferguson dined with us. We smoked and I became woundy sleepy. Now I have taken collar to this arrangement, I find an open sea before me which I could not have anticipated, for though I should get through well enough with my expectations during the year, yet it is a great thing to have a certainty to be clear as a new pin of every penny of debt. There is no being obliged or asking favours or getting loans from some grudging friend who can never look at you after but with fear of losing his cash, or you at him without the humiliating sense of having extorted an obligation. Besides my large debts, I have paid since I was in trouble at least £2000 of personal encumbrances, so no wonder my nose is still under water. I really believe the sense of this apparently unending struggle, schemes for retrenchment in which I was unseconded, made me low-spirited, for the sun seems to shine brighter upon me as a free man. Nevertheless, devil take the necessity which makes me drudge like a very hack of Grub Street.

"May the foul fa' the gear and the bletherie o 't."

I walked out with Tom's assistance, came home, went through the weary work of cramming, and so forth; wrought after tea, and then to bed.

April 20. — As yesterday till two — sixteen pages of the History written,

and not less than one-fifth of the whole book. What if they should be off? I were finely holp'd for throwing my time away. A toy! They dare not.

Lord Buchan is dead, a person whose immense vanity, bordering upon insanity, obscured, or rather eclipsed, very considerable talents. His imagination was so fertile that he seemed really to believe the extraordinary fictions which he delighted in telling. His economy, most laudable in the early part of his life, when it enabled him, from a small income, to pay his father's debts, became a miserable habit, and led him to do mean things. He had a desire to be a great man, and a Mæcenas bon marché. The two celebrated lawyers, his brothers, were not more gifted by nature than I think he was, but the restraints of a profession kept the eccentricity of the family in order. Henry Erskine was the best-natured man I ever knew, thoroughly a gentleman, and with but one fault: he could not say no, and thus sometimes misled those who trusted him. Tom Erskine was positively mad. I have heard him tell a cock-and-a-bull story of having seen the ghost of his father's servant, John Burnet, with as much sincerity as if he believed every word he was saying. Both Henry and Thomas were saving men, yet both died very poor. The one at one time possessed £200,000; the other had a considerable fortune. The Earl alone has died wealthy. It is saving, not getting, that is the mother of riches. They all had wit. The Earl's was crackbrained and sometimes caustic; Henry's was of the very kindest, best-humoured, and gayest that ever cheered society; that of Lord Erskine was moody and maddish. But I never saw him in his best days.

Went to Haining. Time has at last touched the beautiful Mrs. Pringle. I wonder he was not ashamed of himself for spoiling so fine a form. But what cares he? Corrected proofs after dinner. James B. is at last at work again.

April 21. — Spent the whole morning at writing, still the History, such is my wilful whim. Twenty pages now finished — I suppose the clear fourth part of a volume. I went out, but the day being sulky I sat in the Conservatory, after trying a walk! I have been glancing over the works for Gillies's review, and I think on them between-hands while I compose the History, — an odd habit of doing two things at once, but it has always answered with me well enough.

April 22. — Another hard day's work at the History, now increased to the Bruce and Baliol period, and threatening to be too lengthy for the

Cyclopædia. But I will make short work with wars and battles. I wrote till two o'clock, and strolled with old Tom and my dogs till halfpast four, hours of pleasure and healthful exercise, and to-day taken with ease. A letter from J.B., stating an alarm that he may lose the printing of a part of the Magnum. But I shall write him he must be his own friend, set shoulder to the wheel, and remain at the head of his business; and of that I must make him aware. And so I set to my proofs. "Better to work," says the inscription on Hogarth's Bridewell, "than stand thus."

April 23. — A cold blustering day — bad welcome for the poor lambs. I made my walk short and my task long, my work turning entirely on the History — all on speculation. But the post brought me a letter from Dr. Lardner, the manager of the Cyclopædia, agreeing to my terms; so all is right there, and no labour thrown away. The volume is to run to 400 pages; so much the better; I love elbow-room, and will have space to do something to purpose. I replied agreeing to his terms, and will send him copy as soon as I have corrected it. The Colonel and Miss Ferguson dined with us. I think I drank rather a cheerful glass with my good friend. Smoked an extra cigar, so no more at present.

April 25. — After writing to Mr. Cochrane, to Cadell and J.B., also to Mr. Pitcairn, it was time to set out for Lord Buchan's funeral. The funeral letters were signed by Mr. H. David Erskine, his lordship's natural son. His nephew, the young Earl, was present, but neither of them took the head of the coffin. His lordship's funeral took place in a chapel amongst the ruins. His body was in the grave with its feet pointing westward. My cousin, Maxpopple, was for taking notice of it, but I assured him that a man who had been wrong in the head all his life would scarce become right-headed after death. I felt something at parting with this old man, though but a trumpery body. He gave me the first approbation I ever obtained from a stranger. His caprice had led him to examine Dr. Adam's class when I, a boy twelve years old, and then in disgrace for some aggravated case of negligence, was called up from a low bench, and recited my lesson with some spirit and appearance of feeling the poetry — it was the apparition of Hector's ghost in the Æneid — of which called forth the noble Earl's applause. I was very proud of this at the time.

I was sad on another account — it was the first time I had been among these ruins since I left a very valued pledge there. My next visit may be involuntary. Even so, God's will be done! at least I have not the mortification of thinking what a deal of patronage and fuss Lord Buchan would bestow on my funeral. Maxpopple dined and slept here with four of his family, much amused with what they heard and saw. By good fortune a ventriloquist and partial juggler came in, and we had him in the library after dinner. He was a half-starved wretched-looking creature, who seemed to have ate more fire than bread. So I caused him to be well stuffed, and gave him a guinea, rather to his poverty than to his skill — and now to finish Anne of Geierstein.

April 26. — But not a finger did I lay on the jacket of Anne. Looking for something, I fell in with the little drama, long missing, called the Doom of Devorgoil. I believe it was out of mere contradiction that I sat down to read and correct it, merely because I would not be bound to do aught that seemed compulsory. So I scribbled at a piece of nonsense till two o'clock, and then walked to the lake. At night I flung helve after hatchet, and spent the evening in reading the Doom of Devorgoil to the girls, who seemed considerably interested. Anne objects to the mingling the goblinry, which is comic, with the serious, which is tragic. After all, I could greatly improve it, and it would not be a bad composition of that odd kind to some picnic receptacle of all things.

April 27. — This day must not be wasted. I breakfast with the Fergusons, and dine with the Brewsters. But, by Heaven, I will finish Anne of Geierstein this day betwixt the two engagements. I don't know why nor wherefore, but I hate Anne, I mean Anne of Geierstein; the other two Annes are good girls. Accordingly I well nigh accomplished my work, but about three o'clock my story fell into a slough, and in getting it out I lost my way, and was forced to postpone the conclusion till tomorrow. Wrote a good day's work notwithstanding.

April 28. — I have slept upon my puzzle, and will now finish it, Jove bless my pia mater, as I see not further impediment before me. The story will end, and shall end, because it must end, and so here goes. After this doughty resolution, I went doggedly to work, and finished five leaves by the time

when they should meet the coach. But the misfortune of writing fast is that one cannot at the same time write concisely. I wrote two pages more in the evening. Stayed at home all day. Indeed, the weather — sleety, rainy, stormy — forms no tempting prospect. Bogie, too, who sees his flourish going to wreck, is looking as spiteful as an angry fiend towards the unpropitious heavens. So I made a day of work of it,

"And yet the end was not."

April 29. — This morning I finished and sent off three pages more, and still there is something to write; but I will take the broad axe to it, and have it ended before noon.

This has proved impossible, and the task lasted me till nine, when it was finished, tant bien que mal. Now, will people say this expresses very little respect for the public? In fact, I have very little respect for that dear publicum whom I am doomed to amuse, like Goody Trash in Bartholomew Fair, with rattles and gingerbread; and I should deal very uncandidly with those who may read my confessions were I to say I knew a public worth caring for or capable of distinguishing the nicer beauties of composition. They weigh good and evil qualities by the pound. Get a good name and you may write trash. Get a bad one and you may write like Homer, without pleasing a single reader. I am, perhaps, l'enfant gâté de succés, but I am brought to the stake, and must perforce stand the course.

Having finished Anne I began and revised fifteen leaves of the History, and sent them to Dr. Lardner. I think they read more trashy than I expected. But when could I ever please myself, even when I have most pleased others? Then I walked about two hours by the thicket and river-side, watching the appearance of spring, which, as Coleridge says —

"Comes slowly up this way."

After dinner and tea I resumed the task of correction, which is an odious one, but must be attempted, ay, and accomplished too. P/

April 30. — Dr. Johnson enjoins Bozzy to leave out of his diary all notices of the weather as insignificant. It may be so to an inhabitant of Bolt Court, in Fleet Street, who need care little whether it rains or snows, except the

shilling which it may cost him for a Jarvie; but when I wake and find a snow shower sweeping along, and destroying hundreds perhaps of young lambs, and famishing their mothers, I must consider it as worth noting. For my own poor share, I am as indifferent as any Grub Streeter of them all —

> “ — And since ‘tis a bad day,
> Rise up, rise up, my merry men,
> And use it as you may.”

I have accordingly been busy. The weather did not permit me to go beyond the courtyard, for it continued cold and rainy. I have employed the day in correcting the history for Cyclopædia as far as page 35, exclusive, and have sent it off, or shall tomorrow. I wish I knew how it would run out. Dr. Lardner’s measure is a large one, but so much the better. I like to have ample verge and space enough, and a mere abridgment would be discreditable. Well, nobody can say I eat the bread of idleness. Why should I? Those who do not work from necessity take violent labour from choice, and were necessity out of the question I would take the same sort of literary labour from choice — something more leisurely though.

May

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May 1. — Weather more tolerable. I commenced my review on the Duke of Guise's Expedition, for my poor correspondent Gillies, with six leaves. What a curious tale that is of Masaniello! I went to Huntly Burn in the sociable, and returned on foot, to my great refreshment. Evening as usual. Ate, drank, smoked, and wrote.

May 2. — A pitiful day of rain and wind. Laboured the whole morning at Gillies's review. It is a fine subject — the Duke of Guise at Naples — and I think not very much known, though the story of Masaniello is.

I have a letter from Dr. Lardner proposing to me to publish the history in June. But I dare not undertake it in so short a space, proof-sheets and all considered; it must be October — no help for it. Worked after dinner as usual.

May 3. — The very same diary might serve this day as the last. I sent off to Gillies half his review, and I wish the other half at Old Nick.

May 4. — A poor young woman came here this morning, well-dressed and well-behaved, with a strong northern accent. She talked incoherently a long story of a brother and a lover both dead. I would have kept her here till I wrote to her friends, particularly to Mr. Sutherland (an Aberdeen bookseller), to inform them where she is, but my daughter and her maidens were frightened, as indeed there might be room for it, and so I sent her in one of Davidson's chaises to the Castle at Jedburgh, and wrote to Mr. Shortreed to see she is humanely treated. I have written also to her brother.

> "Long shall I see these things forlorn,
> And long again their sorrows feel."

The rest was write, walk, eat, smoke; smoke, and write again.

May 5. — A moist rainy day, mild, however, and promising good weather. I

sat at my desk the whole day, and worked at Gillies's review. So was the day exhausted.

May 6. — I sent off the review. Received the sheets of the Secret Tribunal from Master Reynolds. Keith Scott, a grandson of James Scott, my father's cousin-german, came here, a fine lively boy with good spirits and amiable manners. Just when I had sent off the rest of Gillies's manuscript, W. Laidlaw came, so I had him for my companion in a walk which the late weather has prevented for one or two days. Colonel and Mrs. Ferguson, and Margaret Ferguson, came to dinner, and so passed the evening.

May 7. — Captain Percy, brother of Lord Lovaine, and son of Lord Beverley, came out to dinner. Dr. and Mrs. Brewster met him. He is like his brother, Lord Lovaine, an amiable, easy, and accomplished man, who has seen a great deal of service, and roamed about with tribes of Western Indians.

May 8. — Went up Yarrow with Captain Percy, which made a complete day's idleness, for which I have little apology to offer. I heard at the same time from the President that Sir Robert Dundas is very unwell, so I must be in Edinburgh on Monday 11th. Very disagreeable, now the weather is becoming pleasant.

May 9. — Captain Percy left us at one o'clock. He has a sense of humour, and aptness of comprehension which renders him an agreeable companion. I am sorry his visit has made me a little idle, but there is no help for it.

I have done everything to-day previous to my going away, but — que faut-il faire? one must see society now and then, and this is really an agreeable man. And so, transeat ille. I walked, and was so fatigued as to sleep, and now I will attack John Lockhart's proof-sheets, of which he has sent me a revise. In the evening I corrected proofs for the review.

May 10. — This must be a day of preparation, which I hate; yet it is but laying aside a few books, and arranging a few papers, and yet my nerves are fluttered, and I make blunders, and mislay my pen and my keys, and make more confusion than I can repair. After all, I will try for once to do it steadily.

Well! I have toiled through it; it is like a ground swell in the sea that brings up all that is disgusting from the bottom — admonitory letters — unpaid bills — few of these, thank my stars! — all that one would wish to forget perks itself up in your face at a thorough redding up — devil take it, I will get out and cool the fever that this turmoil has made in my veins! The delightful spring weather conjured down the evil spirit. I sat a long time with my nerves shaking like a frightened child, and then laughed at it all by the side of the river, coming back by the thicket.

May 11, [Edinburgh]. — We passed the morning in the little arrangements previous to our departure, and then returned at night to Edinburgh, bringing Keith Scott along. This boy's grandfather, James Scott by name, very clever and particularly well acquainted with Indian customs and manners. He was one of the first settlers in Prince of Wales Island. He was an active-minded man, and therefore wrote a great deal. I have seen a trunkful of his MSS. Unhappily, instead of writing upon some subject on which he might have conveyed information he took to writing on metaphysics, and lost both his candles and his labour. I was consulted about publishing some part of his works; but could not recommend it. They were shallow essays, with a good deal of infidelity exhibited. Yet James Scott was a very clever man. He only fell into the common mistake of supposing that arguments new to him were new to all others. His son, when I knew him long since in this country, was an ordinary man enough. This boy seems smart and clever. We reached the house in the evening; it was comfortable enough considering it had been shut up for two months. I found a letter from Cadell asserting his continued hope in the success of the Magnum. I begin to be jealous on the subject, but I will know tomorrow.

May 12. — Went to Parliament House. Sir Robert Dundas very unwell. Poor Hamilton on his back with the gout. So was obliged to have the assistance of Rolland from the Second Division. Saw Cadell on the way home. I was right: he had been disappointed in his expectations from Glasgow and other mercantile places where trade is low at present. But

> "Tidings did he bring of Africa and golden joys."

The Magnum has taken extremely in Ireland, which was little counted on, and elsewhere. Hence he proposes a new edition of Tales of my

Grandfather, First Series; also an enlargement of the Third Series. All this drives poverty and pinch, which is so like poverty, from the door.

I visited Lady J.S., and had the pleasure to find her well. I wrote a little, and got over a place that bothered me. Cadell has apprehensions of A[nne] of G[eierstein], so have I. Well, the worst of it is, we must do something better.

May 13. — Attended the Court, which took up a good deal of time. On my return saw Sir Robert Dundas, who is better — and expects to be out on Tuesday. I went to the Highland Society to present Miss Grahame Stirling's book, being a translation of Gelieu's work on bees, which was well received. Went with the girls to dine at Dalhousie Castle, where we were very kindly received. I saw the Edgewell Tree, too fatal, says Allan Ramsay, to the family from which he was himself descended. I also saw the fatal Coalston Pear, said to have been preserved many hundred years. It is certainly a pear either petrified or turned into wood, with a bit out of one side of it.

It is a pity to see my old school-companion, this fine truehearted nobleman of such an ancient and noble descent, after having followed the British flag through all quarters of the world, again obliged to resume his wanderings at a time of life equal, I suppose, to my own. He has not, however, a grey hair in his head.

May 14. — Left Dalhousie at eight to return here to breakfast, where we received cold tidings. Walter has had an inflammatory attack, and I fear it will be necessary to him to return without delay to the Continent. I have letters from Sophia and Sir Andrew Halliday. The last has been of the utmost service, by bleeding and advising active measures. How little one knows to whom they are to be obliged! I wrote to him and to Jane, recommending the Ionian Islands, where Sir Frederick Adam would, I am sure, give Walter a post on his staff. The kind old Chief Commissioner at once interested himself in the matter. It makes me inexpressibly anxious, yet I have kept up my determination not to let the chances of fate overcome me like a summer's-cloud. I wrote four or five pages of the History to-day, notwithstanding the agitation of my feelings.

May 15. — Attended the Court, where Mr. Rolland and I had the duty of

the First Division; Sir Robert and Hamilton being both laid up. Dined at Granton and met Lord and Lady Dalhousie, Sir John Hope, *etc.* I have spelled out some work this day, though I have been rather knocked about.

May 16. — After the Court this day I went to vote at the Archers' Hall, where some of the members had become restive. They were outvoted two to one. There had been no division in the Royal Body Guard since its commencement, but these times make divisions everywhere. A letter from Lockhart brings better news of Walter, but my heart is heavy on the subject. I went on with my History, however, for the point in this world is to do what we ought, and bear what we must.

Dined at home and wrote in the evening.

May 17. — I never stirred from my seat all this day. My reflections, as suggested by Walter's illness, were highly uncomfortable; and to divert it I wrought the whole day, save when I was obliged to stop and lean my head on my hand. Real affliction, however, has something in it by which it is sanctified. It is a weight which, however oppressive, may like a bar of iron be conveniently disposed on the sufferer's person. But the insubstantiality of a hypochondriac affection is one of its greatest torments. You have a huge featherbed on your shoulders, which rather encumbers and oppresses you than calls forth strength and exertion to bear it. There is something like madness in that opinion, and yet it has a touch of reality. Heaven help me!

May 18. — I resolved to take exercise to-day, so only wrought till twelve. I sent off some sheets and copy to Dr. Lardner. I find my written page goes as better than one to two of his print, so a little more than one hundred and ninety of my writing will make up the sum wanted. I sent him off as far as page sixty-two. Went to Mr. Colvin Smith's at one, and sat for my picture to three. There must be an end of this sitting. It devours my time.

I wrote in the evening to Walter, James MacCulloch, to Dr. Lardner, and others, and settled some other correspondence.

May 19. — I went to the Court, and abode there till about one, and in the Library from one to two, when I was forced to attend a public meeting about the King's statue. I have no turn for these committees, and yet I get always jamm'd into them. They take up a cruel deal of time in a way very

unsatisfactory. Dined at home, and wrought hard. I shall be through the Bruce's reign. It is lengthy; but, hang it, it was our only halcyon period. I shall be soon done with onehalf of the thousand pound's worth.

May 20. — Mr. Cadell breakfasted with us, with a youngster for whom he wants a letter to the Commander or Governor of Bombay. After breakfast C. and I had some talk of business. His tidings, like those of ancient Pistol, are of Africa and golden joys. He is sure of selling at the starting 8000 copies of the Magnum, at a profit of £70 per 1000 — that is, per month. This seems certain. But he thinks the sale will rise to 12,000, which will be £280 more, or £840 in all. This will tell out a gross divisible profit of upwards of £25,000. This is not unlikely, but after this comes a series of twenty volumes at least, which produce only half that quantity indeed; but then the whole profits, save commissions, are the author's. That will come to as much as the former, say £50,000 in all. This supposes I carry on the works of fiction for two or three novels more. But besides all this, Cadell entertains a plan of selling a cheaper edition by numbers and numbermen, on which he gives half the selling price. One man, Mr. Ireland, offers to take 10,000 copies of the Magnum and talks of 25,000. This allows a profit of £50 per thousand copies, not much worse than the larger copy, and Cadell thinks to carry on both. I doubt this. I have great apprehension that these interlopers would disgust the regular trade, with whom we are already deeply engaged. I also foresee selling the worst copies at the higher price. All this must be thought and cared for. In the meantime, I see a fund, from which large payments may be made to the Trustees, capable of extinguishing the debt, large as it is, in ten years or earlier, and leaving a reversion to my family of the copyrights. Sweet bodements — good — but we must not reckon our chickens before they are hatched, though they are chipping the shell now. We will see how the stream takes.

Dined at a public dinner given to the excellent Lord Dalhousie before his departure for India. An odd way of testifying respect to public characters, by eating, drinking, and roaring. The names, however, will make a good show in the papers. Home at ten. Good news from Sophia and Walter. I am zealous for the Mediterranean when the season comes, which may be the beginning of September.

May 21. — This is only the 23d on which I write, yet I have forgotten

anything that has passed on the 21st worthy of note. I wrote a good deal, I know, and dined at home. The step of time is noiseless as it passes over an old man. The non est tanti mingles itself with everything.

May 22. — I was detained long in the Court, though Ham. had returned to his labour. We dined with Captain Basil Hall, and met a Mr. Codman, or some such name, with his lady from Boston. The last a pleasant and well-mannered woman, the husband Bostonian enough. We had Sir William Arbuthnot, besides, and his lady.

By-the-bye, I should have remembered that I called on my old friend, Lady Charlotte Campbell, and found her in her usual good-humour, though miffed a little — I suspect at the history of Gillespie Grumach in the Legend of Montrose. I saw Haining also, looking thin and pale. These should have gone to the memorandum of yesterday.

May 23. — Went to-day to call on the Commissioner, and saw, at his Grace's Levee, the celebrated divine, soi-disant prophet, Irving. He is a fine-looking man (bating a diabolical squint), with talent on his brow and madness in his eye. His dress, and the arrangement of his hair, indicated that much attention had been bestowed on his externals, and led me to suspect a degree of self-conceit, consistent both with genius and insanity.

Came home by Cadell's, who persists in his visions of El Dorado. He insists that I will probably bring £60,000 within six years to rub off all Constable's debts, which that sum will do with a vengeance. Cadell talks of offering for the Poetry to Longman. I fear they will not listen to him. The Napoleon he can command when he likes by purchasing their stock in hand. The Lives of the Novelists may also be had. Pleasant schemes all these, but dangerous to build upon. Yet in looking at the powerful machine which we have put in motion, it must be owned "as broken ships have come to land."

Waited on the Commissioner at five o'clock, and had the pleasure to remain till eight, when the debate in the Assembly was over. The question which employed their eloquence was whether the celebrated Mr. Irving could sit there as a ruling elder. It was settled, I think justly, that a divine, being of a different order of officers in the Kirk, cannot assume the character of a ruling elder, seeing he cannot discharge its duties.

Mr. Irving dined with us. I could hardly keep my eyes off him while we were at table. He put me in mind of the devil disguised as an angel of light,

so ill did that horrible obliquity of vision harmonise with the dark tranquil features of his face, resembling that of our Saviour in Italian pictures, with the hair carefully arranged in the same manner. There was much real or affected simplicity in the manner in which he spoke. He rather made play, and spoke much across the table to the Solicitor, and seemed to be good-humoured. But he spoke with that kind of unction which is nearly [allied] to cajolerie. He boasted much of the tens of thousands that attended his ministry at the town of Annan, his native place, till he wellnigh provoked me to say he was a distinguished exception to the rule that a prophet was not esteemed in his own country. But time and place were not fitting.

May 24. — I wrote or wrought all the morning, yea, even to dinner-time. Miss Kerr, and Mrs. Skene, and Will Clerk dined. Skene came from the Commissioner's at seven o'clock. We had a merry evening. Clerk exults in the miscarriage of the Bill for the augmentation of the judges' salaries. He and the other clerks in the Jury Court had hoped to have had a share in the proposed measure, but the Court had considered it as being nos poma natamus. I kept our friends quiet by declining to move in a matter which was to expose us to the insult of a certain refusal. Clerk, with his usual felicity of quotation, said they should have remembered the Clown's exhortation to Lear, "Good nuncle, tarry and take the fool with you."

May 25. — Wrote in the morning. Dr. Macintosh Mackay came to breakfast, and brought with him, to show me, the Young Chevalier's target, purse, and snuffbox, the property of Cluny MacPherson. The pistols are for holsters, and no way remarkable; a good serviceable pair of weapons silver mounted. The targe is very handsome indeed, studded with ornaments of silver, chiefly emblematic, chosen with much taste of device and happily executed. There is a contrast betwixt the shield and purse, the targe being large and heavy, the purse, though very handsome, unusually small and light. After one o'clock I saw the Duke and Duchess of Gordon; then went to Mr. Smith's to finish a painting for the last time. The Duchess called with a Swiss lady, to introduce me to her friend, while I was doing penance. I was heartily glad to see her Grace once more. Called in at Cadell's. His orders continue so thick that he must postpone the delivery for several days, to get new engravings thrown off, *etc.* Vogue la galère! From all that now

appears, I shall be much better off in two or three years than if my misfortunes had never taken place. Periissem ni periissem.

Dined at a dinner given by the Antiquarian Society to Mr. Hay Drummond, Secretary to the Society, now going Consul to Tangiers. It was an excellent dinner — turtle, champagne, and all the agrémens of a capital meal, for £1, 6s. a-head. How Barry managed I can't say. The object of this compliment spoke and drank wine incessantly; goodnaturedly delighted with the compliment, which he repeatedly assured me he valued more than a hundred pounds. I take it that after my departure, which was early, it would be necessary to "carry Mr. Silence to bed."

May 26. — The business at the Court heavy. Dined at Gala's, and had the pleasure to see him in amended health. Sir John and Lady Hope were there, and the evening was lively and pleasant. George Square is always a melancholy place for me. I was dining next door to my father's former house.

May 27. — I got up the additional notes for the Waverley Novels. They seem to be setting sail with a favourable wind. I had to-day a most kind and friendly letter from the Duke of Wellington, which is a thing to be vain of. He is a most wonderful man to have climbed to such a height without ever slipping his foot. Who would have said in 1815 that the Duke would stand still higher in 1829, and yet it indubitably is so. We dined with Lady Charlotte Campbell, now Lady Charlotte Bury, and her husband, who is an egregious fop but a fine draughtsman. Here is another day gone without work in the evening.

May 28. — The Court as usual till one o'clock. But I forgot to say Mr. Macintosh Mackay breakfasted, and inspected my curious Irish MS., which Dr. Brinkley gave me. Mr. Mackay, I should say Doctor, who well deserved the name, reads it with tolerable ease, so I hope to knock the marrow out of the bone with his assistance. I came home and despatched proof-sheets and revises for Dr. Lardner. I saw kind John Gibson, and made him happy with the fair prospects of the Magnum. He quite agrees in my views. A young clergyman, named M'Combie, from Aberdeenshire, also called to-day. I have had some consideration about the renewal or re-translation of the Psalmody. I had peculiar views adverse to such an undertaking. In the first

place, it would be highly unpopular with the lower and more ignorant rank, many of whom have no idea of the change which those spiritual poems have suffered in translation, but consider their old translations as the very songs which David composed. At any rate, the lower class think that our fathers were holier and better men than we, and that to abandon their old hymns of devotion, in order to grace them with newer and more modish expression, would be a kind of sacrilege. Even the best informed, who think on the subject, must be of opinion that even the somewhat bald and rude language and versification of the Psalmody gives them an antique and venerable air, and their want of the popular graces of modish poetry shows they belong to a style where ornaments are not required. They contain, besides, the very words which were spoken and sung by the fathers of the Reformation, sometimes in the wilderness, sometimes in fetters, sometimes at the stake. If a Church possessed the vessels out of which the original Reformers partook of the Eucharist, it would be surely bad taste to melt them down and exchange them for more modern. No, no. Let them write hymns and paraphrases if they will, but let us have still

> "All people that on earth do dwell."

Law and devotion must lose some of their dignity as often as they adopt new fashions.

May 30. — The Skenes came in to supper last night. Dr. Scott of Haslar Hospital came to breakfast. He is a nephew of Scott of Scalloway, who is one of the largest proprietors in Shetland. I have an agreeable recollection of the kindness and hospitality of these remote isles, and of this gentleman's connections in particular, who welcomed me both as a stranger and a Scott, being duly tenacious of their clan. This young gentleman is high in the medical department of the navy. He tells me that the Ultima Thule is improving rapidly. The old clumsy plough is laid aside. They have built several stout sloops to go to the deep-sea fishing, instead of going thither in open boats, which consumed so much time between the shore and the haaf or fishing spot. Pity but they would use a steamboat to tow them out! I have a real wish to hear of Zetland's advantage. I often think of its long isles, its towering precipices, its capes covered with seafowl of every class and description that ornithology can find names for, its deep caves, its smoked

geese, and its sour sillocks. I would like to see it again. After the Court I came round by Cadell, who is like Jemmy Taylor,

> "Full of mirth and full of glee,"

for which he has good reason, having raised the impression of the Magnum to 12,000 copies, and yet the end is not, for the only puzzle now is how to satisfy the delivery fast enough.

May 31. — We dined at Craigcrook with Jeffrey. It is a most beautiful place, tastefully planted with shrubs and trees, and so sequestered, that after turning into the little avenue, all symptoms of the town are left behind you. He positively gives up the Edinburgh Review. A very pleasant evening. Rather a glass of wine too much, for I was heated during the night. Very good news of Walter.

June

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June 1. — Being Sunday I remained to work the whole day, and finished half of the proposed volume of History. I was not disturbed the whole day, a thing rather unusual.

June 2. — Received Mr. Rees of London and Col. Ferguson to breakfast. Mr. Rees is clearly of opinion our scheme (the Magnum) must answer. I got to letter-writing after breakfast, and cleared off old scores in some degree. Dr. Ross called and would hardly hear of my going out. I was obliged, however, to attend the meeting of the trustees for the Theatre. The question to be decided was, whether we should embrace an option left to us of taking the old Theatre at a valuation, or whether we should leave it to Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Murray to make the best of it. There were present Sir Patrick Murray, Baron Hume, Lord Provost, Sir John Hay, Mr. Gilbert Innes, and myself. We were all of opinion that personally we ought to have nothing to do with it. But I thought as trustees for the public, we were bound to let the public know how the matter stood, and that they might, if they pleased, have the theatrical property for £16,000, which is dog cheap. They were all clear to give it up (the right of reversion) to Mrs. Siddons. I am glad she should have it, for she is an excellent person, and so is her brother. But I think it has been a little jobbish. There is a clause providing the new patentees may redeem. I desired that the circumstance should be noted, that we were only exercising our own judgment, leaving the future trustees to exercise theirs. I rather insisted that there should be some saving clause of this kind, even for the sake of our honour. But I could not prevail upon my colleagues to put such a saving clause on the minutes, though they agreed to the possibility of the new patentees redeeming on behalf of the public. I do not think we have done right.

I called on Mr. Cadell, whose reports of the Magnum might fill up the dreams of Alnaschar should he sleep as long as the seven sleepers. The rest was labour and letters till bed-time.

June 3. — The ugly symptoms still continue. Dr. Ross does not make much of it, and I think he is apt to look grave. I wrote in the morning. Dr.

Macintosh Mackay came to breakfast, and brought a Gaelic book, which he has published — the Poetry of Rob Donn — some of which seems pretty as he explained it. Court kept me till near two, and then home comes I. Afternoon and evening was spent as usual. In the evening Dr. Ross ordered me to be cupped, an operation which I only knew from its being practised by that eminent medical practitioner the barber of Bagdad. It is not painful; and, I think, resembles a giant twisting about your flesh between his finger and thumb.

June 4. — I was obliged to absent myself from the Court on Dr. Ross's positive instance; and, what is worse, I was compelled to send an apology to Hopetoun House, where I expected to see Madame Caradori, who was to sing Jock of Hazeldean. I wrote the song for Sophia; and I find my friends here still prefer her to the foreign syren.

> "However, Madame Caradori,
> To miss you I am very sorry,
> I should have taken it for glory
> To have heard you sing my Border story."

I worked at the Tales of my Grandfather, but leisurely.

June 5. — Cadell came to dine with me tête-à-tête, for the girls are gone to Hopetoun House. We had ample matter to converse upon, for his horn was full of good news. While we were at dinner we had letters from London and Ireland, which decided him to raise the impression of Waverley to 15,000. This, with 10,000 on the number line which Ireland is willing to take, will make £18,000 a year of divisible profit. This leads to a further speculation, as I said, of great importance. Longman & Co. have agreed to sell their stock on hand of the Poetry, in which they have certain shares, their shares included, for £8000. Cadell thinks he could, by selling off at cheap rates, sorting, making waste, etc., get rid of the stock for about £5000, leaving £3000 for the purchase of the copyrights, and proposes to close the bargain as much cheaper as he can, but at all events to close it. Whatever shall fall short of the price returned by the stock, the sale of which shall be entirely at his risk, shall be reckoned as the price of the copyright, and we shall pay half of that balance. I had no hesitation in authorising him to proceed in his bargain with Owen Rees of Longman's house upon that principle. For

supposing, according to Cadell's present idea, the loss on the stock shall amount to £2000 or £3000, the possession of the entire copyright undivided would enable us, calculating upon similar success to that of the Novels, to make at least £500 per cent. Longman & Co. have indeed an excellent bargain, but then so will we. We pay dear indeed for what the ostensible subject of sale is, but if it sets free almost the whole of our copyrights, and places them in our own hands, we get a most valuable quid pro quo. There is only onefourth, I think, of Marmion in Mr. Murray's hands, and it must be the deuce if that cannot be [secured]. Mr. Cadell proposed that, as he took the whole books on his risk, he ought to have compensation, and that it should consist in the sum to be given to me for arranging and making additions to the volumes of Poetry thus to be republished. I objected to this, for in the first place he may suffer no loss, for the books may go off more rapidly than he thinks or expects. In the second place, I do not know what my labours in the Poetry may be. In either case it is a blind bargain; but if he should be a sufferer beyond the clear half of the loss, which we agree to share with him, I agreed to make him some compensation, and he is willing to take what I shall think just; so stands our bargain. Remained at home and wrote about four pages of Tales. I should have done more, but my head, as Squire Sullen says, "aiked consumedly." Rees has given Cadell a written offer to be binding till the twelfth; meantime I have written to Lockhart to ask John Murray if he will treat for the fourth share of Marmion, which he possesses. It can be worth but little to him, and gives us all the copyrights. I have a letter from Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, touching a manuscript of Messrs. Hay Allan called the Vestiarium Scotiæ by a Sir Richard Forrester. If it is an imposition it is cleverly done, but I doubt the quarter it comes from. These Hay Allans are men of warm imaginations. It makes the strange averment that all the LowCountry gentlemen and border clans wore tartan, and gives sets of them all. I must see the manuscript before I believe in it. The Allans are singular men, of much accomplishment but little probity — that is, in antiquarian matters. Cadell lent me £10, — funny enough, after all our grand expectations, for Croesus to want such a gratility!

June 7. — I rose at seven, and wrote to Sir Thomas Lauder a long warning on the subject of these Allans and their manuscript. Proceeded to write, but found myself pulled up by the necessity of reading a little. This occupied my whole morning. The Lord President called very kindly to desire me to

keep at home tomorrow. I thought of being out, but it may be as well not. I am somehow or other either listless or lazy. My head aches cruelly. I made a fight at reading and working till eleven, and then came sleep with a party-coloured [mantle] of fantastic hues, and wrapt me into an imaginary world.

June, 8. — I wrote the whole morning till two o'clock. Then I went into the gardens of Princes Street, to my great exhilaration. I never felt better for a walk; also it is the first I have taken this whole week and more. I visited some remote garden grounds, where I had not been since I walked there with the good Samaritan Skene, sadly enough, at the time of my misfortunes. The shrubs and young trees, which were then invisible, are now of good size, and gay with leaf and blossom. I, too, old trunk as I am, have put out tender buds of hope, which seemed checked for ever.

I may now look with fair hope to freeing myself of obligation from all men, and spending the rest of my life in ease and quiet. God make me thankful for so cheering a prospect!

June 9. — I wrote in the morning, set out for a walk at twelve o'clock as far as Mr. Cadell's. I found him hesitating about his views, and undecided about the Number plan. He thinks the first plan answers so much beyond expectation it is a pity to interfere with it, and talks of re-engraving the plates. This would be touchy, but nothing is resolved on.

Anne had a little party, where Lady Charlotte Bury, Lady Hopetoun, and others met the Caradori, who sung to us very kindly. She sung Jock of Hazeldean very well, and with a peculiar expression of humour. Sandie Ballantyne kindly came and helped us with fiddle and flageolet. Willie Clerk was also here. We had a lunch, and were very gay, not the less so for the want of Mr. Bury, who is a thorough-paced coxcomb, with some accomplishments, however. I drank two glasses of champagne, which have muddled my brains for the day. Will Clerk promised to come back and dine on the wreck of the turkey and tongue, pigeon-pie, *etc.* He came, accordingly, and stayed till nine; so no time for work. It was not a lost day, however.

June 10. — Nota bene, my complaint quite gone. I attended the Court, and sat there till late. Evening had its lot of labour, which is, I think, a second nature to me. It is astonishing how little I look into a book of entertainment.

I have been reading over the Five Nights of St. Albans, — very much extra mœnia nostri mundi, and possessed of considerable merit, though the author loves to play at cherry-pit with Satan.

June 11. — I was kept at Court by a hearing till near three. Then sat to Mr. Graham for an hour and a half. When I came home, behold a letter from Mr. Murray, very handsomely yielding up the fourth share of Marmion, which he possessed. Afterwards we went to the theatre, where St. Ronan's Well was capitally acted by Murray and the Bailie, — the part of Clara Mowbray being heavy for want of Mrs. Siddons. Poor old Mrs. Renaud, once the celebrated Mrs. Powell, took leave of the stage. As I was going to bed at twelve at night, in came R.P.Gillies like a tobacco cask. I shook him off with some difficulty, pleading my having been lately ill, but he is to call tomorrow morning.

June 12. — Gillies made his appearance. I told him frankly I thought he conducted his affairs too irregularly for any one to assist him, and I could not in charity advise any one to encourage subscriptions, but that I should subscribe myself, so I made over to him about £50, which the Foreign Review owes me, and I will grow hardhearted and do no more. I was not long in the Court, but I had to look at the controversy about the descent of the Douglas family, then I went to Cadell and found him still cock-a-hoop. He has raised the edition to 17,000, a monstrous number, yet he thinks it will clear the 20,000, but we must be quiet in case people jalouse the failure of the plates. I called on Lady J.S. When I came home I was sleepy and overwalked. By the way, I sat till Graham finished my picture. I fell fast asleep before dinner, and slept for an hour. After dinner I wrote to Walter, Charles, Lockhart, and John Murray, and took a screed of my novel; so concluded the evening idly enough.

June 13. — We hear of Sophia's motions. She is to set sail by steamboat on the 16th, Tuesday, and Charles is to make a run down with her. But, alas! my poor Johnnie is, I fear, come to lay his bones in his native land. Sophia can no longer disguise it from herself, that as his strength weakens the disease increases. The poor child is so much bent on coming to see Abbotsford and grandpapa, that it would be cruel not to comply with his wish — and if affliction comes, we will bear it best together.

"Not more the schoolboy who expires
Far from his native home desires
To see some friend's familiar face,
Or meet a parent's last embrace."

It must be all as God wills it. Perhaps his native air may be of service.

More news from Cadell. He deems it necessary to carry up the edition to 20,000.

[Abbotsford.] — This day was fixed for a start to Abbotsford, where we arrived about six o'clock, evening. To my thinking, I never saw a prettier place; and even the trees and flowers seemed to say to me, We are your own again. But I must not let imagination jade me thus. It would be to make disappointment doubly bitter: and, God knows, I have in my child's family matter enough to check any exuberant joy.

June 14. — A delicious day — threatening rain; but with the languid and affecting manner in which beauty demands sympathy when about to weep. I wandered about the banks and braes all morning, and got home about three, and saw everything in tolerable order, excepting that there was a good number of branches left in the walks. There is a great number of trees cut, and bark collected. Colonel Ferguson dined with us, and spent the afternoon.

June 15. — Another charming day. Up and despatched packets for Ballantyne and Cadell; neither of them was furiously to the purpose, but I had a humour to be alert. I walked over to Huntly Burn, and round by Chiefswood and Janeswood, where I saw Captain Hamilton. He is busy finishing his Peninsular campaigns. He will not be cut out by Napier, whose work has a strong party cast; and being, besides, purely abstract and professional, to the public seems very dull. I read General Miller's account of the South American War. I liked it the better that Basil Hall brought the author to breakfast with me in Edinburgh. A fine, tall, military figure, his left hand withered like the prophet's gourd, and plenty of scars on him. There have been rare doings in that vast continent; but the strife is too distant, the country too unknown, to have the effect upon the imagination which European wars produce.

This evening I indulged in the far niente — a rare event with me, but which I enjoy proportionally.

June 16. — Made up parcel for Dr. Lardner; and now I propose to set forth my memoranda of Byron for Moore's acceptance, which ought in civility to have been done long since. I will have a walk, however, in the first place.

I did not get on with Byron so far as I expected — began it though, and that is always something. I went to see the woods at Huntly Burn, and Mars Lea, *etc.* Met Captain Hamilton, who tells me a shocking thing. Two Messrs. Stirling of Drumpellier came here and dined one day, and seemed spirited young men. The younger is murdered by pirates. An Indian vessel in which he sailed was boarded by these miscreants, who behaved most brutally; and he, offering resistance I suppose, was shockingly mangled and flung into the sea. He was afterwards taken up alive, but died soon after. Such horrid accidents lie in wait for those whom we see "all joyous and unthinking," sweeping along the course of life; and what end may be waiting ourselves? Who can tell?

June 17. — Must take my leave of sweet Abbotsford, and my leisure hour, my eve of repose. To go to town will take up the morning.

[Edinburgh.] — We set out about eleven o'clock, got to Edinburgh about four, where I dined with Baron Clerk and a few Exchequer friends — Lord Chief Baron, Sir Patrick Murray, Sir Henry Jardine, *etc. etc.*

June 18. — Corrected proofs for Dr. Dionysius Lardner. Cadell came to breakfast. Poor fellow, he looks like one who had been overworked; and the difficulty of keeping papermakers up to printers, printers up to draughtsmen, artists to engravers, and the whole party to time, requires the utmost exertion. He has actually ordered new plates, although the steel ones which we employ are supposed to throw off 30,000 without injury. But I doubt something of this. Well, since they will buckle fortune on our back we must bear it scholarly and wisely. I went to Court. Called on my return on J.B. and Cadell. At home I set to correct Ivanhoe. I had twenty other things more pressing; but, after all, these novels deserve a preference. Poor Terry is totally prostrated by a paralytic affection. Continuance of existence not to be wished for.

Tomorrow I expect Sophia and her family by steam.

June 19. — Sophia, and Charles who acted as her escort, arrived at nine o'clock morning, fresh from the steamboat. They were in excellent health — also the little boy and girl; but poor Johnnie seems very much changed indeed, and I should not be surprised if the scene shortly closes. There is obviously a great alteration in strength and features. At dinner we had our family chat on a scale that I had not enjoyed for many years. The Skenes supped with us.

June 20. — Corrected proof-sheets in the morning for Dr. Lardner. Then I had the duty of the Court to perform.

As I came home I recommended young Shortreed to Mr. Cadell for a printing job now and then when Ballantyne is overloaded, which Mr. Cadell promised accordingly.

Lady Anna Maria Elliot's company at dinner. Helped on our family party, and passed the evening pleasantly enough, my anxiety considering.

June 21. — A very wet Sunday. I employed it to good purpose, bestowing much labour on the History, ten pages of which are now finished. Were it not for the precarious health of poor Johnnie I would be most happy in this reunion with my family, but, poor child, this is a terrible drawback.

June 22. — I keep working, though interruptedly. But the heat in the midst of the day makes me flag and grow irresistibly drowsy. Mr. and Mrs. Skene came to supper this evening. Skene has engaged himself in drawing illustrations to be etched by himself for Waverley. I wish it may do.

June 23. — I was detained in the Court till halfpast [three]. Captain William Lockhart dined with Skene. The Captain's kind nature had brought him to Edinburgh to meet his sister-in-law.

June 24. — I was detained late in the Court, but still had time to go with Adam Wilson and call upon a gentlemanlike East Indian officer, called Colonel Francklin, who appears an intelligent and respectable man. He writes the History of Captain Thomas, a person of the condition of a common seaman, who raised himself to the rank of a native prince, and for

some time waged a successful war with the powers around him. The work must be entertaining.

June 25. — Finished correcting proofs for Tales, 3d Series. The Court was over soon, but I was much exhausted. On the return home quite sleepy and past work. I looked in on Cadell, whose hand is in his housewife's cap, driving and pushing to get all the works forward in due order, and cursing the delays of artists and engravers. I own I wish we had not hampered ourselves with such causes of delay.

June 26. — Mr. Ellis, missionary from the South Sea Islands, breakfasted, introduced by Mr. Fletcher, minister of the parish of Stepney.

Mr. Ellis's account of the progress of civilisation, as connected with religion, is very interesting. Knowledge of every kind is diffused — reading, writing, printing, abundantly common. Polygamy abolished. Idolatry is put down; the priests, won over by the chiefs, dividing among them the consecrated lands which belonged to their temples. Great part of the population are still without religion, but willing to be instructed. Wars are become infrequent; and there is in each state a sort of representative body, or senate, who are a check on the despotism of the chief. All this has come hand in hand with religion. Mr. Ellis tells me that the missionaries of different sects avoided carefully letting the natives know that there were points of disunion between them. Not so some Jesuits who had lately arrived, and who taught their own ritual as the only true one. Mr. Ellis described their poetry to me, and gave some examples; it had an Ossianic character, and was composed of metaphor. He gave me a small collection of hymns printed in the islands. If this gentleman is sincere, which I have no doubt of, he is an illustrious character. He was just about to return to the Friendly Islands, having come here for his wife's health.

[Blairadam.] — After the Court we set off (the two Thomsons and I) for Blair-Adam, where we held our Macduff Club for the twelfth anniversary. We met the Chief Baron, Lord Sydney Osborne, Will Clerk, the merry knight Sir Adam Ferguson, with our venerable host the Lord Chief Commissioner, and merry men were we.

June 27. — I ought not, where merry men convene, to omit our jovial son of Neptune, Admiral Adam. The morning proving delightful, we set out for

the object of the day, which was Falkland. We passed through Lochore, but without stopping, and saw on the road eastward, two or three places, as Balbedie, Strathendry, and some others known to me by name. Also we went through the town of Leslie, and saw what remains of the celebrated rendezvous of rustic gallantry called Christ's Kirk on the Green. It is now cut up with houses, one of the most hideous of which is a new church, having the very worst and most offensive kind of Venetian windows. This, I am told, has replaced a quiet lowly little Gothic building, coeval, perhaps, with the royal poet who celebrated the spot. Next we went to Falkland, where we found Mr. Howden, factor of Mr. Tyndall Bruce, waiting to show us the palace.

Falkland has most interesting remains. A double entrance-tower, and a side building running east from it, is roofed, and in some degree habitable; a corresponding building running northward from the eastern corner is totally ruinous, having been destroyed by fire. The architecture is highly ornamented, in the style of the Palace at Stirling. Niches with statues, with projections, cornices, etc, are lavished throughout. Many cornice medallions exhibited such heads as those procured from the King's room at Stirling, the originals, perhaps, being the same. The repeated cypher of James V. and Mary of Guise attest the builder of this part of the palace. When complete it had been a quadrangle. There is as much of it as remained when Slezer published his drawings. Some part of the interior has been made what is called habitable, that is, a half-dozen of bad rooms have been gotten out of it. Am clear in my own mind a ruin should be protected, but never repaired. The proprietor has a beautiful place called Nut-hill, within ten minutes' walk of Falkland, and commanding some fine views of it and of the Lomond Hill. This should be the residence. But Mr. Bruce and his predecessor, my old professor, John Bruce, deserve great credit for their attention to prevent dilapidation, which was doing its work fast upon the ancient palace. The only remarkable apartment was a large and well-proportioned gallery with a painted roof — tempore Jacobi Sexti — and built after his succession to the throne of England. I noticed a curious thing, — a hollow column concealed the rope which rung the Castle bell, keeping it safe from injury and interruption.

The town of Falkland is old, with very narrow streets. The arrival of two carriages and a gig was an event important enough to turn out the whole population. They are said to be less industrious, more dissipated, and

readier to become soldiers than their neighbours. So long a court retains its influence!

We dined at Wellfield with my Mend George Cheape, with whom I rode in the cavalry some thirty years ago. Much mirth and good wine made us return in capital tune. The Chief Baron and Admiral Adam did not go on this trip. When we returned it was time to go to bed by a candle.

June 28. — Being Sunday, we lounged about in the neighbourhood of the crags called Kiery Craigs, *etc.* The Sheriff-substitute of Kinross came to dinner, and brought a gold signet which had been found in that town. It was very neat work, about the size of a shilling. It bore in a shield the arms of Scotland and England, parti per pale, those of Scotland occupying the dexter side. The shield is of the heater or triangular shape. There is no crown nor legend of any kind; a slip of gold folds upwards on the back of the hinge, and makes the handle neatly enough. It is too well wrought for David II.'s time, and James IV. is the only monarch of the Scottish line who, marrying a daughter of England, may carry the arms of both countries parti per pale. Mr. Skelton is the name of the present possessor.

Two reported discoveries. One, that the blaeberry shrub contains the tanning quality as four to one compared to the oak — which may be of great importance, as it grows so commonly on our moors.

The other, that the cutting of an appletree, or other fruit-tree, may be preserved by sticking it into a potato and planting both together. Curious, if true.

June 29 [Edinburgh]. — We dined together at Blair-Adam, having walked in the woods in the morning, and seen a beautiful new walk made through the woody hill behind the house. In a fine evening, after an early dinner, our party returned to Edinburgh, and there each dispersed to his several home and resting-place. I had the pleasure of finding my family all well, except Johnnie.

June 30. — After my short sniff of country air, here am I again at the receipt of custom. The sale with Longman & Co., for stock and copyrights of my [Poetical] Works, is completed, for £7000, at dates from twelve to thirty-six months. There are many sets out of which we may be able to clear the money, and then we shall make something to clear the copyright. I am

sure this may be done, and that the bargain will prove a good one in the long run.

Dined at home with my family, whom, as they disperse tomorrow, I have dedicated the evening to.

July

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July 1. — This morning wrote letters and sent them off by Charles. It was Teind Wednesday, so I was at home to witness the departure of my family, which was depressing. My two daughters, with the poor boy Johnnie, went off at ten o'clock, my son Charles, with my niece, about twelve. The house, filled with a little bustle attendant on such a removal, then became silent as the grave. The voices of the children, which had lately been so clamorous with their joyous shouts, are now hushed and still. A blank of this kind is somewhat depressing, and I find it impossible to resume my general tone of spirits. A lethargy has crept on me which no efforts can dispel; and as the day is rainy, I cannot take exercise. I have read therefore the whole morning, and have endeavoured to collect ideas instead of expending them. I have not been very successful. In short, diem perdidi.

> Localities at Blair-Adam: —
> Lochornie and Lochornie Moss,
> The Loutingstane and Dodgell's Cross,
> Craigen Cat and Craigen Crow,
> Craiggaveral, the King's Cross, and Dunglow.

July 2. — I made up for my deficiencies yesterday, and besides attending the Court wrote five close pages, which I think is very near double task. I was alone the whole day and without interruption. I have little doubt I will make my solitude tell upon my labours, especially since they promise to prove so efficient. I was so languid yesterday that I did not record that J. Ballantyne, his brother Sandy, and Mr. Cadell dined here on a beefsteak, and smoked a cigar, and took a view of our El Dorado.

July 3. — Laboured at Court, where I was kept late, and wrought on my return home, finishing about five pages. I had the great pleasure to learn that the party with the infantry got safe to Abbotsford.

July 4. — After Court I came home and set to work, still on the Tales.

When I had finished my bit of dinner, and was in a quiet way smoking my cigar over a glass of negus, Adam Ferguson comes with a summons to attend him to the Justice-Clerk's, where, it seems, I was engaged. I was totally out of case to attend his summons, redolent as I was of tobacco. But I am vexed at the circumstance. It looks careless, and, what is worse, affected; and the Justice is an old friend moreover. I rather think I have been guilty towards him in this respect before. Devil take my stupidity! I will call on Monday and say, Here is my sabre and here is my heart.

July 5. — Sir Adam came to breakfast, and with him Mr. and Mrs. Johnstone of Bordeaux, the lady his cousin. I could not give them a right Scottish breakfast, being on a Sunday morning. Laboured on the Tales the whole morning.

The post brought two letters of unequal importance. One from a person calling himself Haval, announcing to me the terrific circumstance that he had written against the Waverley Novels in a publication called La Belle Assemblée, at which doubtless, he supposes, I must be much annoyed. He be d — — , and that's plain speaking. The other from Lord Aberdeen, announcing that Lockhart, Dr. Gooch, and myself, are invested with the power of examining the papers of the Cardinal Duke of York, and reporting what is fit for publication. This makes it plain that the Invisible neither slumbers nor sleeps. The toil and remuneration must be Lockhart's, and to any person understanding that sort of work the degree of trust reposed holds out hope of advantage. At any rate, it is a most honourable trust, and I have written in suitable terms to Lord Aberdeen to express my acceptance of it, adverting to my necessary occupations here, and expressing my willingness to visit London occasionally to superintend the progress of the work. Treated myself, being considerably fagged, with a glass of poor Glengarry's super-excellent whisky and a cigar, made up my Journal, wrote to the girls, and so to roost upon a crust of bread and a glass of small beer, my usual supper.

July 6. — I laboured all the morning without anything unusual, save a call from my cousin, Mary Scott of Jedburgh, whom I persuaded to take part of my chaise to Abbotsford on Saturday. At two o'clock I walked to Cadell's, and afterwards to a committee of the Bannatyne Club. Thereafter I went to Leith, where we had fixed a meeting of The Club, now of forty-one years'

standing. I was in the chair, and Sir Adam croupier. We had the Justice-Clerk, Lord Abercromby, Lord Pitmilly, Lord Advocate, James Ferguson, John Irving, and William Clerk, and passed a merry day for old fellows. It is a curious thing that only three have died of this club since its formation. These were the Earl of Selkirk; James Clerk, Lieutenant in the Navy; and Archibald Miller, W.S. Sir Patrick Murray was an unwilling absentee. There were absent — Professor Davidson of Glasgow, besides Glassford, who has cut our society, and poor James Edmonstoune, whose state of health precludes his ever joining society again. We took a fair but moderate allowance of wine, sung our old songs, and were much refreshed with a hundred old stories, which would have seemed insignificant to any stranger. The most important of these were old college adventures of love and battle.

July 7. — I was rather apprehensive that I might have felt my unusual dissipation this morning, but not a whit; I rose as cool as a cucumber, and set about to my work till breakfast-time. I am to dine with Ballantyne to-day. Tomorrow with John Murray. This sounds sadly like idleness, except what may be done either in the morning before breakfast, or in the broken portion of the day between attendance on the Court and my dinner meal, — a vile, drowsy, yawning, fagged portion of existence, which resembles one's day, as a portion of the shirt, escaping betwixt one's waistcoat and breeches, indicates his linen.

Dined with James Ballantyne, who gave us a very pleasant party. There was a great musician, Mr. Neukomm, a German, a pupil of Haydn, a sensible, pleasant man.

July 8. — This morning I had an ample dose of proofs and could do nothing but read them. The Court kept me till two; I was then half tempted to go to hear Mr. Neukomm perform on the organ, which is said to be a most masterly exhibition, but I reflected how much time I should lose by giving way to temptation, and how little such ears as mine would be benefited by the exhibition, and so I resolved to return to my proofs, having not a little to do. I was so unlucky as to meet my foreigner along with Mr. Laine, the French Consul, and his lady, who all invited me to go with them, but I pleaded business, and was set down, doubtless, for a Goth, as I deserved. However, I got my proofs settled before dinner-time, and began to pack up books, *etc*.

I dined at John Murray's, and met, amongst others, Mr. Schutze, the brother-in-law of poor George Ellis. We conversed about our mutual friend, and about the life Canning was to have written about him, and which he would have done con amore. He gave me two instances of poor George's neatness of expression, and acuteness of discrimination. Having met, for the first time, "one Perceval, a young lawyer," he records him as a person who, with the advantages of life and opportunity, would assuredly rise to the head of affairs. Another gentleman is briefly characterised as "a man of few words, and fewer ideas." Schutze himself is a clever man, with something dry in his manner, owing, perhaps, to an imperfection of hearing. Murray's parties are always agreeable and well chosen.

July 9. — I began an immense arrangement of my papers, but was obliged to desist by the approach of four o'clock. Having been enabled to shirk the Court, I had the whole day to do what I wished, and as I made some progress I hope I will be strengthened to resume the task when at Abbotsford.

Heard of the death of poor Bob Shortreed, the companion of many a long ride among the hills in quest of old ballads. He was a merry companion, a good singer and mimic, and full of Scottish drollery. In his company, and under his guidance, I was able to see much of rural society in the mountains which I could not otherwise have attained, and which I have made my use of. He was, in addition, a man of worth and character. I always burdened his hospitality while at Jedburgh on the Circuit, and have been useful to some of his family. Poor fellow! He died at a most interesting period for his family, when his eldest daughter was about to make an advantageous marriage. So glide our friends from us — Haec poena diu viventibus. Many recollections die with him and with poor Terry. I dined with the Skenes in a family way.

July 10, — Had a hard day's work at the Court till about two, and then came home to prepare for the country. I made a talis qualis arrangement of my papers, which I trust I shall be able to complete at Abbotsford, for it will do much good. I wish I had a smart boy like Red Robin the tinker. Wrote also a pack of letters.

Abbotsford, July 11. — I was detained in the Court till nearly one o'clock, then set out and reached Abbotsford in five or six hours. Found all well, and

Johnnie rather better. He sleeps, by virtue of being in the open air, a good deal.

July 12. — The day excessively rainy, or, as we call it, soft. I e'en unpacked my books and did a great deal to put them in order, but I was sick of the labour by two o'clock and left several of my books and all of my papers at sixes and sevens. Sir Adam and the Colonel dined with us. A Spanish gentleman with his wife, whom I had seen at the French Consul's, also dropped in. He was a handsome, intelligent, and sensible man; his name I have forgot. We had a pleasant evening.

July 13. — This day I wrote till one, resuming the History, and making out a day's task. Then went to Chiefswood, and had the pleasure of a long walk with a lady, well known in the world of poetry, Mrs. Hemans. She is young and pretty, though the mother of five children, as she tells me. There is taste and spirit in her conversation. My daughters are critical, and call her blue, but I think they are hypercritical. I will know better when we meet again. I was home at four. Had an evening walk with little Walter, who held me by the finger, gabbling eternally much that I did, and more that I did not, understand. Then I had a long letter to write to Lockhart, correct and read, and despatch proofs, etc.; and to bed heartily tired, though with no great exertion.

July 14. — A rainy forenoon broke the promise of a delightful morning. I wrote four and a half pages, to make the best of a bad bargain. If I can double the daily task, I will be something in hand. But I am resolved to stick to my three pages a day at least. The twelfth of August will then complete my labours.

July 15. — This day two very pretty and wellbred boys came over to breakfast with us. I finished my task of three pages and better, and went to walk with the little fellows round the farm, by the lake, etc., *etc.* They were very good companions. Tom has been busy thinning the terrace this day or two, and is to go on.

July 16. — I made out my task-work and betook myself to walk about twelve. I feel the pen turn heavy after breakfast; perhaps my solemn

morning meal is too much for my intellectual powers, but I won't abridge a single crumb for all that. I eat very little at dinner, and can't abide to be confined in my hearty breakfast. The work goes on as task-work must, slow, sure, and I trust not drowsy, though the author is. I sent off to Dionysius Lardner (Goodness be with us, what a name!) as far as page thirty-eight inclusive, but I will wait to add tomorrow's quota. I had a long walk with Tom. I am walking with more pleasure and comfort to myself than I have done for many a day. May Heaven continue this great mercy, which I have so much reason to be thankful for!

July 17. — - We called at Chiefswood and asked Captain Hamilton, and Mrs. H., and Mrs. Hemans, to dinner on Monday. She is a clever person, and has been pretty. I had a long walk with her tête-à-tête. She told me of the peculiar melancholy attached to the words no more. I could not help telling, as a different application of the words, how an old dame riding home along Cockenzie Sands, pretty bowsy, fell off the pillion, and her husband, being in good order also, did not miss her till he came to Prestonpans. He instantly returned with some neighbours, and found the good woman seated amidst the advancing tide, which began to rise, with her lips ejaculating to her cummers, who she supposed were still pressing her to another cup, "Nae ae drap mair, I thank you kindly." We dined in family, and all well.

July 18. — - A Sunday with alternate showers and sunshine. Wrote double task, which brings me to page forty-six inclusive. I read the Spaewife of Galt. There is something good in it, and the language is occasionally very forcible, but he has made his story difficult to understand, by adopting a region of history little known, and having many heroes of the same name, whom it is not easy to keep separate in one's memory. Some of the traits of the Spaewife, who conceits herself to be a changeling or twin, are very good indeed. His Highland Chief is a kind of Caliban, and speaks, like Caliban, a jargon never spoken on earth, but full of effect for all that.

July 19. — I finished two leaves this morning, and received the Hamiltons and Mrs. Hemans to breakfast. Afterwards we drove to Yarrow and showed Mrs. Hemans the lions. The party dined with us, and stayed till evening. Of course no more work.

July 20. — A rainy day, and I am very drowsy and would give the world to — — . [**Note: dash is a blank space] I wrote four leaves, however, and then my understanding dropped me. I have made up for yesterday's short task.

NOTE. — From July 20th, 1329, to May 23d, 1830, there are no entries in the Journal, but during that time Sir Walter met with a sad loss. He was deprived of his humble friend and staunch henchman, Thomas Purdie. The following little note to Laidlaw shows how keenly he felt his death: —

> "MY DEAR WILLIE, — I write to tell you the shocking news of poor Tom Purdie's death, by which I have been greatly affected. He had complained, or rather spoken, of a sore throat; and the day before yesterday, as it came on a shower of rain, I wanted him to walk fast on to Abbotsford before me, but you know well how impossible that was. He took some jelly, or trifle of that kind, but made no complaint. This morning he rose from bed as usual, and sat down by the table with his head on his hand; and when his daughter spoke to him, life had passed away without a sigh or groan. Poor fellow! There is a heart cold that loved me well, and, I am sure, thought of my interest more than his own. I have seldom been so much shocked. I wish you would take a ride down and pass the night. There is much I have to say, and this loss adds to my wish to see you. We dine at four. The day is indifferent, but the sooner the better. — Yours very truly,
>
> "WALTER SCOTT.
>
> "31st (sic) October," Qy. 29th.

To Mr. Cadell, a few days later, he says, "I have lost my old and faithful servant, my factotum, and am so much shocked that I really wish to be quit of the country. I have this day laid him in the grave."

On coming to Edinburgh, Sir Walter found that his old friend and neighbour Lady Jane Stuart was no longer there to welcome him. She also had died somewhat suddenly on October 28th, and was buried at Invermay on November 4th.

1830 — May

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May 23, [Abbotsford.] — About a year ago I took the pet at my Diary, chiefly because I thought it made me abominably selfish; and that by recording my gloomy fits I encouraged their recurrence, whereas out of sight, out of mind, is the best way to get rid of them; and now I hardly know why I take it up again; but here goes. I came here to attend Raeburn's funeral. I am near of his kin, my great-grandfather, Walter Scott, being the second son or first cadet of this small family. My late kinsman was also married to my aunt, a most amiable old lady. He was never kind to me, and at last utterly ungracious. Of course I never liked him, and we kept no terms. He had forgot, though, an infantine cause of quarrel, which I always remembered. When I was four or five years old I was staying at Lessudden House, an old mansion, the abode of this Raeburn. A large pigeon-house was almost destroyed with starlings, then a common bird, though now seldom seen. They were seized in their nests and put in a bag, and I think drowned, or threshed to death, or put to some such end. The servants gave one to me, which I in some degree tamed, and the brute of a laird seized and wrung its neck. I flew at his throat like a wild cat, and was torn from him with no little difficulty. Long afterwards I did him the mortal offence to recall some superiority which my father had lent to the laird to make up a qualification, which he meant to exercise by voting for Lord Minto's interest against poor Don. This made a total breach between two relations who had never been friends, and though I was afterwards of considerable service to his family, he kept his illhumour, alleging justly enough that I did these kind actions for the sake of his wife and family, not for his benefit. I now saw him at the age of eighty-two or three deposited in the ancestral grave. Dined with my cousins, and returned to Abbotsford about eight o'clock.

May 24, [Edinburgh]. — Called on my neighbour Nicol Milne of Faldonside, to settle something about the road to Selkirk. Afterwards went to Huntly Burn and made my compliments to the family. Lunched at halfpast two and drove to town, calling at George Square on Gala. He proposed to give up the present road to Selkirk in favour of another on the north side of the river, to be completed by two bridges. This is an object for

Abbotsford. In the evening came to town. Letter from Mr. H[aydon] soliciting £20. Wait till Lockhart comes.

May 25. — Got into the old mill this morning, and grind away. Walked in very bad day to George Square from the Parliament House, through paths once familiar, but not trod for twenty years. Met Scott of Woll and Scott of Gala, and consulted about the new road between Galashiels and Selkirk. I am in hopes to rid myself of the road to Selkirk, which goes too near me at Abbotsford. Dined at Lord Chief Commissioner's, where we met the new Chief Baron Abercromby and his lady. I thought it was the first time we had met for above forty years, but he put me in mind we had dined one day at John Richardson's.

May 26. — Wrought with proofs, etc., at the Demonology, which is a cursed business to do neatly. I must finish it though, for I need money. I went to the Court; from that came home, and scrambled on with half writing, half reading, half idleness till evening. I have laid aside smoking much; and now, unless tempted by company, rarely take a cigar. I was frightened by a species of fit which I had in February, which took from me my power of speaking. I am told it is from the stomach. It looked woundy like palsy or apoplexy. Well, be it what it will, I can stand it.

May 27. — Court as usual. I am agitating a proposed retirement from the Court. As they are only to have four instead of six Clerks of Session in Scotland, it will be their interest to let me retire on a superannuation. Probably I shall make a bad bargain, and get only twothirds of the salary, instead of three-fourths. This would be hard, but I could save between two and three hundred pounds by giving up town residence; and surely I could do enough with my time at reviews and other ways, so as to make myself comfortable at Abbotsford. At any rate, jacta est aha; Sir Robert Peel and the Advocate seem to acquiesce in the arrangement, and Sir Robert Dundas retires alongst with me. I think the difference will be infinite in point of health and happiness.

May 28. — Wrought in the morning, then the Court, then Cadell's. My affairs go on up to calculation, and the Magnum keeps its ground. If this can last for five or six years longer we may clear our hands of debt; but perhaps

I shall have paid that of Nature before that time come. They will have the books, and Cadell to manage them, who is a faithful pilot. The poetry which we purchased for [£7000], payable in two years, is melting off our hands; and we will feed our Magnum in that way when we have sold the present stock, by which we hope to pay the purchase-money, and so go on velvet with the continuation. So my general affairs look well. I expect Lockhart and Sophia to arrive this evening in the Roads, and breakfast with us tomorrow. This is very reviving.

May 29. — The Lockharts were to appear at nine o'clock, but it is past four, and they come not. There has been easterly wind, and a swell of the sea at the mouth of the Firth, but nevertheless I wish they would come. The machinery is liable to accidents, and they may be delayed thus.

Mr. Piper, the great contractor for the mail coaches, one of the sharpest men in his line, called here to-day to give his consent to our line of road. He pays me the compliment of saying he wishes my views on the subject. That is perhaps fudge, but at least I know enough to choose the line that is most for my own advantage. I have written to make Gala acquainted that my subscription depends on their taking the Gala foot road; no other would suit me. After dinner I began to tease myself about the children and their parents, and night went down on our uncertainty.

May 30. — Our travellers appeared early in the morning, cum tota sequela. Right happy were we all. Poor Johnnie looks well. His deformity is confirmed, poor fellow; but he may be a clever lad for all that. An imposthume in his neck seems to be the crisis of his complaint. He is a gentle, placid creature. Walter is remarkably handsome, and so is little Whippety Stourie, as I call her. After breakfast I had a chat with Lockhart about affairs in general, which, as far as our little interests are concerned, are doing very well. Lockhart is now established in his reputation and literary prospects. I wrote some more in his Demonology, which is a scrape, I think.

May 31. — Set to work early, and did a good day's work without much puffing and blowing. Had Lockhart at dinner, and a tête-à-tête over our cigar. He has got the right ideas for getting to the very head of the literary world and now stands very high as well for taste and judgment as for

genius. I think there is no fear now of his letting a love of fun run away with him. At home the whole day, except a walk to Cadell's, who is enlarging his sale. As he comes upon heavy months, and is come now to the Abbot, the Monastery, and the less profitable or popular of the novels, this is a fortunate circumstance. The management seems very judicious.

June

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June, 1. — Proofs and Court, the inevitable employment of the day. Louisa Kerr dined with us, and Williams looked in. We talked a good deal on Celtic witchery and fairy lore. I was glad to renew my acquaintance with this able and learned man.

June 2. — The Lockharts left us again this morning, and although three masons are clanking at their work to clear a well, the noise is mitigated, now the poor babies' clang of tongues is removed. I set myself to write, determining to avoid reasoning, and to bring in as many stories as possible. Being a Teind Wednesday, I may work undisturbed, and I will try to get so far ahead as may permit a journey to Abbotsford on Saturday. At nine o'clock was as far ahead as page 57. It runs out well, and 150 pages will do.

June 3. — Finished my proofs, and sent them off with copy. I saw Mr. Dickinson on Tuesday: a right plain sensible man. He is so confident in my matters, that, being a large creditor himself, he offers to come down, with the support of all the London creditors, to carry through any measure that can be devised for my behoof. Mr. Cadell showed him that we are four years forward in matter prepared for the press. Got Heath's illustrations, which, I dare say, are finely engraved, but commonplace enough in point of art.

June 4. — Court as usual, and not long detained. Visited Cadell. All right, and his reports favourable, it being the launch of our annual volume, now traversing a year, with unblemished reputation and success uninterrupted. I should have said I overhauled proofs and furnished copy in the morning between seven and ten o'clock.

After coming from the Court I met Woll and Gala, and agreed upon the measures to be attempted at Selkirk on the eighth at the meeting of trustees. In the evening smoked an extra cigar (none since Tuesday), and dedicated the rest to putting up papers, etc., for Abbotsford. Anne wants me to go to

hear the Tyrolese Minstrels, but though no one more esteems that bold and highspirited people, I cannot but think their yodelling, if this be the word, is a variation, or set of variations, upon the tones of a jackass, so I remain to dribble and scribble at home.

June 5. — I rose at seven as usual, and, to say truth, dawdled away my time in putting things to rights, which is a vile amusement, and writing letters to people who write to ask my opinion of their books, which is as much as to say — "Tom, come tickle me." This is worse than the other pastime, but either may serve for a broken day, and both must be done sometimes.

[Abbotsford.] — After the Court, started for Abbotsford at halfpast twelve at noon, and here we are at halfpast five impransi. The country looks beautiful, though the foliage, larches in particular, have had a blight. Yet they can hardly be said to lose foliage since they have but a sort of brushes at best.

June 6. — Went through a good deal of duty as to proofs, and the like. At two set out and reached by four Chiefswood, where I had the happiness to find the Lockharts all in high spirits, well and happy. Johnnie must be all his life a weakly child, but he may have good health, and possesses an admirable temper. We dined with the Lockharts, and were all very happy.

June 7. — Same duty carefully performed. I continued working till about one, when Lockhart came to walk. We took our course round by the Lake. I was a good deal fagged, and must have tired my companion by walking slow. The Fergusons came over — Sir Adam in all his glory — and "the night drave on wi' sangs and clatter."

June 8. — Had not time to do more than correct a sheet or two. About eleven set off for Selkirk, where there was a considerable meeting of road trustees. The consideration of the new road was intrusted to a committee which in some measure blinks the question; yet I think it must do in the end. I dined with the Club, young Chesters president. It is but bad fun, but I might be father of most of them, and must have patience. At length

> "Hame cam our gudeman at e'en,
> And hame cam he."

June 9. — In the morning I advised Sheriff Court processes, carried on the Demonology till twelve, then put books, etc., in some order to leave behind me. Will it be ordered that I come back not like a stranger, or sojourner, but to inhabit here? I do not know; I shall be happy either way. It is perhaps a violent change in the end of life to quit the walk one has trod so long, and the cursed splenetic temper, which besets all men, makes you value opportunities and circumstances when one enjoys them no longer. Well! things must be as they may, as says that great philosopher Corporal Nym.

[Edinburgh.] — I had my walk, and on my return found the Lockharts come to take luncheon, and leave of us. Reached Edinburgh at nine o'clock. Found, among less interesting letters, two from Lord Northampton on the death of the poor Marchioness, and from Anna Jane Clephane on the same melancholy topic. Hei mihi!

June 10. — Corrected proofs, prepared some copy, and did all that was right. Dined and wrought in the evening, yet I did not make much way after all.

June 11. — In the morning, the usual labour of two hours. God bless that habit of being up at seven! I could do nothing without it, but it keeps me up to the scratch, as they say. I had a letter this morning with deep mourning paper and seal; the mention of my nephew in the first line made me sick, fearing it had related to Walter. It was from poor Sir Thomas Bradford, who has lost his lady, but was indeed an account of Walter, and a good one.

June 12. — A day of general labour and much weariness.

June 13. — The same may be said of this day.

June 14. — And of this, only I went out for an hour and a half to Mr. Colvin Smith, to conclude a picture for Lord Gillies. This is a sad relief from labour.

> "… Sedet æternumque sedebit
> Infelix Theseus."

But Lord Gillies has been so kind and civil that I must have his picture as like as possible.

June 15. — I had at breakfast the son of Mr. Fellenburg of Hofwyll, Switzerland, a modest young man. I used to think his father something of a quack, in proposing to discover how a boy's natural genius lies, with a view to his education. How would they have made me a scholar, is a curious question. Whatever was forced on me as a task I should have detested. There was also a gentlemanlike little man, the Chevalier de — — , silent, and speaks no English. Poor George Scott, Harden, is dead of the typhus fever. Poor dear boy! I am sorry for him, and yet more for his parents. I have a letter from Henry on the subject.

June 16. — I wrote this forenoon till I completed the 100 pages, which is well done. I had a call from Colin Mackenzie, whom I had not seen for nearly two years. He has not been so well, and looks ghastly, but I think not worse than I have seen him of late years. We are very old acquaintances. I remember he was one of a small party at college, that formed ourselves into a club called the Poetical Society. The other members were Charles Kerr of Abbotrule (a singular being), Colin M'Laurin (insane), Colin, and I, who have luckily kept our wits. I also saw this morning a Mr. Low, a youth of great learning, who has written a good deal on the early history of Scotland. He is a good-looking, frank, gentlemanlike lad; with these good gifts only a parish schoolmaster in Aberdeenshire. Having won a fair holiday I go to see Miss Kemble for the first time. It is two or three years since I have been in a theatre, once my delight.

June 17. — Went last night to theatre, and saw Miss Fanny Kemble's Isabella, which was a most creditable performance. It has much of the genius of Mrs. Siddons, her aunt. She wants her beautiful countenance, her fine form, and her matchless dignity of step and manner. On the other hand, Miss Fanny Kemble has very expressive, though not regular, features, and what is worth it all, great energy mingled with and chastened by correct taste. I suffered by the heat, lights, and exertion, and will not go back tonight, for it has purchased me a sore headache this theatrical excursion. Besides, the play is Mrs. Beverley, and I hate to be made miserable about domestic distress, so I keep my gracious presence at home tonight, though

Ive and respect Miss Kemble for giving her active support to her father in his need, and preventing Covent Garden from coming down about their ears. I corrected proofs before breakfast, attended Court, but was idle in the forenoon, the headache annoying me much. Dinner will make me better. And so it did. I wrote in the evening three pages, and tolerably well, though I may say with the Emperor Titus (not Titus Oates) that I have lost a day.

June 18, [Blair-Adam]. — Young John Colquhoun of Killermont and his wife breakfasted with us, — a neat custom that, and saves wine and wassail. Then to Court, and arranged for our departure for Blair-Adam, it being near midsummer when the club meets. Anne with me, and Sir Adam Ferguson. The day was execrable. Our meeting at Blair-Adam was cordial, but our numbers diminished; the good and very clever Lord Chief Baron is returned to his own country, with more regrets than in Scotland usually attend a stranger. Will Clerk has a bad cold, [Thomas] Thomson is detained, but the Chief Commissioner, Admiral Adam, Sir Adam, John Thomson and I, make an excellent concert. I only hope our venerable host will not fatigue himself. Tomorrow we go to Culross, which Sir Robert Preston is repairing, and the wise are asking for whose future enjoyment. He is upwards of ninety, but still may enjoy the bustle of life.

June 19. — Arose and expected to work a little, but a friend's house is not favourable; you are sure to want the book you have not brought, and are in short out of sorts, like the minister who could not preach out of his own pulpit. There is something fanciful in this, and something real too, and I have forgot my watch and left half my glasses at home.

Off we set at halfpast eight o'clock, Lord Chief Commissioner being left at home owing to a cold. We breakfasted at Luscar, a place belonging to Adam Rolland, but the gout had arrested him at Edinburgh, so we were hospitably received by his family. The weather most unpropitious, very cold and rainy. After breakfast to Culross, where the veteran, Sir Robert Preston, showed us his curiosities. Life has done as much for him as most people. In his ninety-second year he has an ample fortune, a sound understanding, not the least decay of eyes, ears, or taste; is as big as two men, and eats like three. Yet he too experiences the singula prædantur anni, and has lost something since I last saw him. If his appearance renders old age tolerable, it does not make it desirable. But I fear when death comes we shall be unwilling for all that to part with our bundle of sticks. Sir Robert amuses

himself with repairing the old House of Culross, built by the Lord Bruce of Kinloss. To what use it is destined is not very evident to me. It is too near his own comfortable mansion of Valleyfield to be useful as a residence, if indeed it could be formed into a comfortable modern house. But it is rather like a banqueting house. Well, he follows his own fancy. We had a sumptuous cold dinner. Adam grieves it was not hot, so little can war and want break a man to circumstances. We returned to Blair-Adam in the evening, through "the wind but and the rain." For June weather it is the most ungenial I have seen. The beauty of Culross consists in magnificent terraces rising on the seabeach, and commanding the opposite shore of Lothian; the house is repairing in the style of James the Sixth. The windows have pediments like Heriot's Work. There are some fine relics of the old Monastery, with large Saxon arches. At Luscar I saw with pleasure the painting by Raeburn, of my old friend Adam Rolland, Esq., who was in the external circumstances, but not in frolic or fancy, my prototype for Paul Pleydell.

June 20. — We settled this morning to go to church at Lochore, that is, at Ballingray; but when we came to the earthly paradise so called, we were let off for there was no sermon, for which I could not in my heart be sorry. So, after looking at Lochore, back we came to lounge and loiter about till dinner-time. The rest of the day was good company, good cheer, and good conversation. Yet to be idle here is not the thing, and to be busy is impossible, so I wish myself home again in spite of good entertainment. We leave tonight after an early dinner, and I will get to work again.

June 21, [Edinburgh]. — Wrote to Walter a long letter. The day continued dropping occasionally, but Sir Adam was in high fooling, and we had an amazing deal of laughing. We stole a look at the Kiery Craigs between showers. In the meantime George Cheape and his son came in. We dined at halfpast three, but it was seven ere we set off, and did not reach the house in Shandwick Place till eleven at night. Thus ended our Club for the year 1830, its thirteenth anniversary. Its numbers were diminished by absence and indisposition, but its spirit was unabated.

June 22. — Finished proofs and some copy in the morning. Returned at noon, and might have laboured a good day's work, but was dull, drowsy, and indolent, and could not, at least did not, write above half a page. It was

a day lost, and indeed it is always with me the consequence of mental indolence for a day or two, so I had a succession of eating and dozing, which I am ashamed of, for there was nothing to hinder me but "thick-coming fancies." Pshaw, rabbit un!

June 23. — Worked well this morning, and then to Court. At two called on Mr. Gibson, and find him disposed for an instalment. Cadell has £10,000, and Gibson thinks £12,000 will pay 2s. 6d. I wish it could be made three shillings, which would be £15,000.

Presided at a meeting of the Bannatyne Club. The Whigs made a strong party to admit Kennedy of Dunure, which set aside Lord Medwyn, who had been longer on the roll of candidates. If politics get into this Club it will ruin the literary purpose of the meeting, and the general good-humour with which it has gone on. I think it better to take the thing good-humouredly, and several of them volunteered to say that Medwyn must be the next, which will finish all à l'aimable. If it come to party-work I will cut and run. Confound it! my eyes are closing now, even now, at halfpast four.

Dined with Lord Medwyn, a pleasant party. The guest of importance, Mrs. Peter Latouche from Dublin, a fine old dame, who must have been beautiful when young, being pleasant and comely at seventy, — saintly it appears.

June 24. — Hard work with Ballantyne's proofs and revises, but got them accomplished. I am at the twelfth hour, but I think I shall finish this silly book before the tenth of July.

Notwithstanding this sage resolution I did not write half a page of the said Demonology this day. I went to the Court, called on Mr. Cadell, returned dog-tired, and trifled my time with reading the trial of Corder. What seemed most singular was his love to talk of the young woman he had murdered, in such a manner as to insinuate the circumstances of his own crime, which is a kind of necessity which seems to haunt conscience-struck men. Charles Sharpe came in at night and supped with us.

June 25. — Slept little later than I should. The proofs occupied the morning. The Court and walk home detained me till two. When I returned, set to work and reached page 210 of copy. There is little or nothing else to say. Skene was with me for a few minutes. I called at Cadell's also, who

thinks a dividend of 3s. per pound will be made out. This will be onehalf of the whole debts, and leave a sinking fund for the rest about £10,000 a year "if the beast live and the branks bide hale."

June 26. — Miss Kemble and her father breakfasted here, with Sir Adam and Lady Ferguson. I like the young lady very much, respecting both her talents and the use she has made of them. She seems merry, unaffected, and good-humoured. She said she did not like the apathy of the Scottish audiences, who are certain not to give applause upon credit. I went to the Court, but soon returned; a bad cold in my head makes me cough and sneeze like the Dragon of Wantley. The Advocates' Bill is read a third time. I hardly know whether to wish it passed or no, and am therefore in utrumque paratus.

June 27. — In the morning worked as usual at proofs and copy of my infernal Demonology — a task to which my poverty and not my will consents. About twelve o'clock I went to the country to take a day's relaxation. We (i.e. Mr. Cadell, James Ballantyne, and I) went to Prestonpans, and, getting there about one, surveyed the little village, where my aunt and I were lodgers for the sake of sea-bathing in 1778, I believe. I knew the house of Mr. Warroch, where we lived, — a poor cottage, of which the owners and their family are extinct. I recollected my juvenile ideas of dignity attendant on the large gate, a black arch which lets out upon the sea. I saw the church where I yawned under the inflictions of a Dr. M'Cormick, a name in which dulness seems to have been hereditary. I saw the Links where I arranged my shells upon the turf, and swam my little skiffs in the pools. Many comparisons between the man, and the recollections of my kind aunt, of old George Constable, who, I think, dangled after her; of Dalgetty, a veteran half-pay lieutenant, who swaggered his solitary walk on the parade, as he called a little open space before the same pool. We went to Preston, and took refuge from a thunder-plump in the old tower. I remembered the little garden where I was crammed with gooseberries, and the fear I had of Blind Harry's spectre of Fawdon showing his headless trunk at one of the windows. I remembered also a very goodnatured pretty girl (my Mary Duff), whom I laughed and romped with and loved as children love. She was a Miss Dalrymple, daughter of Lord Westhall, a Lord of Session; was afterwards married to Anderson of

Winterfield, and her daughter is now [the spouse] of my colleague Robert Hamilton. So strangely are our cards shuffled. I was a mere child, and could feel none of the passion which Byron alleges, yet the recollection of this good-humoured companion of my childhood is like that of a morning dream, nor should I now greatly like to dispel it by seeing the original, who must now be sufficiently time-honoured.

Well, we walked over the field of battle, saw the Prince's Park, Cope's Loan, marked by slaughter in his disastrous retreat, the thorn-tree which marks the centre of the battle, and all besides that was to be seen or supposed. We saw two broadswords, found on the field of battle, one a Highlander's, an Andrew Ferrara, another the dragoon's sword of that day. Lastly, we came to Cockenzie, where Mr. Francis Cadell, my publisher's brother, gave us a kind reception. I was especially glad to see the mother of the family, a fine old lady, who was civil to my aunt and me, and, I recollect well, used to have us to tea at Cockenzie. Curious that I should long afterwards have an opportunity to pay back this attention to her son Robert. Once more, what a kind of shuffling of the hand dealt us at our nativity. There was Mrs. F. Cadell, and one or two young ladies, and some fine fat children. I should be a bastard to the time did I not tell our fare. We had a tiled whiting, a dish unknown elsewhere, so there is a bone for the gastronomers to pick. Honest John Wood, my old friend, dined with us. I only regret I cannot understand him, as he has a very powerful memory, and much curious information. The whole day of pleasure was damped by the news of the King's death; it was fully expected, however, as the termination of his long illness. But he was very good to me personally, and a kind sovereign. The common people and gentry join in their sorrow. Much is owing to a kindly recollection of his visit to this country, which gave all men an interest in him.

June 29. — The business of the Court was suspended, so back I came, without stop or stay, and to work went I. As I had risen early I was sadly drowsy; however, I fought and fagged away the day. I am still in hope to send my whole manuscript to Ballantyne before the 10th July. Well, I must devise something to myself; I must do something better than this Demonological trash. It is nine o'clock, and I am weary, yea, my very spirit's tired. After ten o'clock Mr. Daveis, an American barrister of eminence, deputed to represent the American States in a dispute concerning

the boundaries of Nova Scotia and New England, with an introduction to me from Mr. Ticknor, called. I was unable to see him, and put him off till tomorrow morning at breakfast.

June 30. — The new King was proclaimed, and the College of Justice took the oaths. I assisted Mr. Daveis, who is a pleasant and wellinformed man, to see the ceremony, which, probably, he would hardly witness in his own country. A day of noise and bustle. We dined at Mr. and Mrs. Strange, chère exquise I suppose. Many friends of the Arniston family. I thought there was some belief of Lord Melville losing his place. That he may exchange it for another is very likely, but I think the Duke will not desert him who adhered to him so truly.

July

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July 1. — Mr. Daveis breakfasted with me. On nearer acquaintance, I was more galled by some portion of continental manners than I had been at first, so difficult is it for an American to correct his manner to our ideas of perfect good-breeding. I did all that was right, however, and asked Miss Ferrier, whom he admires prodigiously, to meet him at dinner. Hither came also a young friend, so I have done the polite thing every way. Thomson also dined with us. After dinner I gave my strangers an airing round the Corstorphine hills, and returned by the Cramond road. I sent to Mr. Gibson, Cadell's project for Lammas, which raises £15,000 for a dividend of 3s. to be then made. I think the trustees should listen to this, which is paying onehalf of my debt.

July 2. — Have assurances from John Gibson that £15,000 should be applied as I proposed. If this can be repeated yearly up to 1835 the matter is ended, and well ended; yet, woe's me! the public change their taste, and their favourites get old. Yet if I was born in 1771, I shall only be sixty in 1831, and, by the same reasoning, sixty-four in 1835, so I may rough it out, yet be no Sir Robert Preston. At any rate, it is all I have to trust to.

I did a morning's task, and was detained late at the Court; came home, ate a hearty dinner, slumbered after it in spite of my teeth, and made a poor night's work of it. One's mind gets so dissipated by the fagging, yet insignificant, business of the offices; my release comes soon, but I fear for a term only, for I doubt if they will carry through the Court Bill.

July 3. — My day began at seven as usual. Sir Adam came to breakfast. I read Southey's edition of the Pilgrim's Progress, and think of reviewing the same. I would I had books at hand. To the Court, and remained till two; then went to look at the drawings for repairing Murthly, the house of Sir John or James Stewart, now building by Gillespie Graham, and which he has planned after the fashion of James VI.'s reign, a kind of bastard Grecian — very fanciful and pretty though. Read Hone's Everyday Book, and with a better opinion of him than I expected from his anti-religious frenzy. We are to dine with the Skenes to-day.

Which we did accordingly, meeting Mr. and Mrs. Strange, Lord Forbes, and other friends.

July 4. — Was a complete and serious day of work, only interrupted in the evening by — — , who, with all the freedom and ease of continental manners, gratified me with his gratuitous presence. Yet it might have been worse, for his conversation is well enough, but it is strange want of tact to suppose one must be alike welcome to a stranger at all hours of the day; but I have stuffed the portfolio, so do not grudge half-an-hour.

July 5. — I was up before seven and resumed my labours, and by breakfast-time I had reached p. 133; it may reach to 160 or 170 as I find space and matter. Buchanan came and wrote about fifteen of his pages, equal to mine in proportion of three to one. We are therefore about p. 138, and in sight of land. At two o'clock went to bury poor George Burnet, the son of Gilbert Innes, in as heavy a rain as I ever saw. Was in Shandwick Place again by four and made these entries. I dine to-day with the Club; grant Heaven it fair before six o'clock!

We met at Barry's, and had a gallant dinner, but only few of our number was present. Alas! sixty does not rally to such meetings with the alacrity of sixteen, and our Club has seen the space between these terms. I was home and abed when Charles arrived and waked me. Poor fellow! he is doing very well with his rheumatic limbs.

July 6. — I did little this morning but correct some sheets, and was at the Court all morning. About two I called at Mr. Cadell's, and I learned the dividend was arranged. Sir Adam fell in with us, and laid anchors to windward to get an invitation to Cockenzie for next year, being struck with my lifelike description of a tiled haddock. I came home much fagged, slept for half-an-hour (I don't like this lethargy), read I Promessi Sposi, and was idle. Miss Kerr dined and gave us music.

July 7. — This morning corrected proofs, with which J.B. proceeds lazily enough, and alleges printing reasons, of which he has plenty at hand. Though it was the Teind Wednesday the devil would have it that this was a Court of Session day also for a cause of mine; so there I sat hearing a dozen cases of augmentation of stipend pleaded, and wondering within myself

whether anything can be predicated of a Scottish parish, in which there cannot be discovered a reason for enlarging the endowments of the minister. I returned after two, with a sousing shower for companion; I got very wet and very warm. But shall we go mourn for that, my dear? I rather like a flaw of weather; it shows something of the old man is left. I had Mr. Buchanan to help pack my papers and things, and got through part of that unpleasant business.

July 8. — I had my letters as usual, but no proofs till I was just going out. Returning from the Court met Skene, who brought me news that our visit was at an end for Saturday, poor Colin having come to town very unwell. I called to see him, and found him suffering under a degree of slow palsy, his spirits depressed, and his looks miserable, worse a great deal than when I last saw him. His wife and daughter were in the room, dreadfully distressed. We spoke but a few words referring to recovery and better days, which, I suspect, neither of us hoped. For I looked only on the ghost of my friend of many a long day; and he, while he said to see me did him good, must have had little thought of our meeting under better auspices. We shall, of course, go straight to Abbotsford, instead of travelling by Harcus as we intended.

July 9. — Two distressed damsels on my hands, one, a friend of Harriet Swinton, translates from the Italian a work on the plan of I Promessi Sposi, but I fear she must not expect much from the trade. A translation with them is a mere translation — that is, a thing which can be made their own at a guinea per sheet, and they will not have an excellent one at a higher rate. Second is Miss Young, daughter of the excellent Dr. Young of Hawick. If she can, from her father's letters and memoranda, extract materials for a fair simple account of his life, I would give my name as editor, and I think it might do, but for a large publication — Palabras, neighbour Dogberry, the time is by. Dined with the Bannatyne, where we had a lively party. Touching the songs, an old roué must own an improvement in the times, when all paw-paw words are omitted, and naughty innuendos gazés. One is apt to say —

> "Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,
> A good mouth-filling oath, and leave 'in sooth,'
> And such protest of pepper-gingerbread."

I think there is more affectation than improvement in the new mode.

July 10. — Rose rather late: the champagne and turtle, I suppose, for our reform includes no fasting. Then poor Ardwell came to breakfast; then Dr. Young's daughter. I have projected with Cadell a plan of her father's life, to be edited by me. If she does but tolerably, she may have a fine thing of it. Next came the Court, where sixty judgments were pronounced and written by the Clerks, I hope all correctly, though an error might well happen in such a crowd, and — — , one of the best men possible, is beastly stupid. Be that as it may, off came Anne, Charles, and I for Abbotsford. We started about two, and the water being too deep didn't arrive till past seven; dinner, etc., filled up the rest of the day.

July 11, Abbotsford. — Corrected my proofs and the lave of it till about one o'clock. Then started for a walk to Chiefswood, which I will take from station to station, with a book in my pouch. I have begun Lawrie Todd, which ought, considering the author's undisputed talents, to have been better. He might have laid Cooper aboard, but he follows far behind. No wonder: Galt, poor fellow, was in the King's Bench when he wrote it. No whetter of genius is necessity, though said to be the mother of invention.

July 12. — Another wet day, but I walked twice up and down the terrace, and also wrote a handsome scrap of copy, though mystified by the want of my books, and so forth. Dr. and Mrs. Lockhart and Violet came to luncheon and left us to drive on to Peebles. I read and loitered and longed to get my things in order. Got to work, however, at seven in the morning.

July 13. — Now "what a thing it is to be an ass!" I have a letter from a certain young man, of a sapient family, announcing that his sister had so far mistaken my attentions as to suppose I was only prevented by modesty from stating certain wishes and hopes, *etc.* The party is a woman of rank: so far my vanity may be satisfied. But to think I would wish to appropriate a grim grenadier made to mount guard at St. James's! The Lord deliver me! I excused myself with little picking upon the terms, and there was no occasion for much delicacy in repelling such an attack.

July 14. — The Court of Session Bill is now committed in the House of Lords, so it fairly goes on this season, and I have, I suppose, to look for my

congé. I can hardly form a notion of the possibility that I am not to return to Edinburgh. My clerk Buchanan came here, and assists me to finish the Demonology Letters, and be d — d to them. But it is done to their hand. Two ladies, Mrs. Latouche of Dublin, and her niece, Miss Boyle, came to spend a day or two. The aunt is a fine old lady; the conversation that of a serious person frightened out of her wits by the violence and superstition of our workers of miracles in the west. Miss Boyle is a pretty young woman, rather quiet for an Irish lass.

July 16. — We visited at Lessudden yesterday, and took Mrs. Latouche thither. To-day, as they had left us, we went alone to Major John's house of Ravenswood and engaged a large party of cousins to dine tomorrow.

In the evening a party of foreigners came around the door, and going out I found Le Comte Ladislaus de Potocki, a great name in Poland, with his lady and brother-in-law, so offered wine, coffee, tea, *etc.* The lady is strikingly pretty. If such a woman as she had taken an affection for a lame baronet, nigh sixty years old, it would be worth speaking about! I have finished the Demonology.

July 17. — Another bad day, wet past all efforts to walk, and threatening a very bad harvest. Persecuted with begging letters; an author's Pegasus is like a postchaise leaving the door of the inn: the number of beggars is uncountable. The language they hold of my character for charity makes my good reputation as troublesome as that of Joseph Surface. A dinner of cousins, the young Laird of Raeburn, so he must be called, though nearly as old as I am, at their head. His brother Robert, who has been in India for forty years, excepting one short visit: a fine manly fellow, who has belled the cat with fortune, and held her at bay as a man of mould may. Being all kinsmen and friends, we made a merry day of our reunion. All left at night.

July 18. —

> "Time runs, I know not how, away."

Here am I beginning the second week of my vacation — though what needs me note that? — vacation and session will probably be the same to me in the future. The long remove must then be looked to, for the final signal to break up, and that is a serious thought.

I have corrected two sets of proofs, one for the mail, another for the Blucher tomorrow.

[No entry between July 18 and September 5.]

[Mr. Lockhart remarks that it was during this interval that the highest point of his recovery was reached. The following little note accompanied the review of Southey's Bunyan to Chiefswood on August 6th: — -

> "Dear Lockhart, I send you the enclosed. I intended to have brought it myself with help of 'Daddy Dun,' but I find the weather is making a rain of it to purpose.
>
> "I suppose you are all within doors, and the little gardeners all off work. — Yours, W.S."]

A playful yet earnest petition, showing Sir Walter's continued solicitude for the welfare of the good 'Dominie Sampson,' was also written at this time to the Duke of Buccleuch: —

> "ABBOTSFORD, 20th August.
>
> "The minister of — — — having fallen among other black cocks of the season, emboldens me once more to prefer my humble request in favour of George Thomson, long tutor in this family. His case is so well known to your Grace that I would be greatly to blame if I enlarged upon it. His morals are irreproachable, his talents very respectable. He has some oddity of manner, but it is far from attaching to either the head or the heart….
>
> "It would be felt by me among one of the deepest obligations of the many which I owe to the house of Buccleuch. I daresay your Grace has shot a score of black game to-day. Pray let your namesake bag a parson."

September

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September 5. — In spite of resolution I have left my Diary for some weeks, I cannot tell why. We have had the usual number of travelling Counts and Countesses, Yankees male and female, and a Yankee-Doodle-Dandy into the bargain, a smart young Virginia man. We have had friends of our own also, the Miss Ardens, young Mrs. Morritt and Anne Morritt, most agreeable visitors. Cadell came out here yesterday with his horn filled with good news. This will in effect put an end to the trust; only the sales and produce must be pledged to insure the last £15,000 and the annuity interest of £600. In this way Mr. Cadell will become half-partner in the remaining volumes of the books following St. Ronan's; with all my heart, but he must pay well for it, for it is good property. Neither is any value stated for literary profits; yet, four years should have four novels betwixt 1830-4. This at £2500 per volume might be £8000, which would diminish Mr. Cadell's advance considerably. All this seems feasible enough, so my fits of sullen alarm are ill placed. It makes me care less about the terms I retire upon. The efforts by which we have advanced thus far are new in literature, and what is gained is secure.

[No entry between September 5 and December 20.]

December

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December 20. — From September 5 to December 20 is a long gap, and I have seen plenty of things worth recollecting, had I marked them down when they were gliding past. But the time has gone by. When I feel capable of taking it up, I will.

Little self will jostle out everything else, and my affairs, which in some respects are excellent, in others, like the way of the world, are far from being pleasant.

Of good I have the pleasure of saying I have my children well, and in good health. The dividend of 3s. in the pound has been made to the creditors, and the creditors have testified their sense of my labours by surrendering my books, furniture, plate, and curiosities. I see some friends of mine think this is not handsomely done. In my opinion it is extremely so. There are few things so [easy] as to criticise the good things one does, and to show that we ourselves would have done [more] handsomely. But those who know the world and their own nature are always better pleased with one kind action carried through and executed, than with twenty that only glide through their minds, while perhaps they tickle the imagination of the benevolent Barmecide who supposes both the entertainment and the eater. These articles do not amount to less than £10,000 at least, and, without dispensing with them entirely, might furnish me with a fund for my younger children. Now, suppose these creditors had not seriously carried their purpose into execution, the transaction might have been afterwards challenged, and the ease of mind which it produced to me must have been uncertain in comparison. Well! onehalf of these claims are cleared off, furnished in a great measure by onehalf issue of the present edition of the Waverley Novels, which had reached the 20th of the series.

It cannot be expected that twenty more will run off so fast; the later volumes are less favourites, and are really less interesting. Yet when I read them over again since their composition, I own I found them considerably better than I expected, and I think, if other circumstances do not crush them and blight their popularity, they will make their way. Mr. Cadell is still desirous to acquire onehalf of the property of this part of the work, which is chiefly my own. He proposes assembling all my detached works of fiction

and articles in Annuals, so that the whole, supposing I write, as is proposed, six new volumes, will run the collection to fifty, when it is time to close it. Between cash advanced on this property, and a profit on the sale of the second part, Mr. Cadell thinks, having taken a year or two years' time, to gather a little wind into the bag, I will be able to pay, on my part, a further sum of £30,000, or the moiety remaining of the whole debts, amounting now to less than £60,000.

Should this happy period arrive in or about the year 1832 the heavy work will be wellnigh finished. Tor, although £30,000 will still remain, yet there is £20,000 actually secured upon my life, and the remaining £10,000 is set against the sale of Waverley, which shall have been issued; besides which there is the whole Poetry, Bonaparte, and several other articles, equally [available] in a short time to pay up the balance, and afford a very large reversion.

This view cannot be absolutely certain, but it is highly probable, and is calculated in the manner in which Building Schemes [are dealt with], and is not merely visionary. The year 1833 may probably see me again in possession of my estate.

A circumstance of great consequence to my habits and comforts was my being released from the Court of Session on November 1830 (18th day). My salary, which was £1300, was reduced to £840. My friends, just then leaving office, were desirous to patch up the deficiency with a pension. I do not see well how they could do this without being exposed to obloquy, which they shall not be on my account. Besides, though £500 a year is a round sum, yet I would rather be independent than I would have it.

My kind friend the Lord Chief Commissioner offered to interfere to have me named a Privy Councillor; but besides that when one is poor he ought to avoid taking rank, I would be much happier if I thought any act of kindness was done to help forward Charles; and, having said so much, I made my bow, and declared my purpose of remaining satisfied with the article of my knighthood. And here I am, for the rest of my life I suppose, with a competent income, which I can [increase].

All this is rather pleasing, nor have I the least doubt that I could make myself easy by literary labour. But much of it looks like winding up my bottom for the rest of my life. But there is a worse symptom of settling accounts, of which I have felt some signs.

Last spring, Miss Young, the daughter of Dr. Young, had occasion to call on me on some business, in which I had hopes of serving her. As I endeavoured to explain to her what I had to say, I had the horror to find I could not make myself understood. I stammered, stuttered, said one word in place of another — did all but speak; Miss Young went away frightened enough, poor thing; and Anne and Violet Lockhart were much alarmed. I was bled with cupping-glasses, took medicine, and lived on panada; but in two or three days I was well again. The physicians thought, or said at least, that the evil was from the stomach. It is very certain that I have seemed to speak with an impediment, and I was, or it might be fancied myself, troubled with a mispronouncing and hesitation. I felt this particularly at the Election, and sometimes in society. This went on till last November, when Lord — — — came out to make me a visit. I had for a long time taken only one tumbler of whisky and water without the slightest reinforcement. This night I took a very little drop, not so much as a bumper glass, of whisky altogether. It made no difference on my head that I could discover, but when I went to the dressing-room I sank stupefied on the floor. I lay a minute or two — was not found, luckily, gathered myself up, and got to my bed. I was alarmed at this second warning, consulted Abercrombie and Ross, and got a few restrictive orders as to diet. I am forced to attend to them; for, as Mrs. Cole says, "Lack-a-day! a thimbleful oversets me."

To add to these feelings I have the constant increase of my lameness: the thigh-joint, knee-joint, and ankle-joint.

December 21. — I walk with great pain in the whole limb, and am at every minute, during an hour's walk, reminded of my mortality. I should not care for all this, if I was sure of dying handsomely. Cadell's calculations would be sufficiently firm though the author of Waverly had pulled on his last nightcap. Nay, they might be even more trustworthy, if Remains, and Memoirs, and such like, were to give a zest to the posthumous. But the fear is the blow be not sufficient to destroy life, and that I should linger on an idiot and a show…..

We parted on good terms and hopes. But, fall back, fall edge, nothing shall induce me to publish what I do not think advantageous to the community, or suppress what is.

December 23. — To add for this day to the evil thereof, I am obliged to

hold a Black-fishing Court at Selkirk. This is always a very unpopular matter in one of our counties, as the salmon never do get up to the heads of the waters in wholesome season, and are there in numbers in spawning-time. So that for several years during the late period, the gentry, finding no advantage from preserving the spawning fish, neglected the matter altogether in a kind of dudgeon, and the peasantry laid them waste at their will. As the property is very valuable, the proprietors down the country agreed to afford some additional passage for fish when the river is open, providing they will protect the spawning fish during close-time. A new Act has been passed, with heavy penalties and summary powers of recovery. Some persons are cited under it to-day; and a peculiar licence of poaching having distinguished the district of late years, we shall be likely to have some disturbance. They have been holding a meeting for reform in Selkirk, and it will be difficult to teach them that this consists in anything else save the privilege of obeying only such laws as please them. We shall see, but I would have counselled the matter to have been delayed for a little season. I shall do my duty, however. Do what is right, come what will.

Six black-fishers were tried, four were condemned. All went very quietly till the conclusion, when one of the criminals attempted to break out. I stopped him for the time with my own hand. But after removing him from the Courthouse to the jail he broke from the officers, who are poor feeble old men, the very caricature of peace officers.

December 24. — This morning my old acquaintance and good friend Miss Bell Ferguson died after a short illness: an old friend, and a woman of the most excellent condition. The last two or almost three years were very sickly.

A bitter cold day. Anne drove me over to Huntly Burn to see the family. I found Colonel Ferguson and Captain John, R.N., in deep affliction, expecting Sir Adam hourly. Anne sets off to Mertoun, and I remain alone. I wrote to Walter about the project of making my succession in movables. J.B. sent me praises of the work I am busy with. But I suspect a little supercherie, though he protests not. He is going to the country without sending me the political article. But he shall either set up or return it, as I won't be tutored by any one in what I do or forbear.

December 25. — I have sketched a political article on a union of Tories and

an Income Tax. But I will not show my teeth if I find I cannot bite. Arrived at Mertoun, and found with the family Sir John Pringle, Major Pringle, and Charles Baillie. Very pleasant music by the Miss Pringles.

December 26, [Mertoun]. — Prayers after breakfast, being Sunday. Afterwards I shut myself up in Mr. Scott's room.

He has lately become purchaser of his grandfather's valuable library, which was collected by Pope's Lord Marchmont. Part of it is a very valuable collection of tracts during the great Civil War. I spent several hours in turning them over, but I could not look them through with any accuracy. I passed my time very pleasantly, and made some extracts, however, and will resume my research another day.

Major Pringle repeated some pretty verses of his own composing.

I had never a more decided inclination to go loose, yet I know I had better keep quiet.

December 27, [Abbotsford]. — Commences snow, and extremely bitter cold. When I returned from Mertoun, half-frozen, I took up the Magnum, and began to notify the romance called Woodstock, in which I got some assistance from Harden's ancient tracts. I ought rather to get on with Robert of Paris; but I have had all my life a longing to do something else when I am called to particular labour, — a vile contradictory humour which I cannot get rid of. Well, I can work at something, so at the Magnum work I. The day was indeed broken, great part having been employed in the return from Mertoun.

December 28. — Drove down to Huntly Burn. Sir Adam very melancholy, the death of his sister having come with a particular and shocking surprise upon him. After half-an-hour's visit I returned and resumed the Magnum.

December 29. — Attended poor Miss Bell Ferguson's funeral. I sat by the Rev. Mr. Thomson. Though ten years younger than me, I found the barrier between him and me much broken down. We remember it though with more or less accuracy. We took the same old persons for subjects of correspondence of feeling and sentiment. The difference of ten years is little after sixty has passed. In a cold day I saw poor Bell laid in her cold bed. Life never parted with a less effort. Letter from Cadell offering to advance on second series French Tales. This will come in good time, and keep me

easy. He proposes views for the Magnum. I fear politics may disappoint them.

December 30. — Meeting at Selkirk to-day about the new road to Galashiels. It was the largest meeting I ever saw in Selkirkshire. We gain the victory by no less than 14 to 4. I was named one of the committee to carry the matter on, so in gaining my victory I think I have caught a Tartar, for I have taken on trouble enough. Some company, — Lord Napier, Scotts of Harden, Johnstone of Alva, Major Pringle. In the evening had some private conversation with H.F.S. and R.J., and think there is life in a mussel. More of this hereafter.

December 31. — My two young friends left this morning, but not without renewing our conversation of last night. We carried on the little amusements of the day, and spent our Hogmanay pleasantly enough, in spite of very bad auguries.

1831 — January

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January 1, 1831. — I cannot say the world opens pleasantly with me this new year. I will strike the balance. There are many things for which I have reason to be thankful.

First. — Cadell's plans seem to have succeeded, and he augurs well as to the next two years, reckoning £30,000 on the stuff now on hand, and £20,000 on the insurance money, and £10,000 to be borrowed somehow. This will bring us wonderfully home.

Second. — Cadell is of opinion if I meddle in politics, and I am strongly tempted to do so, I shall break the milk-pail, and threatens me with the fate of Basil Hall, who, as he says, destroyed his reputation by writing impolitic politics. Well, it would be my risk, and if I can do some good, which I rather think I can, is it right or manly to keep myself back?

Third. — I feel myself decidedly weaker in point of health, and am now confirmed I have had a paralytic touch. I speak and read with embarrassment, and even my handwriting seems to stammer. This general failure

> "With mortal crisis doth portend,
> My days to appropinque an end."

I am not solicitous about this, only if I were worthy I would pray God for a sudden death, and no interregnum between I cease to exercise reason and I cease to exist.

The Scotts of Harden, Pringles of Stitchill, and Russells of Ashestiel, are all here; I am scarce fit for company though.

January 2. — Held a great palaver with the Scotts, *etc.*

I find my language apt to fail me; but this is very like to be fancy, and I must be cautious of giving way to it. This cautions me against public exertion much more than Cadell's prognostications, which my blood rises against, and which are ill calculated to keep me in restraint. We dozed through a gloomy day, being the dullest of all possible thaws.

January 3. — I had a letter from the Lord Chief Commissioner, mentioning the King's intention to take care of Charles's interests and promotion in the Foreign Office, an additional reason why I should not plunge rashly into politics, yet not one which I can understand as putting a padlock on my lips neither. I may write to L.C.C. that I may be called on to express an opinion on the impending changes, that I have an opinion, and a strong one, and that I hope this fresh favour [may not be regarded] as padlocking my lips at a time when it would otherwise be proper to me to speak or write. I am shocked to find that I have not the faculty of delivering myself with facility — an embarrassment which may be fanciful, but is altogether as annoying as if real.

January 4. — A base, gloomy day, and dispiriting in proportion. I walked out with Swanston for about an hour: everything gloomy as the back of the chimney when there is no fire in it. My walk was a melancholy one, feeling myself weaker at every step and not very able to speak. This surely cannot be fancy, yet it looks something like it. If I knew but the extent at which my inability was like to stop, but every day is worse than another. I have trifled much time, too much; I must try to get afloat tomorrow, perhaps getting an amanuensis might spur me on, for onehalf is nerves. It is a sad business though.

January 5. — Very indifferent, with more awkward feelings than I can well bear up against. My voice sunk and my head strangely confused. When I begin to form my ideas for conversation expressions fail me, even in private conversation, yet in solitude they are sufficiently arranged. I incline to hold that these ugly symptoms are the work of imagination; but, as Dr. Adam Ferguson, a firm man if ever there was one in the world, said on such an occasion, What is worse than imagination? As Anne was vexed and frightened, I allowed her to send for young Clarkson. Of course he could tell but little, save what I knew before.

January 6. — A letter from Henry Scott about the taking ground for keeping the reform in Scotland upon the Scottish principles. I will write him my private sentiments, but avoid being a boute-feu.

Go this day to Selkirk, where I found about 120 and more persons of that burgh and Galashiels, who were sworn in as special constables, enough to maintain the peace. What shocked me particularly was the weakness of my voice and the confusion of my head attempting to address them, which was really a poor affair. On my return I found the Rev. Mr. Milne of Quebec, a friend of my sister-in-law. Another time would have been better for company, but Captain John Ferguson and Mr. Laidlaw coming in to dinner, we got over the day well enough.

January 7. — A fine frosty day, and my spirits lighter. I have a letter of great comfort from Walter, who in a manly, handsome, and dutiful manner expressed his desire to possess the library and movables of every kind at Abbotsford, with such a valuation laid upon them as I choose to impose. This removes the only delay to making my will. Supposing the literary property to clear the debts by aid of insurances and other things, about 1835 it will come into my person, and I will appoint the whole to work off the heritable debt of £10,000. If the literary property can produce that sum, besides what it has already done, I would convey it to the three younger children.

January 8. — Spent much time in writing instructions for my last will and testament. Sent off parcel by Dr. Milne, who leaves to-day. Have up two boys for shop-lifting. Remained at Galashiels till four o'clock, and returned starved. Could work none, and was idle all evening — try tomorrow for a workday; so loiter on.

January 10. — Went over to Galashiels, and was busied the whole time till three o'clock about a petty thieving affair, and had before me a pair of gallows'-birds, to whom I could say nothing for total want of proof, except, like the sapient Elbow, Thou shalt continue there; know thou, thou shalt continue. A little gallow brood they were, and their fate will catch them. Sleepy, idle, and exhausted on this. Wrought little or none in the evening.

Wrote a long letter to Henry [Scott], who is a fine fellow, and what I call a heart of gold. He has sound parts, good sense, and is a true man. Also, I wrote to my excellent friend the Lord Chief [Commissioner]. I thought it right to say that I accepted with gratitude his Majesty's goodness, but trusted it was not to bind me to keep my fingers from pen and ink should a

notion impress me that I could help the country. I walked a little, to my exceeding refreshment. I am using that family ungratefully. But I will not, for a punctilio, avoid binding, if I can, a strong party together for the King and country, and if I see I can do anything, or have a chance of it, I will not fear for the skin-cutting. It is the selfishness of this generation that drives me mad.

> "A hundred pounds?
> Ha! thou hast touched me nearly."

I will get a parcel copied tomorrow; wrote several letters at night.

January 11. — Wrote and sent off three of my own pages in the morning, then walked with Swanston. I tried to write before dinner, but, with drowsiness and pain in my head, made little way. My friend Will Laidlaw came in to dinner, and after dinner kindly offered his services as amanuensis. Too happy was I, and I immediately plunged him into the depths of Count Robert, so we got on three or four pages, worth perhaps double the number of print. I hope it did not take him too short, but after all to keep the press going without an amanuensis is impossible, and the publishers may well pay a sponsible person. He comes back tomorrow. It eases many of my anxieties, and I will stick to it. I really think Mr. Laidlaw is pleased with the engagement for the time. Sent off six close pages.

January 12. — I have a visit from Mr. Macdonald the sculptor, who wishes to model a head of me. He is a gentlemanlike man, and pleasant as most sculptors and artists of reputation are, yet it is an awful tax upon time. I must manage to dictate while he models, which will do well enough.

So there we sat for three hours or four, I sitting on a stool mounted on a packing-box, for the greater advantage; Macdonald modelling and plastering away, and I dictating, without interval, to goodnatured Will Laidlaw, who wrought without intermission. It is natural to ask, Do I progress? but this is too feverish a question. A man carries no scales about him to ascertain his own value. I always remember the prayer of Virgil's sailor in extremity: —

> "Non jam prima peto Mnestheus, neque vincere certo;
> Quamquam O! — Sed superent quibus hoc, Neptune, dedisti!

Extremos pudeat rediisse: hoc vincite, cives,
Et prohibete nefas!”

We must to our oar; but I think this and another are all that even success would prompt me to write; and surely those that have been my defenders

“Have they so long held out with me untired,
And stop they now for breath? Well, be it so.”

January 13. — Went to Selkirk on the business of the new high road. I perceive Whytbank and my cousin Colonel Russell of Ashestiel are disposed to peep into the expenses of next year’s outlay, which must be provided by loan. This will probably breed strife. Wrote a hint of this to Charles Balfour. Agreed with Smith so far as contracting for the Bridges at £1200 each. I suspect we are something like the good manager who distressed herself with buying bargains.

January 15. — Gave the morning from ten till near two to Mr. Macdonald, who is proceeding admirably with his bust. It is bloody cold work, but he is an enthusiast and much interested; besides, I can sit and dictate owing to Mr. Laidlaw, and so get forward, while I am advancing Lorenzo di Guasco, which is his travelling name. I wrote several letters too, and got through some business. Walked, and took some exercise between one and three.

January 16. — Being Sunday, read prayers. Mr. and Mrs. James go to look for a house, which they desire to take in this country. As Anne is ill, the presence of strangers, though they are pleasant, is rather annoying. Macdonald continues working to form a new bust out of my old scalp. I think it will be the last sitting which I will be enticed to. Thanks to Heaven, the work finishes tomorrow.

January 17. — This morning, when I came downstairs, I found Mr. Macdonald slabbering away at the model. He has certainly great enthusiasm about his profession, which is a sine qua non. It was not till twelve that a postchaise carried off my three friends.

I had wrote two hours when Dr. Turner came in, and I had to unfold my own complaints. I was sick of these interruptions, and dismissed Mr.

Laidlaw, having no hope of resuming my theme with spirit. God send me more leisure and fewer friends to peck it away by teaspoonfuls!

Another fool sends to entreat an autograph, which he should be ashamed in civility to ask, as I am to deny it. I got notice of poor Henry Mackenzie's death. He has long maintained a niche in Scottish Literature — gayest of the gay, though most sensitive of the sentimental.

January 18. — Came down from my bedroom at eight, and took a rummage in the way of putting things to rights. Dictated to Laidlaw till about one o'clock, during which time it was rainy. Afterwards I walked, sliding about in the mud, and very uncomfortable. In fact, there is no mistaking the three sufficients, and Fate is now straitening its circumvallations round me. Little likely to be better than I am. I am heart-whole as a biscuit, and may last on as now for eight or ten years; the thing is not uncommon, considering I am only in my sixtieth year. I cannot walk; but the intense cold weather may be to blame in this. My riding is but a scramble, but it may do well enough for exercise; and though it is unpleasant to find one's enjoyment of hill and vale so much abridged, yet still when I enjoy my books, and am without acute pain, I have but little to complain of, considering the life I have led so long.

> "So hap what may;
> Time and the hour run through the roughest day."

Mr. Laidlaw came down at ten, and we wrought till one. This should be a good thing for an excellent man, and is an important thing to me, as it saves both my eyesight and nerves, which last are cruelly affected by finding those "who look out of the windows" grow gradually darker and darker. Rode out, or more properly, was carried out, into the woods to see the course of a new road, which may serve to carry off the thinnings of the trees, and for rides. It is very well lined, and will serve both for beauty and convenience. Mr. Laidlaw engages to come back to dinner, and finish two or three more pages. Met my agreeable and ladylike neighbour, Mrs. Brewster, on my pony, and I was actually ashamed to be seen by her.

> "Sir Dennis Brand, and on so poor a steed."

I believe detestable folly of this kind is the very last that leaves us. One would have thought I ought to have little vanity at this time o' day; but it is an abiding appurtenance of the old Adam, and I write for penance what, like a fool, I actually felt.

January 19. — Wrote on by Mr. Laidlaw's assistance. Things go bobbishly enough; we have a good deal finished before dinner. Henry Scott comes to dine with me vis-à-vis, and we have a grand dish of politics. The friends of old Scotland want but a signal. A certain great lawyer says that if Sir W.S. wrote another Malachi it would set more men on fire than a dozen associations. This almost tempts me. But the canny lad says moreover that to appeal to national partiality, *i.e.* that you should call on Scotsmen to act like Scotsmen, is unfair, and he would be sorry it was known he, late and future placeman, should encourage such paw-paw doings. Yet if Sir W.S. could be got to stand forlorn hope, the legal gentleman would suggest, *etc. etc.* Suggest and be d — d. Sir W.S. knows when to [doff] his bonnet, and when to cock it in the face of all and sundry. Moreover, he will not be made a cat's-paw of, look you now.

January 20. — Wrought all morning; a monstrous packet of letters at mid-day. Borrow honest Laidlaw's fingers in the evening. I hope his pay will recompense him: it is better than "grieve-ing" or playing Triptolemus. Should be, if I am hardworking, 100 guineas, which, with his house, cow, and free rent, would save, I believe, some painful thoughts to him and his amiable wife and children. We will see how the matter fudges. Almost finished the first volume.

January 21. — James Ballantyne in ecstasies at our plan of an amanuensis. I myself am sensible that my fingers begin to stammer — that is, to write one word instead of another very often. I impute this to fancy, the terrible agency of which is too visible in my illness, and it encourages me to hope the fatal warning is yet deferred. I feel lighter by a million ton since I made this discovery. If I can dictate freely, and without hesitation, my fear to speak at the meeting about the road was vain terror, and so Andiamo Caracci. Wrote some letters this afternoon.

January 22. — Mr. Laidlaw rather late of coming. One of his daughters has

been ill, and he is an approved physician. Pity when one so gifted employs his skill on himself and family for all patients. We got on, however, to page 46.

January 23. — I wrought a little to-day. Walked to Chiefswood, or rather from it, as far only as Habbie's Howe. Came home, cold indeed, but hearty. Slept after dinner. I think the peep, real or imaginary, at the gates of death has given me firmness not to mind little afflictions. I have jumbled this and the preceding day strangely, when I went to Chiefswood and Huntly Burn. I thought this a week-day.

January 24. — Worked with Mr. Laidlaw, and, as the snow was on the ground, did so without intermission, which must be sinking to the spirits. Held on, however.

January 25. — Same drizzling waste, rendering my footing insecure, and leaving me no refuge but in sitting at home and working till one o'clock. Then retired upon the Sheriff Court processes. Bran, poor fellow, lies yawning at my feet, and cannot think what is become of the daily scamper, which is all his master's inability affords him. This grieves me, by calling back the days of old. But I may call them as I may,

> "Youth winna return, nor the days of lang syne."

January 26. — I have Skene and Mr. M'Culloch of Ardwell, to the relief of my spirits and the diminishing of my time. Mr. Laidlaw joined us at dinner.

Bitter cold.

January 27. — So fagged with my frozen vigils that I slept till after ten. When I lose the first two hours in the morning I can seldom catch them again during the whole day.

A friendly visit from Ebenezer Clarkson of Selkirk, a medical gentleman in whose experience and ingenuity I have much confidence, as well as his personal regard for myself. He is quite sensible of the hesitation of speech of which I complain, and thinks it arises from the stomach. Recommends the wild mustard as an aperient. But the brightest ray of hope is the chance that I may get some mechanical aid made by Fortune at

Broughton Street, which may enable me to mount a pony with ease, and to walk without torture. This would, indeed, be almost a restoration of my youth, at least of a green old age full of enjoyment. The shutting one out from the face of living nature is almost worse than sudden death.

January 28. — I wrote with Laidlaw. It does not work clear; I do not know why. The plot is, nevertheless, a good plot, and full of expectation. But there is a cloud over me, I think, and interruptions are frequent. I creep on, however.

January 29. — Much in the same way as yesterday, rather feeling than making way. Mr. Williams and his brother came in after dinner. Welcome both; yet the day was not happy. It consumed me an afternoon, which, though well employed, and pleasantly, had the disagreeable effect of my being kept from useful work.

January 30. — Snow deep, which makes me alter my purpose of going to town tomorrow. For to-day, my friends must amuse themselves as they can.

January 31 [to February 9, Edinburgh]. — Retain my purpose, however, and set out for Edinburgh alone — that is, no one but my servant. The snow became impassable, and in Edinburgh I remain immovably fixed for ten days — that is, till Wednesday — never once getting out of doors, save to dinner, when I went and returned in a sedan chair. I commenced my quarantine in Mackenzie's Hotel, where I was deadly cold, and it was tolerably noisy. The second day Mr. Cadell made a point of my coming to his excellent house, where I had no less excellent an apartment and the most kind treatment — - that is, not making a show of me, for which I was in but bad tune. The physical folks, Abercrombie and Ross, bled me with cupping-glasses, purged me confoundedly, and restricted me of all creature comforts. But they did me good, as I am sure they meant to do sincerely; and I got rid of a giddy feeling, which I have been plagued with, and have certainly returned much better. I did not neglect my testamentary affairs. I executed my last will, leaving Walter burdened, by his own choice, with £1000 to Sophia, and another received at her marriage, and £2000 to Anne, and the same to Charles. He is to advance them money if they want it; if not, to pay them interest, which is his own choice, otherwise I would have sold the books and rattletraps. I have made provisions for clearing my estate by my

publications, should it be possible; and should that prove possible, from the time of such clearance being effected, to be a fund available to all my children who shall be alive or leave representatives. My bequests must, many of them, seem hypothetical; but the thing, being uncertain, must be so stated.

Besides, during the unexpected stay in town, I employed Mr. Fortune, an ingenious artist, to make a machine to assist my lame leg, — an odd enough purchase to be made at this time of day, yet who would not purchase ease? I dined with the Lord Chief Commissioner, with the Skenes twice, with Lord Medwyn, and was as happy as anxiety about my daughter would permit me.

The appearance of the streets was most desolate: the hackney-coaches, with four horses, strolling about like ghosts, the foot-passengers few but the lowest of the people.

I wrote a good deal of Count Robert, yet I cannot tell why my pen stammers egregiously, and I write horridly incorrect. I long to have friend Laidlaw’s assistance.

February

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February 9,[Abbotsford]. — A heavy and most effective thaw coming on I got home about five at night, and found the haugh covered with water, dogs, pigs, cows, to say nothing of human beings, all who slept at the offices in danger of being drowned. They came up to the mansion-house about midnight, with such various clamour, that Anne thought the house was attacked by Captain Swing and all the Radicals.

February 10. — I set to work with Mr. Laidlaw, and had after that a capital ride; my pony, little used, was somewhat frisky, but I rode on to Huntly Burn. Began my diet on my new régime, and like it well, especially porridge to supper. It is wonderful how old tastes rise.

February 11. — Wrought again to-day, and John Swanston walked with me. Wrote many letters, and sent copy to Ballantyne. Rode as usual. It is well enough to ride every day, but confoundedly tiresome to write it down.

February 13. — I did not ask down Mr. Laidlaw, thinking it fair to spare his Sunday. I had a day of putting to rights, a disagreeable work which must be done. I took the occasion to tell Mr. Cadell that Malachi will break forth again; but I will not make a point of it with him. I do not fear there will be as many to strike up as to strike down, and I have a strong notion we may gain the day. I have a letter from the Duchess of Wellington, asking a copy of Melville's Memoirs. She shall have it if it were my last.

February 14. — I had hardly begun my letter to Mr. Cadell than I began also to "pull in resolution." I considered that I had no means of retreat; and that in all my sober moments, meaning my unpassionate ones, for the doctors have taken from me the means of producing Dutch courage, I have looked on political writing as a false step, and especially now when I have a good deal at stake. So, upon the whole, I cancelled the letter announcing the publication. If this was actually meanness it is a foible nobody knows of. Anne set off for Edinburgh after breakfast. Poor girl, she is very nervous. I wrote with Mr. L. till one — then had a walk till three — then wrote this

diary till four. Must try to get something for Mr. Laidlaw, for I am afraid I am twaddling. I do not think my head is weakened, but a strange vacillation makes me suspect. Is it not thus that men begin to fail, becoming, as it were, infirm of purpose,

> "… that way madness lies; let me shun that:
> No more of that …"

Yet, why be a child about it? what must be, will be.

February 15. — I wrote and corrected through the long day till one o'clock; then rode out as far as Dr. Scott's, and called on him. Got a fresh dose of proofs at Mathieson's, and returned home. At nine o'clock at night had a card from Miss Bell [Maclachlan], wishing to speak to me about some Highland music. Wrote for answer I knew nothing of the matter, but would be happy to see Mrs. and Miss Bell to breakfast. I had a letter of introduction by Robert Chambers, which I declined, being then unwell. But as Trotter of Braid said, "The ladies maun come."

February 16. — Mrs. and Miss Bell Maclachlan of the West Highlands, mother and daughter, made their way to me to breakfast. I did not wish to see them, being strangers; but she is very pretty — that is, the daughter — and enthusiastic, and that is always flattering to an old gentleman. She wishes to have words to Celtic melodies, and I have promised her some, to the air of Crochallan, and incline to do her good, perhaps, to the extent of getting her words from Lord Francis Leveson Gower, Lockhart, and one or two others. We parted, she pleased with my willing patronage, and I with an uncommon handsome countenance she showed me.

This detained Mr. Laidlaw re infecta, and before I had written a page the pony came to the door; but wrote something after dinner.

February 17 and 18. — We had the usual course of food, study, and exercise in the forenoon. Was extremely sleepy in the afternoon, which made, I fear, but bad work. We progress, however. In riding met Sir Adam Ferguson, and asked him and his brother the Colonel to dinner tomorrow. Wrote in the meantime as usual.

February 19. — Plagued by the stay for leg starting a screw bolt, which is

very inconvenient. Sent off, this morning, proofs as far as end of first volume, and 20 manuscript pages, equal to about a quarter of the second. Is it good or not? I cannot say. I think it better as it goes on; and so far so good. I am certain I have written worse abomination, as John Ballantyne, poor fellow, used to say.

February 20. — Wrote five pages this morning; then rode out to the hill and looked at some newly planted, rather transplanted, trees. Mr. Laidlaw gone for the day. I trust I shall have proofs to correct. In the meantime I may suck my paws and prepare some copy, or rather assemble the raw material.

February 21. — I made up parcels by mail-coach and Blucher to go tomorrow — second volume Redgauntlet. At one fetched a walk through wet and dry, looking at the ravages of the late flood. After I came in, till two hours after tea-time, busied with the Sheriff Court processes, which I have nearly finished. After this I will lounge over my annotating. The Tales of the Crusades come next.

February 22. — Wrought with Mr. L. from ten to three, then took the pony carriage, with the purpose of going to Chiefswood, but a heavy squall came on with snow, so we put about-ship and returned. Read Lyttelton's History of England to get some notes for Crusaders, vol. i. After dinner Mr. Laidlaw from six to eight. Sent off six pages.

February 23, 24, 25. — These three days I can hardly be said to have varied from my ordinary.

Rose at seven, dressed before eight, wrote letters, or did any little business till a quarter past nine. Then breakfast. Mr. Laidlaw comes from ten till one. Then take the pony, and ride quantum mutatus two or three miles, John Swanston walking by my bridle-rein lest I fall off. Come home about three or four. Then to dinner on a single plain dish and half a tumbler, or by'r lady three-fourths of a tumbler, of whisky and water. Then sit till six o'clock, when enter Mr. Laidlaw again, and work commonly till eight. After this, work usually alone till halfpast nine, then sup on porridge and milk, and so to bed. The work is half done. If any [one] asks what time I take to think on the composition, I might say, in one point of view, it was seldom

five minutes out of my head the whole day. In another light, it was never the serious subject of consideration at all, for it never occupied my thoughts entirely for five minutes together, except when I was dictating to Mr. Laidlaw.

February 26. — Went through the same routine, only, being Saturday, Mr. Laidlaw does not come in the evening. I think there is truth in the wellknown phrase, Aurora musis amica. I always have a visit of invention between six and seven — that is, if anything has been plaguing me, in the way of explanation, I find it in my head when I wake. I have need of it tonight.

February 27. — Being Saturday, no Mr. Laidlaw came yesterday evening, nor to-day, being Sunday. Truth is, I begin to fear I was working too hard, and gave myself to putting things in order, and working at the Magnum, and reading stupid German novels in hopes a thought will strike me when I am half occupied with other things. In fact, I am like the servant in the Clandestine Marriage, who assures his mistress he always watches best with his eyes shut.

February 28. — Past ten, and Mr. Laidlaw, the model of a clerk in other respects, is not come yet. He has never known the value of time, so is not quite accurate in punctuality; but that, I hope, will come if I can drill him to it without hurting him. I think I hear him coming. I am like the poor wizard who is first puzzled how to raise the devil and then how to employ him. But vogue la galère. Worked till one, then walked with great difficulty and pain till halfpast two. I think I can hardly stir without my pony, which is a sad pity. Mr. Laidlaw dines here.

March

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March 1, 2, 3. — All these three days I wrote forenoon and fagged afternoon. Kept up the ball indifferent well, but began to tire on the third, and suspected that I was flat — a dreary suspicion, not easily chased away when once it takes root.

March 4. — Laid aside the novel, and began with vigour a review of Robson's Essay on Heraldry; but I missed some quotations which I could not get on without. I gave up, and took such a rash ride nowadays. Returned home, and found Colonel Russell there on a visit. Then we had dinner, and afterwards the making up this miserable Journal.

March 5. — I have a letter from our member, Whytbank, adjuring me to assist the gentlemen of the county with an address against the Reform Bill, which menaces them with being blended with Peeblesshire, and losing of consequence one half of their franchise. Mr. Pringle conjures me not to be very nice in choosing my epithets. Mr. Pringle, Torwoodlee, comes over and speaks to the same purpose, adding, it will be the greatest service I can do the county, *etc.* This, in a manner, drives me out of a resolution to keep myself clear of politics, and "let them fight dog, fight bear." But I am too easy to be persuaded to bear a hand. The young Duke of Buccleuch comes to visit me also; so I promised to shake my duds and give them a cast of my calling, fall back, fall edge.

March 7-10. — In these four days I drew up, with much anxiety, an address reprobatory of the Bill, both with respect to Selkirkshire, and in its general purport. I was not mealy-mouthed, and those who heard the beginning could hardly avoid listening to the end. It was certainly in my best style, and would have made a deal of noise. From the uncompromising style it would have attracted attention. Mr. Laidlaw, though he is on t'other side on the subject, thinks it the best thing I ever wrote; and I myself am happy to find that it cannot be said to smell of the apoplexy. The pointed passages were, on the contrary, clever and well put. But it was too declamatory, too much like a pamphlet, and went far too generally into

opposition to please the country gentlemen, who are timidly inclined to dwell on their own grievances rather than the public wrongs.

March 11. — This day we had our meeting at Selkirk. I found Borthwickbrae (late member) had sent the form of an address, which was finished by Mr. Andrew Lang. It was the reverse of mine in every respect. It was short, and to the point. It only contained a remonstrance against the incorporation with [Peebles]shire, and left it to be inferred that they approved the Bill in other respects. As I saw that it met the ideas of the meeting (six in number) better by far than such an address as mine, I instantly put it in my pocket. But I endeavoured to add to their complaint of a private wrong a general clause, stating their sense of the hazard of passing a Bill full of such violent innovations at once on the public. But though Harden, Alva, and Torwoodlee voted for this measure, it was refused by the rest of the meeting, to my disappointment; since in its present state it will not be attended to, and is in fact too milk-and-water to attract notice. I am, however, personally out of the scrape; I was a fool to stir such a mess of skimmed milk with so honourable an action. If some of the gentlemen of the press get hold of this story, what would they make of it, and how little would I care! One thing is clear: it gives me a right to decline future interference, and let the world wag, Sessa.

March 12. — Wrote the history of my four days' labour in vain to Sandy Pringle, Whytbank, and so transeat with cæteris erroribus. I only gave way to one jest. A ratcatcher was desirous to come and complete his labours in my house, and I, who thought he only talked and laughed with the servants, recommended him to go to the head courts and meetings of freeholders, where he would find rats in plenty.

March 13. — I have finally arranged a thorny transaction. Mr. Cadell has an interest in some of the Novels, amounting to onehalf; but the following are entirely my own, viz.: —

St. Ronan's Well, 3 vols.
Tales of Crusaders, 4 "
First Chronicles, 2 "
Anne of Geierstein, 3 "

Redgauntlet, 3 “
Woodstock, 3 “
Second Chronicles, 3 “
Count Robert, 3 “

In all, twentyfour volumes, which will begin printing after Quentin Durward, and concludes the year 1831. For half the property he proposes to pay 6000 guineas on 2d February 1831 . I think that with this sum, and others coming in, I may reduce the debt to £45,000.

But I do not see clearly enough through this affair to accept this offer. First, I cannot see that there is wisdom in engaging Mr. Cadell in deep speculations, unless they served him very much. I am, in this respect, a burnt child: I have not forgotten the fire, or rather the furnace. Second, I think the property worth more, if publicly sold. Third, I cannot see any reasons which should render it advantageous for me to sell one half of this property, it being admittedly at the same [time] highly judicious to keep the other half. This does not fadge. Fourth, As to the immediate command of the money, I am not pressed for it, not having any advantage by paying it a year or two sooner or later. The actual proceeds of the sales will come in about 1834, and I daresay will not be far behind in amount the sum of £6000.

In short, I will not sell on a rainy day, as our proverb says. I have communicated my resolution to Cadell, to whom, no doubt, it will be a disappointment, for which I am sorry, but cannot help it.

March 14. — Had a very sensible and good-humoured answer from Mr. Cadell, readily submitting to my decision. He mentions, what I am conscious of, the great ease of accomplishing, if the whole is divided into two halves. But this is not an advantage to me, but to them who keep the books, and therefore I cannot be moved by it. It is the great advantage of uniformity, of which Malachi Malagrowther tells so much. I do not fear that Mr. Cadell will neglect the concern because he has not the large share in it which he had in the other. He is, I think, too honest a man. He has always shown himself every way willing and ready to help me, and verily he hath his reward; and I can afford him on that property a handsome percentage for the management. But if his fate was to lose considerably by this transaction, I must necessarily be a sufferer; if he be a great gainer, it is at my expense,

so it is like the children's game of "Odds I win, evens you lose" — so will say no more about it. I think I will keep my ground nearly, so these cursed politics do not ruin the country. I am unable to sit at good men's boards, and Anne has gone to Mertoun to-day without me. I cannot walk or ride but for a mile or two. Naboclish! never mind. I am satisfied that I am heart-whole as a biscuit, and I may live to see the end of those affairs yet. I am driving on the Count of Paris right merrily. I have plenty of leisure, and vive la plume! I have arranged matters as I think for the best, so will think no more about it.

March 16. — The affair with Mr. Cadell being settled, I have only to arrange a set of regular employment for my time, without over-fatiguing myself. What I at present practise seems active enough for my capacity, and even if I should reach the threescore and ten, from which I am thrice three years distant, or nearer ten, the time may pass honourably, usefully, and profitably, both to myself and other people. My ordinary runs thus: — Rise at a quarter before seven; at a quarter after nine breakfast, with eggs, or in the singular number, at least; before breakfast private letters, etc.; after breakfast Mr. Laidlaw comes at ten, and we write together till one. I am greatly helped by this excellent man, who takes pains to write a good hand, and supplies the want of my own fingers as far as another person can. We work seriously at the task of the day till one o'clock, when I sometimes walk — not often, however, having failed in strength, and suffering great pain even from a very short walk. Oftener I take the pony for an hour or two and ride about the doors; the exercise is humbling enough, for I require to be lifted on horseback by two servants, and one goes with me to take care I do not fall off and break my bones, a catastrophe very like to happen. My proud promenade à pied or à cheval, as it happens, concludes by three o'clock. An hour intervenes for making up my Journal and such light work. At four comes dinner, — a plate of broth or soup, much condemned by the doctors, a bit of plain meat, no liquors stronger than small beer, and so I sit quiet to six o'clock, when Mr. Laidlaw returns, and remains with me till nine or three quarters past, as it happens. Then I have a bowl of porridge and milk, which I eat with the appetite of a child. I forgot to say that after dinner I am allowed half a glass of whisky or gin made into weak grog. I never wish for any more, nor do I in my secret soul long for cigars, though

once so fond of them. About six hours per day is good working, if I can keep at it.

March 17. — Little of this day, but that it was so uncommonly windy that I was almost blown off my pony, and was glad to grasp the mane to prevent its actually happening. Rode round by Brigends. I began the third volume of Count Robert of Paris, which has been on the anvil during all these vexatious circumstances of politics and health. But "the blue heaven bends over all." It may be ended in a fortnight if I keep my scheme. But I will take time enough. This would be on Thursday. I would like it much.

March 18. — We get well on. Count Robert is finished so far as the second goes, and some twenty [pages] of the third. Blackwood's Magazine, after long bedaubing me with compliment, has began to bedaub Lockhart for my sake, or perhaps me for Lockhart's sake, with abuse. Lockhart's chief offence seems to have been explaining the humbug of showing up Hogg as a fool and blackguard in what he calls the Noctes. For me I care wonderfully little either for his flattery or his abuse.

March 19. — I made a hard working day — almost equal to twenty pages, but there was some reason for it, for Ballantyne writes me that the copy sent will not exceed 265 pages when the end of volume ii. is reached; so 45 more pages must be furnished to run it out to page 329. This is an awful cast back; so the gap is to be made up.

March 20. — I thought I was done with politics, but it is easy getting into the mess, and difficult and sometimes disgraceful to get out. I have a letter from Sheriff Oliver, desiring me to go [to Jedburgh] on Monday (tomorrow) and show countenance by adhering to a set of propositions, being a resolution. Though not well drawn, they are uncompromising enough; so I will not part company. Had a letter, too, from Henry Scott. He still expects to refuse the Bill. I wrote him that would but postpone the evil day, unless they could bring forward a strong Administration, and, what is most essential, a system of finance; otherwise it won't do. Henry has also applied to me for the rejected address. But this I shall decline.

March 22. — Went to-day at nine o'clock to the meeting. A great number

present, with a tribune full of Reformers, who showed their sense of propriety by hissing, hooting, and making all sorts of noises; and these unwashed artificers are from henceforth to select our legislators. There was some speaking, but not good. I said something, for I could not sit quiet.

We did not get home till about nine, having fasted the whole time. James, the blockhead, lost my poor Spice, a favourite terrier. The fool shut her in a stable, and somebody, [he] says, opened the door and let her out. I suspect she is lost for aye, for she was carried to Jedburgh in a postchaise.

March 23. — The measure carried by a single vote. In other circumstances one would hope for the interference of the House of Lords, but it is all hab-nab at a venture. The worst is that there is a popular party who want personal power, and are highly unfitted to enjoy it. It has fallen easily, the old Constitution; no bullying Mirabeau to assail, no eloquent Maury to defend. It has been thrown away like a child's broken toy. Well trained, the good sense of the people is much trusted to; we will see what it will do for us.

The curse of Cromwell on those whose conceit brought us to this pass. Sed transeat. It is vain to mourn what cannot be mended.

March 24. — Frank Grant and his lady came here. Frank will, I believe, and if he attends to his profession, be one of the celebrated men of the age. He is well known to me as the companion of my sons and the partner of my daughters. In youth, that is in extreme youth, he was passionately fond of foxhunting and other sports, but not of any species of gambling. He had also a strong passion for painting, and made a little collection. As he had sense enough to feel that a younger brother's fortune would not last long under the expenses of a good stud and a rare collection of chef-d'œuvres, he used to avow his intention to spend his patrimony, about £10,000, and then again to make his fortune by the law. The first he soon accomplished. But the law is not a profession so easily acquired, nor did Frank's talents lie in that direction. His passion for painting turned out better. Nature had given him the rare power of judging soundly of painting, and in a remarkable degree the power of imitating it. Connoisseurs approved of his sketches, both in pencil and oils, but not without the sort of criticisms made on these occasions — that they were admirable for an amateur; but it could not be expected that he should submit to the technical drudgery absolutely

necessary for a profession, and all that species of criticism which gives way before natural genius and energy of character.

Meantime Frank Grant, who was remarkably handsome, and very much the man of fashion, married a young lady with many possibilities, as Sir Hugh Evans says. She was eldest sister of Farquharson of Invercauld, chief of that clan; and the young man himself having been almost paralysed by the malaria in Italy, Frank's little boy by this match becomes heir to the estate and chieftainship. In the meantime fate had another chance for him in the matrimonial line. At Melton-Mowbray, during the hunting season, he had become acquainted (even before his first marriage) with a niece of the Duke of Rutland, a beautiful and fashionable young woman, with whom he was now thrown into company once more. It was a natural consequence that they should marry. The lady had not much wealth, but excellent connections in society, to whom Grant's good looks and good breeding made him very acceptable.

March 25. — In the meantime Frank saw the necessity of doing something to keep himself independent, having, I think, too much spirit to become a Stulko, drinking out the last glass of the bottle, riding the horses which the laird wishes to sell, and drawing sketches to amuse the lady and the children, — besides a prospect on Invercauld elevating him, when realised, to the rank of the laird's father.

March 26. — Grant was above all this, and honourably and manfully resolved to cultivate his taste for painting, and become a professional artist. I am no judge of painting, but I am conscious that Francis Grant possesses, with much taste, a sense of beauty derived from the best source, that of really good society, while in many modern artists, the total want of that species of feeling is so great as to be revolting. His former acquaintances render his immediate entrance into business completely secure, and it will rest with himself to carry on his success. He has, I think, that degree of energy and force of character which will make him keep and enlarge any reputation which he may acquire. He has confidence too in his own powers, always a requisite for a young painter whose aristocratic pretensions must be envied by [his less fortunate brethren].

March 27. — Frank Grant is still with me, and is well pleased — I think

very deservedly so — with a cabinet picture of myself, armour, and so forth, together with my two noble staghounds of the greyhound race. I wish Cadell had got it; it is far better than Watson's — though his is well too. The dogs sat charmingly, but the picture took up some time.

March 28. — We went out a little ride. The weather most tempting, the day beautiful. We rode and walked a little.

March 29. — We had an hour's sitting of the dogs, and a good deal of success. I cannot compose my mind on this public measure. It will not please those whom it is the object to please.

March 30. — Robert Dundas and his wife — Miss Durham that was — came to spend a day or two. I was heartily glad to see him, being my earliest and best friend's son. John Swinton came by Blucher, on the part of an anti-Reform meeting in Edinburgh; exhorting me to take up the pen, but I declined and pleaded health, which, God knows, I have a right to urge. I might have urged also the chance of my breaking down, but there would be a cry of this kind which might very well prove real.

March 31. — Swinton returned in the forenoon yesterday after lunch. He took my denial very quietly, and said it would be wrong to press me. I have not shunned anything that came fairly on me, but I do not see the sense of standing forth a champion. It is said that the Duke of Buccleuch has been offered the title of Monmouth if he would cease to oppose. He said there were two objections — they would not give it him if he seriously thought of it, and he would not take it if they did. The Dundases went off to-day. I was glad I had seen them, although visitors rather interrupt work.

April

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April 2. — Mr. Henry Liddell, eldest son of Lord Ravensworth, arrived here. I like him and his brother Tom very much. They are what may be termed fine men. Young Mackenzie of Cromarty came with him, who is a fine lad and sings very beautifully. I knew his father and mother, and was very glad to see him. They had been at Mertoun fishing salmon, with little sport.

April 3. — A letter from the Lord Chief Commissioner, reporting Lord Palmerston and Sir Herbert Taylor's letters in Charles's favour. Wrote a grateful answer, and resolved, that as I have made my opinion public at every place where I could be called on or expected to appear, I will not throw myself forward when I have nothing to say. May the Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this vow!

April 4. — Mr. Liddell and Hay Mackenzie left us this morning. Liddell showed me yesterday a very good poem, worthy of Pope or Churchill, in old-fashioned hexameters, called the [illegible]. He has promised me a copy, for it is still being printed. There are some characters very well drawn. The force of it belies the character of a Dandie, too hastily ascribed to the author. He is accomplished as an artist and musician, and certainly has a fine taste for poetry, though he may never cultivate it. He promises to bring his lady — who is very clever, but pretty high, they say, in the temper — to spend a day or two with us after leaving Edinburgh.

April 5. — This fifth day of April is the March fair at Selkirk. Almost every one of the family goes there, Mr. Laidlaw among others. I have a hideous paralytic custom of stuttering with my pen, and cannot write without strange blunders; yet I cannot find any failure in my intellect. Being unable to write to purpose with my own hand, this forenoon was a sort of holiday to me. The third volume of Count Robert is fairly begun, but I fear I shall want stuff to fill it, for I would not willingly bombast it with things inappropriate. If I could fix my mind to the task to-day, my temper, notwithstanding my oath, sets strong towards politics, where I would be

sure of making a figure, and feel I could carry with me a great part of the middle-class, who wait for a shot between wind and water — half comic, half serious, which is a better argument than most which are going. The regard of my health is what chiefly keeps me in check. The provoking odium I should mind much less; for there will always be as many for as against me, but it would be a foolish thing to take flight to the next world in a political gale of wind. If Cadell gave me the least encouragement I would give way to the temptation. Meantime I am tugging at the chain for very eagerness. I have done enough to incense people against me, without, perhaps, doing so much as I could, would, or should have done.

April 6. — I have written to Alva and Lord Elgin, explaining why I cannot, as they encourage me to do, take upon me the cause of the public, and bell-the-cat with the reformers. I think I have done enough for an individual.

I have more than half dictated the third volume to Mr. Laidlaw; but I feel the subject wants action, and that a little repose will be very necessary. Resolve tomorrow shall be a resting-day. I have not had one this long time. I had a letter from Croker, advising a literary adventure — the personal history of Charles Edward. I think it will do. Rode to Melrose and brought home the letters from the postoffice.

April 8, — I took leave of poor Major John Scott, who, being afflicted with a distressing asthma, has resolved upon selling his house in Ravenswood, which he had dressed up with much neatness, and going abroad to Jamaica. Without having been intimate friends, we were always affectionate relations, and now we part, probably never to meet in this world. He has a good deal of the character said to belong to the family. Our parting with mutual feeling may be easily supposed.

April 9. — This being Saturday, I expect the bibliopolist and typographer about two o'clock, I suppose, when I shall have much to journalise. Failures among the trade are alarming, yet not if we act with prudence. Nous verrons.

Mr. Cadell and J. Ballantyne, with the son of the latter. Their courage is much stouter than I apprehended. Cadell says he has lost £1000 by bad debts, which is less than he expected, by bad times coming on at this time. We have been obliged to publish the less popular part of the Waverley Novels. At present I incline to draw a period after 48 volumes, and so close

the publication. About nine or ten volumes will then conclude our Magnum Opus, so called, and Mr. Cadell thinks we shall then begin the Poetical Works, in twelve volumes, with illustrations by Turner, which he expects to rise as far as 12,000. The size is to be that of the Waverley Novels.

April 10. — I had a letter from Mr. Cowan, Trustee for

Constable's creditors, telling that the manuscripts of the Waverley Novels had been adjudged to him, and offering them to me, or rather asking my advice about the disposal of them. Answered that I considered myself as swindled out of my property, and therefore will give no consent to any sale of the pillage. Cadell says he is determined to get the MSS. from Cowan. I told him I would give him the rest of the MSS., which are in my own hand, for Mr. Cadell has been very friendly to me in not suffering me to want money in difficult times. We are not pushed by our creditors, so can take our own time; and as our plans prosper, we can pay off debt. About two o'clock enter two gentlemen in an open carriage, both from Makerstoun, and both Captains in the Navy. Captain Blair, a son of the member for Ayrshire, my old friend the Laird of Blair. Just as they retreat, Mr. Pontey is announced. I was glad to see this great forester. He is a little man, and gets along with an air of talent, something like Gifford, the famous editor of the Quarterly. As in his case mental acuteness gave animation to that species of countenance which attends personal deformity. The whole of his face was bizarre and odd, yet singularly impressive. We walked round, I with great pain, by the Hooded Corbies' seat, and this great Lord of the woodland gave the plantation great approbation. He seems rather systematic in pruning, yet he is in a great measure right. He is tolerably obstinate in his opinions. He dined, leaving me flattered with his applause, and pleased with having seen him.

April 11. — This day I went, with Anne and Miss Jane Erskine, to see the laying of the stones of foundation of two bridges in my neighbourhood over Tweed and the Ettrick. There was a great many people assembled. The day was beautiful, the scene romantic, and the people in good spirits and good-humour. Mr. Paterson of Galashiels made a most excellent prayer; Mr. Smith gave a proper repast to the workmen, and we subscribed sovereigns apiece to provide for any casualty. I laid the foundation-stone of the bridge

over Tweed, and Mr. C.B. Scott of Woll that of Ettrick. The general spirit of good-humour made the scene, though without parade, extremely interesting.

April 12. — We breakfasted with the Fergusons, after which Anne and Miss Erskine walked up the Rhymer's Glen. I could as easily have made a pilgrimage to Rome with pease in my shoes unboiled. I drove home, and began to work about ten o'clock. At one o'clock I rode, and sent off what I had finished. Mr. Laidlaw dined with me. In the afternoon we wrote five or six pages more. I am, I fear, sinking a little, from having too much space to fill, and a want of the usual inspiration which makes me, like the chariot wheels of Pharaoh in the sands of the Red Sea, drive heavily. It is the less matter if this prove, as I suspect, the last of this fruitful family.

April 13. — Corrected a proof in the morning. At ten o'clock began where I had left off at my romance. Mr. Laidlaw agrees as to the portion of what we are presently busy with. Laidlaw begins to smite the rock for not giving forth the water in quantity sufficient. I remarked to him that this would not profit much. Doing, perhaps, twelve pages a day will easily finish us, and if it prove dull, why, dull it must be. I shall, perhaps, have half a dozen to make up this night. I have against me the disadvantage of being called the Just, and every one of course is willing to worry me. But they have been long at it, and even those works which have been worst received at their appearance now keep their ground fairly enough. So we'll try our old luck another voyage.

It is a close, thick rain, and I cannot ride, and I am too dead lame to walk in the house. So, feeling really exhausted, I will try to sleep a little.

My nap was a very short one, and was agreeably replaced by Basil Hall's Fragments of Voyages. Everything about the inside of a vessel is interesting, and my friend has the great sense to know this is the case. I remember when my eldest brother took the humour of going to sea, James Watson used to be invited to George Square to tell him such tales of hardships as might disgust him with the service. Such were my poor mother's instructions. But Captain Watson could not render a sea life disgusting to the young midshipman or to his brother, who looked on and listened. The account of assistance given to the Spaniards at Cape Finisterre, and the absurd behaviour of the Junta, are highly interesting — a

more inefficient, yet a more resolved class of men than the Spaniards were never conceived.

April 14. — Advised by Mr. Cadell that he has agreed with Mr. Turner, the first draughtsman of the period, to furnish to the poetical works two decorations to each of the proposed twelve volumes, to wit, a frontispiece and vignette to each, at the rate of £25 for each, which is cheap enough considering these are the finest specimens of art going. The difficulty is to make him come here to take drawings. I have written to the man of art, inviting him to my house, though, if I remember, he is not very agreeable, and offered to transport him to the places where he is to exercise his pencil. His method is to take various drawings of remarkable places and towns and stick them all together. He can therefore derive his subjects from good accurate drawings, so with Skene's assistance we can equip him. We can put him at home on all the subjects. Lord Meadowbank and his son, Skene and his son, Colonel Russell and his sister, dined with us.

April 15. — Lord Meadowbank, etc., went to Newark with me, and returned to dine with the foregoing. Charming day.

April 16. — Lord Meadowbank went to the circuit and our party to their various homes. By the bye, John Pringle and his brother of Haining dined with us yesterday. Skene walks with me and undertakes readily to supply Turner with subjects. Weather enchanting. About 100 leaves will now complete Robert of Paris. Query, will it answer? Not knowing, can't say. I think it will.

Sunday 16th April to Sunday 24th of the same month unpleasantly occupied by ill [health], and its consequences, a distinct shock of paralysis affecting both my nerves and spine, though beginning only on Monday with a very bad cold. Dr. [Abercrombie] was brought out by the friendly care of Cadell, but young Clarkson had already done the needful — that is, had bled and blistered severely, and placed me on a very restricted diet. Whether these precautions have been taken in time I cannot tell. I think they have, though severe in themselves, beat the disease. But I am alike prepared,

"Seu versare dolos, seu certæ occumbere morti."

I only know that to live as I am just now is a gift little worth having. I think I will be in the Secret next week unless I recruit greatly.

April 27. — They have cut me off from animal food and fermented liquor of every kind, and would press upon me such trash as panada and the like, which affect my stomach.

This I will none of, but quietly wait till my ordinary diet is permitted, and thank God I can fast with any one. I walked out and found the day delightful; the woods are looking charming, just bursting forth to the tune of the birds. I have been whistling on my wits like so many chickens, and cannot miss any of them. I feel, on the whole, better than I have yet done. I believe I have fined and recovered, and so may be thankful.

April 28 and 29. — Walter made his appearance, well and stout, and completely recovered of his stomach complaints by abstinence. He has youth on his side, and I in age must submit to be a Lazarus. The medical men persist in recommending a seton. I am no friend to these risky remedies, and will be sure of the necessity before I yield consent. The dying like an Indian under torture is no joke, and, as Commodore Trunnion says, I feel heart-whole as a biscuit. My mind turns to politics. I feel better just now, and so I am. I will wait till Lockhart comes, but that may be too late.

May

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April 30 and May 1. — To meet Sandy Pringle to settle the day of election on Monday. Go on with Count Robert half-a-dozen leaves per day. I am not much pleased with my handiwork. The Chancery money seems like to be paid. This will relieve me of poor Charles, who is at present my chief burthen. The task of pumping my brains becomes inevitably harder when "both chain-pumps are choked below;" and though this may not be the case literally, yet the apprehension is wellnigh as bad.

May 2. — The day passed as usual in dictating (too little) and riding a good deal. I must get finished with Count Robert, who is progressing, as the Transatlantics say, at a very slow pace indeed. By the bye, I have a letter from Nathan T. Rossiter, Williamstown, New York City, offering me a collection of poems by Byron, which are said to have been found in Italy some years since by a friend of Mr. Rossiter. I don't see I can at all be entitled to these, so shall write to decline them. If Mr. Rossiter chooses to publish them in Italy or America he may, but, published here, they must be the property of Lord Byron's executors.

May 3. — Sophia arrives — with all the children looking well and beautiful, except poor Johnnie, who looks very pale. But it is no wonder, poor thing!

May 4. — I have a letter from Lockhart, promising to be down by next Wednesday, that is, to-day. I will consult him about Byron's Exec., and as to these poems said to be his Lordship's. They are very probably first copies thrown aside, or may not be genuine at all. I will be glad to see Lockhart. My pronunciation is a good deal improved. My time glides away ill employed, but I am afraid of the palsy. I should not like to be pinned to my chair. But I believe even that kind of life is more endurable than we could suppose. Your wishes are limited to your little circle — yet the idea is terrible to a man who has been active. My own circle in bodily matters is daily narrowing; not so in intellectual matters, but I am perhaps a bad judge. The plough is coming to the end of the furrow, so it is likely I shall not

reach the common goal of mortal life by a few years. I am now in my sixtieth year only, and

> "Three score and ten years do sum up."

May 5. — A fleece of letters, which must be answered, I suppose — all from persons, my zealous admirers, of course, and expecting a degree of generosity, which will put to rights all their maladies, physical and mental; and expecting that I can put to rights whatever losses have been their lot, raise them to a desirable rank, and [stand] their protector and patron. I must, they take it for granted, be astonished at having an address from a stranger; on the contrary, I would be astonished if any of these extravagant epistles were from any one who had the least title to enter into correspondence with me. I have all the plague of answering these teasing people.

Mr. Burn, the architect, came in, struck by the appearance of my house from the road. He approved my architecture greatly. He tells me the edifice for Jeanie Deans — that is, her prototype — is nigh finished, so I must get the inscription ready. Mr. Burn came to meet with Pringle of Haining; but, alas! it is two nights since this poor young man, driving in from his own lake, where he had been fishing, an ill-broken horse ran away with him, and, at his own stable-door, overturned the vehicle and fractured poor Pringle's skull; he died yesterday morning. A sad business; so young a man, the proprietor of a good estate, and a well-disposed youth. His politics were, I think, mistaken, being the reverse of his father's; but that is nothing at such a time. Burn went on to Richardson's place of Kirklands, where he is to meet the proprietor, whom I too would wish to see, but I can hardly make it out. Here is a world of arrangements. I think we will soon hit upon something. My son Walter takes leave of me to-day to return to Sheffield. At his entreaty I have agreed to put in a seton, which they seem all to recommend. My own opinion is, this addition to my tortures will do me no good; but I cannot hold out against my son. So, when the present blister is well over, let them try their seton as they call it.

May 6 and 7. — Here is a precious job. I have a formal remonstrance from these critical persons, Ballantyne and Cadell, against the last volume of Count Robert, which is within a sheet of being finished. I suspect their opinion will be found to coincide with that of the public; at least it is not

very different from my own. The blow is a stunning one I suppose, for I scarcely feel it. It is singular, but it comes with as little surprise as if I had a remedy ready. Yet God knows, I am at sea in the dark, and the vessel leaky, I think, into the bargain. I cannot conceive that I should have tied a knot with my tongue which my teeth cannot untie. We will see. I am determined to write a political pamphlet coûte que coûte; ay, — should it cost me my life.

I will right and left at these unlucky proof-sheets, and alter at least what I cannot mend.

May 8. — I have suffered terribly, that is the truth, rather in body than in mind, and I often wish I could lie down and sleep without waking. But I will fight it out if I can. It would argue too great an attachment of consequence to my literary labours to sink under. Did I know how to begin, I would begin this very day, although I knew I should sink at the end. After all, this is but fear and faintness of heart, though of another kind from that which trembleth at a loaded pistol. My bodily strength is terribly gone; perhaps my mental too?

May 9. — The weather uncommonly beautiful and I am very eager to get on thinning woods while the peeling season lasts. We made about £200 off wood last season, and this is a sum worth looking at.

May 10. — Some repairs on the milldam still keep the people employed, and we cannot get to the thinning. Yet I have been urging them for a month. It's a great fault of Scottish servants that they cannot be taught to time their turns.

May 11. — By old practice I should be going into town to-day, the Court sitting tomorrow. Am I happier that I am free from this charge? Perhaps I am; that is certain, time begins to make my literary labour more precious than usual. Very weak, scarce able to crawl about without the pony — lifted on and off — and unable to walk half a mile save with great pain.

May 12. — Resolved to lay by Robert of Paris, and take it up when I can work. Thinking on it really makes my head swim, and that is not safe. Miss Ferrier comes out to us. This gifted personage, besides having great talents,

has conversation the least exigeante of any author, female at least, whom I have ever seen among the long list I have encountered, — simple, full of humour, and exceedingly ready at repartee; and all this without the least affectation of the blue stocking.

May 13. — Mr., or more properly Dr., Macintosh Mackay comes out to see me, a simple learned man, and a Highlander who weighs his own nation justly — a modest and estimable person.

I was beat up at midnight to sign a warrant against some delinquents. I afterwards heard that the officers were pursued by a mob from Galashiels, with purpose of deforcing them as far as St. Boswell's Green, but the men were lodged in Jedburgh Castle.

Reports of mobs at all the elections, which, I fear, will prove too true. They have much to answer for who in gaiety of heart have brought a peaceful and virtuous population to such a pass.

May 14. — Rode with Lockhart and Mr. Mackay through the plantations, and spent a pleasanter day than of late months. Story of a haunted glen in Laggan: — A chieftain's daughter or cousin loved a man of low degree. Her kindred discovered the intrigue and punished the lover's presumption by binding the unhappy man, and laying him naked in one of the large ants' nests common in a Highland forest. He died in agony of course, and his mistress became distracted, roamed wildly in the glen till she died, and her phantom, finding no repose, haunted it after her death to such a degree that the people shunned the road by day as well as night. Mrs. Grant of Laggan tells the story, with the addition, that her husband, then minister of Laggan, fixed a religious meeting in the place, and, by the exercise of public worship there, overcame the popular terror of the Red Woman. Dr. Mackay seems to think that she was rather banished by a branch of the Parliamentary road running up the glen than by the prayers of his predecessor. Dr. Mackay, it being Sunday, favoured us with an excellent discourse on the Socinian controversy, which I wish my friend Mr. Laidlaw had heard.

May 15. — Dr. M. left us early this morning; and I rode and studied as usual, working at the Tales of My Grandfather. Our good and learned

Doctor wishes to go down the Tweed to Berwick. It is a laudable curiosity, and I hope will be agreeably satisfied.

May 16 and 17. — I wrote and rode as usual, and had the pleasure of Miss Ferrier's company in my family hours, which was a great satisfaction; she has certainly less affectation than any female I have known that has stood so high — Joanna Baillie hardly excepted. By the way, she [Mrs. Baillie] has entered on the Socinian controversy, for which I am very sorry; she has published a number of texts on which she conceives the controversy to rest, but it escapes her that she can only quote them through a translation. I am sorry this gifted woman is hardly doing herself justice, and doing what is not required at her hands. Mr. Laidlaw of course thinks it the finest thing in the world.

May 18. — Went to Jedburgh to the election, greatly against the wishes of my daughters. The mob were exceedingly vociferous and brutish, as they usually are now-a-days. But the Sheriff had two troops of dragoons at Ancrum Bridge, and all went off quietly. The populace gathered in formidable numbers — a thousand from Hawick alone; they were sad blackguards, and the day passed with much clamour and no mischief. Henry Scott was reelected — for the last time, I suppose. Troja fuit.

I left the burgh in the midst of abuse and the gentle hint of "Burke Sir Walter." Much obliged to the brave lads of Jeddart. Upwards of forty freeholders voted for Henry Scott, and only fourteen for the puppy that opposed him. Even of this party he gained far the greater number by the very awkward coalition with Sir William Scott of Ancrum. I came home at seven at night.

May 20. — This is the Selkirk election, which I supposed would be as tumultuous as the Jedburgh one, but the soutars of Selkirk had got a new light, and saw in the proposed Reform Bill nothing but a mode of disfranchising their ancient burgh. Although the crowd was great, yet there was a sufficient body of special constables, hearty in their useful office, and the election passed as quietly as I ever witnessed one. I came home before dinner, very quiet. I am afraid there is something serious in Galashiels; Jeffrey is fairly funked about it, and has written letters to the authorities of Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire to caution us against making the

precognitions public, which looks ill. Yet I think he would have made arrests when the soldiers were in the country. The time at which I settled at Abbotsford, Whitsunday 1811, I broke up a conspiracy of the weavers. It will look like sympathising with any renewal if another takes place just now. Incendiary letters have been sent, and the householders are in a general state of alarm. The men at Jedburgh Castle are said to be disposed to make a clean breast; if so, we shall soon know more of the matter. Lord William Graham has been nearly murdered at Dumbarton. Why should he not have brought down 50 or 100 lads with the kilts, each with a good kent in his hand fit to call the soul out of the body of these weavers? They would have kept order, I warrant you.

May 21. — Little more than my usual work and my usual exercise. I rode out through the plantations and saw the woodmen getting down what was to be felled. It seems there will be as much for sale as last year of bark: I think about £40 worth. A very nice additional pond to the sawmill has been executed. As for my Tales, they go on well, and are amusing to myself at least. The History of France is very entertaining.

May 22. — I have a letter from my friend John Thomson of Duddingston. I had transmitted him an order for the Duke of Buccleuch for his best picture, at his best price, leaving the choice of the subject and everything else to himself. He expresses the wish to do, at an ordinary price, a picture of common size. The declining to put himself forward will, I fear, be thought like shrinking from his own reputation, which nobody has less need to do. The Duke may wish a large picture for a large price for furnishing a large apartment, and the artist should not shrink from it. I have written him my opinion. The feeling is no doubt an amiable, though a false one. He is modest in proportion to his talents. But what brother of the finer arts ever approached [excellence] so as to please himself?

May 23, 24, and 25. — Worked and exercised regularly. I do not feel that I care twopence about the change of diet as to taste, but I feel my strength much decayed. On horseback my spine feels remarkably sore, and I am tired with a few miles' ride. We expect Walter coming down for the Fife election.

[From May 25th to October 9th there are no dates in the Journal, but the entry beginning "I have been very ill" must have been made about the middle of September. "In the family circle," says Mr. Lockhart, "he seldom spoke of his illness at all, and when he did, it was always in a hopeful strain." "In private, to Laidlaw and myself, his language corresponded exactly with the tone of the Diary. He expressed his belief that the chances of recovery were few — very few — but always added that he considered it his duty to exert what faculties remained to him for the sake of his creditors to the very last. — 'I am very anxious,' he repeatedly said to me, 'to be done one way or other with this Count Robert, and a little story about the Castle Dangerous — which also I had long in my head — but after that I will attempt nothing more, at least not until I have finished all the notes for the Novels,'" *etc.*

On the 18th July he set out in company with Mr. Lockhart to visit Douglas Castle, St. Bride's Church and its neighbourhood, for the purpose of verifying the scenery of Castle Dangerous, then partly printed, returning on the 20th.

He finished that book and Count Robert before the end of August.

In September, Mr. Lockhart, then staying at Chiefswood, and proposing to make a run into Lanarkshire for a day or two, mentioned overnight at Abbotsford that he intended to take his second son, then a boy of five or six years of age, and Sir Walter's namesake, with him on the stage-coach.

Next morning the following affectionate billet was put into his hands: —

To J.G. LOCKHART, Esq., Chiefswood.

"DEAR DON, or Doctor Giovanni,

"Can you really be thinking of taking Wa-Wa by the coach — and I think you said outside? Think of Johnny, and be careful of this little man. Are you par hazard something in the state of the poor capitaine des dragons that comes in singing: —

'Comment? Parbleu! Qu'en pensez vous,
Bon gentilhomme, et pas un sous'?

"If so, remember 'Richard's himself again,' and make free use of the enclosed cheque on Cadell for £50. He will give you the ready as you pass through, and you can pay when I ask.

"Put horses to your carriage, and go hidalgo fashion. We shall all have good days yet.

'And those sad days you deign to spend
With me I shall requite them all;

Sir Eustace for his friends shall send
And thank their love in Grayling Hall!'

"W.S."

On the 15th September he tells the Duke of Buccleuch, "I am going to try whether the air of Naples will make an old fellow of sixty young again."

On the 17th the old splendour of the house was revived. Col. Glencairn Burns, son of the poet, then in Scotland, came

"To stir with joy the towers of Abbotsford."

The neighbours were assembled, and, having his son to help him, Sir Walter did the honours of the table once more as of yore.

On the 19th the poet Wordsworth arrived, and left on the 22d.

On the 20th, Mrs. Lockhart set out for London to prepare for her father's reception there, and on the 23d Sir Walter left Abbotsford for London, where he arrived on the 28th.]

October

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Interval.

I have been very ill, and if not quite unable to write, I have been unfit to do so. I have wrought, however, at two Waverley things, but not well, and, what is worse, past mending. A total prostration of bodily strength is my chief complaint. I cannot walk half a mile. There is, besides, some mental confusion, with the extent of which I am not perhaps fully acquainted. I am perhaps setting. I am myself inclined to think so, and, like a day that has been admired as a fine one, the light of it sets down amid mists and storms. I neither regret nor fear the approach of death if it is coming. I would compound for a little pain instead of this heartless muddiness of mind which renders me incapable of anything rational. The expense of my journey will be something considerable, which I can provide against by borrowing £500 from Mr. Gibson. To Mr. Cadell I owe already, with the cancels on these apoplectic books, about £200, and must run it up to £500 more at least; yet this heavy burthen would be easily borne if I were to be the Walter Scott I once was; but the change is great. This would be nothing, providing that I could count on these two books having a sale equal to their predecessors; but as they do not deserve the same countenance, they will not and cannot have such a share of favour, and I have only to hope that they will not involve the Waverley, which are now selling 30,000 volumes a month, in their displeasure. Something of a Journal and the Reliquiae Trotcosienses will probably be moving articles, and I have in short no fears in pecuniary matters. The ruin which I fear involves that of my King and country. Well says Colin Mackenzie: —

> “Shall this desolation strike thy towers alone?
> No, fair Ellandonan! such ruin ‘twill bring,
> That the storm shall have power to unsettle the throne,
> And thy fate shall be mixed with the fate of thy King.”

I fear that the great part of the memorialists are bartering away the dignity of their rank by seeking to advance themselves by a job, which is a melancholy sight. The ties between democrat and aristocrat are sullen

discontent with each other. The former are regarded as a house-dog which has manifested incipient signs of canine madness, and is not to be trusted. Walter came down to-day to join our party.

[September 20?] — Yesterday, Wordsworth, his son [nephew] and daughter, came to see us, and we went up to Yarrow. The eldest son of Lord Ravensworth also came to see us, with his accomplished lady. We had a pleasant party, and to-day were left by the Liddells, manent the three Wordsworths, cum cæteris, a German or Hungarian Count Erdödy, or some such name.

We arrived in London [September 28,] after a long and painful journey, the weakness of my limbs palpably increasing, and the physic prescribed making me weaker every day. Lockhart, poor fellow, is as attentive as possible, and I have, thank God, no pain whatever; could the end be as easy it would be too happy. I fancy the instances of Euthanasia are not very uncommon. Instances there certainly are among the learned and the unlearned — Dr.

Black, Tom Purdie. I should wish, if it please God, to sleep off in such a quiet way; but we must take what Fate sends. I have not warm hopes of being myself again.

Wordsworth and his daughter, a fine girl, were with us on the last day. I tried to write in her diary, and made an ill-favoured botch — no help for it. "Stitches will wear, and ill ones will out," as the tailor says.

[October 8, London.] — The King has located me on board the Barham, with my suite, consisting of my eldest son, youngest daughter, and perhaps my daughter-in-law, which, with poor Charles, will make a goodly tail. I fancy the head of this tail cuts a poor figure, scarce able to stir about.

The town is in a foam with politics. The report is that the Lords will throw out the Bill, and now, morning of 8th October, I learn it is quoited downstairs like a shovel-board shilling, with a plague to it, as the most uncalled-for attack upon a free constitution, under which men lived happily, which ever was ventured in my day. Well, it would have been pleasing to have had some share in so great a victory, yet even now I am glad I have been quiet. I believe I should only have made a bad figure. Well, I will have time enough to think of all this.

October 9. — The report to-day is that the Chancellor will unite with the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel to bring in a Bill of his own concocting, modified to the taste of the other two, with which some think they will be satisfied. This is not very unlikely, for Lord Brougham has been displeased with not having been admitted to Lord John Russell's task of bill-drawing. He is a man of unbounded ambition, as well as unbounded talent and [uncertain] temper. There have been hosts of people here, particularly the Duke of Buccleuch, to ask me to the christening of his son and heir, when the King stands godfather. I am asked as an ally and friend of the family, which makes the compliment greater. Singular that I should have stood godfather to this Duke himself, representing some great man.

October 10. — Yesterday we dined alone, so I had an opportunity of speaking seriously to John; but I fear procrastination. It is the cry of Friar Bacon's Brazen head, time is — time was; but the time may soon come — time shall be no more. The Whigs are not very bold, not much above a hundred met to support Lord Grey to the last. Their resolutions are moderate, probably because they could not have carried stronger. I went to breakfast at Sir Robert Henry Inglis', and coming home about twelve found the mob rising in the Regent's Park, and roaring for Reform as rationally as a party of Angusshire cattle would have done.

Sophia seemed to act as the jolly host in the play. "These are my windows," and, shutting the shutters, "let them batter — I care not serving the good Duke of Norfolk." After a time they passed out of our sight, hurrying doubtless to seek a more active scene of reformation. As the night closed, the citizens who had hitherto contented themselves with shouting, became more active, and when it grew dark set forth to make work for the glaziers.

October 11, Tuesday. — We set out in the morning to breakfast with Lady Gifford. We passed several glorious specimens of the last night's feats of the reformers. The Duke of Newcastle's and Lord Dudley's houses were sufficiently broken. The maidens, however, had resisted, and from the top of the house with coals, which had greatly embarrassed the assembled mob. Surely if the people are determined on using a right so questionable, and the Government resolved to consider it as too sacred to be resisted, some modes of resistance might be resorted to of a character more ludicrous than

firearms, — coals, for example, scalding oil, boiling water, or some other mode of defence against a sudden attack. We breakfasted with a very pleasant party at Lady Gifford's. I was particularly happy to meet Lord Sidmouth; at seventy-five, he tells me, as much in health and spirits as at sixty. I also met Captain Basil Hall, to whom I owe so much for promoting my retreat in so easy a manner. I found my appointment to the Barham had been pointed out by Captain Henry Duncan, R.N., as being a measure which would be particularly agreeable to the officers of the service. This is too high a compliment. In returning I called to see the repairs at Lambeth, which are proceeding under the able direction of Blore, who met me there. They are in the best Gothic taste, and executed at the expense of a large sum, to be secured by way of mortgage, payable in fifty years; each incumbent within the time paying a proportion of about £4000 a year. I was pleased to see this splendour of church architecture returning again.

Lord Mahon, a very amiable as well as a clever young man, comes to dinner with Mr. Croker; Lady Louisa Stuart in the afternoon, or, more properly, at night.

October 12. — Misty morning — looks like a yellow fog, which is the curse of London. I would hardly take my share of it for a share of its wealth and its curiosity — a vile double-distilled fog of the most intolerable kind. Children scarce stirring yet, but baby and the Macaw beginning their Macaw notes. Among other feats of the mob on Monday, a gentleman who saw the onslaught told me two men got on Lord Londonderry's carriage and struck him; the chief constable came to the rescue and belaboured the rascals, who ran and roared. I should have liked to have seen the onslaught — Dry beating, and plenty of it, is a great operator of a reform among these gentry. At the same time Lord Londonderry is a brain-sick man, very unlike his brother. He horsewhipped a sentinel under arms at Vienna for obeying his consigne, which was madness. On the other side all seems to be prepared. Heavy bodies of the police are stationed in all the squares and places supporting each other regularly. The men themselves say that their numbers amount to 3000, and that they are supported by troops in still greater numbers, so that the Conservative force is sufficiently strong. Four o'clock — a letter from the Duke saying the party is put off by command of the King, and probably the day will be put off until the Duke's return from Scotland, so our hopes of seeing the fine ceremony are all ended.

October 13. — Nocte pluit tota — an excellent recipe for a mob, so they have been quiet accordingly, as we are informed. Two or three other wet nights would do much to weary them out with inactivity. Milman, whom I remember a fine gentlemanlike young man, dined here yesterday. He says the fires have never ceased in his country, but that the oppressions and sufferings occasioned by the poor's rates are very great, and there is no persuading the English farmer that an amended system is comfortable both for rich and poor. The plan of ministers is to keep their places maugre Peers and Commons both, while they have the countenance of the crown; but if a Prince shelters, by authority of the prerogative, ministers against the will of the other authority of the state, does he not quit the defence which supposes he can do no wrong? This doctrine would make a curious change of parties. Will they attempt to legitimize the Fitz Clarences? God forbid! Yet it may end in that, — it would be Paris all over. The family is said to have popular qualities. Then what would be the remedy? Marry! seize on the person of the Princess Victoria, carrying her north and setting up the banner of England with the Duke of W. as dictator! Well, I am too old to fight, and therefore should keep the windy side of the law; besides, I shall be buried before times come to a decision. In the meantime the King dare not go to stand godfather to the son of one of his most powerful peers, a party of his own making, lest his loving subjects pull the house about the ears of his noble host and the company invited to meet him. Their loyalty has a pleasant way of displaying itself. I will go to Westminster after breakfast and see what people are saying, and whether the Barham is likely to sail, or whether its course is not altered to the coast of the Low Countries instead of the Mediterranean.

October 14. — Tried to walk to Lady Louisa Stuart's, but took a little vertigo and came back. Much disturbed by a letter from Walter. He is like to be sent on an obnoxious service with very inadequate force, little prospect of thanks if he does his duty, and much of blame if he is unable to accomplish it. I have little doubt he will ware his mother's calf-skin on them.

The manufacturing districts are in great danger. London seems pretty secure. Sent off the revise of introduction to Mr. Cadell.

October 16. — A letter from Walter with better news. He has been at hard-heads with the rogues and come off with advantage; in short, practised with success the art of drawing two souls out of one weaver. All seems quiet now, and I suppose the Major will get his leave as proposed. Two ladies — [one] Byron's Mary Chaworth — have been frightened to death while the mob tore the dying creatures from their beds and proposed to throw them into the flames, drank the wine, destroyed the furniture, and committed other excesses of a jacquerie. They have been put down, however, by a strong force of yeomanry and regulars. Walter says the soldiers fired over the people's heads, whereas if they had levelled low, the bullets must have told more among the multitude. I cannot approve of this, for in such cases severity is ultimate mercy. However, if they have made a sufficient impression to be striking — why, enough is as good as a feast.

There is a strange story about town of ghost-seeing vouched by Lord Prudhoe, a near relation of the Duke of Northumberland, and whom I know as an honourable man. A colonel described as a cool-headed sensible man of worth and honour, Palgrave, who dined with us yesterday, told us twice over the story as vouched by Lord Prudhoe, and Lockhart gave us Colonel Felix's edition, which coincided exactly. I will endeavour to extract the essence of both. While at Grand Cairo they were attracted by the report of a physician who could do the most singular magical feats, and was in the habit not only of relieving the living, but calling up the dead. This sage was the member of a tribe in the interior part of Africa. They were some time (two years) in finding him out, for he by no means pressed himself on the curious, nor did he on the other hand avoid them; but when he came to Grand Cairo readily agreed to gratify them by a sight of his wonders. The scenes exhibited were not visible to the operator himself, nor to the person for whose satisfaction they were called up, but, as in the case of Dr. Dee and other adepts, by means of a viewer, an ignorant Nubian boy, whom, to prevent imposition, the English gentlemen selected for the purpose, and, as they thought, without any risk of imposture by confederacy betwixt him and the physician. The process was as follows: — A black square was drawn in the palm of the boy's hand, or rather a kind of pentacle with an Arabic character inscribed at each angle. The figures evoked were seen through this space as if the substance of the hand had been removed. Magic rites, and particularly perfumes, were liberally resorted to. After some fumigation the

magician declared that they could not proceed until the seven flags should become visible. The boy declared he saw nothing, then said he saw a flag, then two; often hesitated at the number for a certain time, and on several occasions the spell did not work and the operation went no further, but in general the boy saw the seven flags through the aperture in his hand. The magician then said they must call the Sultan, and the boy said he saw a splendid tent fixed, surrounded by immense hosts, Eblis no doubt, and his angels. The person evoked was then named, and appeared accordingly. The only indispensable requisite was that he was named speedily, for the Sultan did not like to be kept waiting. Accordingly, William Shakespeare being named, the boy declared that he saw a Frank in a dress which he described as that of the reign of Elizabeth or her successor, having a singular countenance, a high forehead, and a very little beard. Another time a brother of the Colonel was named. The boy said he saw a Frank in his uniform dress and a black groom behind him leading a superb horse. The dress was a red jacket and white pantaloons; and the principal figure turning round, the boy announced that he wanted his arm, as was the case with Felix's brother. The ceremony was repeated fourteen times; successfully in twelve instances, and in two it failed from nonappearance of the seven banners in the first instance. The apparent frankness of the operator was not the least surprising part of the affair. He made no mystery, said he possessed this power by inheritance, as a family gift; yet that he could teach it, and was willing to do so, for no enormous sum — nay, one which seemed very moderate. I think two gentlemen embraced the offer. One of them is dead and the other still abroad. The sage also took a price for the exhibition of his skill, but it was a moderate one, being regulated by the extent of the perfumes consumed in the ceremony.

There remains much more to ask I understood the witnesses do not like to bother about, which is very natural. One would like to know a little more of the Sultan, of the care taken to secure the fidelity of the boy who was the viewer and on whom so much depended; whether another sage practising the same feat, as it was said to be hereditary, was ever known to practise in the city. The truth of a story irreconcilable with the common course of nature must depend on cross-examination. If we should find, while at Malta, that we had an opportunity of expiscating this matter, though at the expense of a voyage to Alexandria, it would hardly deter me. The girls go to the Chapel Royal this morning at St. James's. A visit from the Honourable

John Forbes, son of my old and early friend Lord Forbes, who is our fellow-passenger. The ship expects presently to go to sea. I was very glad to see this young officer and to hear his news. Drummond and I have been Mends from our infancy.

October 17. — The morning beautiful. To-day I go to look after the transcripts in the Museum and have a card to see a set of chessmen thrown up by the sea on the coast of Scotland, which were offered to sale for £100. The King, Queen, Knights, etc., were in the costume of the 14th century, the substance ivory or rather the tusk of the morse, somewhat injured by the salt water in which they had been immersed for some time.

Sir John Malcolm told us a story about Garrick and his wife. The lady admired her husband greatly, but blamed him for a taste for low life, and insisted that he loved better to play Scrub to a low-lifed audience than one of his superior characters before an audience of taste. On one particular occasion she was in her box in the theatre. Richard III. was the performance, and Garrick's acting, especially in the night scene, drew down universal applause. After the play was over Mrs. G. proposed going home, which Garrick declined, alleging he had some business in the greenroom, which must detain him. In short, the lady was obliged to acquiesce, and wait the beginning of a new entertainment, in which was introduced a farmer giving his neighbours an account of the wonders seen on a visit to London. This character was received with such peals of applause that Mrs. Garrick began to think it rivalled those which had been so lately lavished on Richard the Third. At last she observed her little spaniel dog was making efforts to get towards the balcony which separated him from the facetious farmer. Then she became aware of the truth. "How strange," she said, "that a dog should know his master, and a woman, in the same circumstances, should not recognise her husband!"

October 18. — Sophia had a small but lively party last night, as indeed she has had every night since we were here — Ladies — [Lady Stafford,] Lady Louisa Stuart, Lady Montagu, Miss Montagu, Lady [Davy], [Mrs.] Macleod, and two or three others; Gentlemen — Lord Montagu, Macleod, Lord Dudley, Rogers [Mackintosh]. A good deal of singing. If Sophia keeps to early hours she may beat London for small parties as poor Miss White did, and without much expense. A little address is all that is necessary. Sir

John insists on my meeting this Rammohun Roy; I am no believer in his wandering knight, so far. The time is gone of sages who travelled to collect wisdom as well as heroes to reap honour. Men think and fight for money. I won't see the man if I can help it. Flatterers are difficult enough to keep at a distance though they be no renegades. I hate a fellow who begins with throwing away his own religion, and then affects a prodigious respect for another.

October 19. — Captain H. Duncan called with Captain Pigot, a smart-looking gentlemanlike man, and announces his purpose of sailing on Monday. I have made my preparations for being on board on Sunday, which is the day appointed. Captain Duncan told me jocularly never to take a naval captain's word on shore, and quoted Sir William Scott, who used to say, waggishly, that there was nothing so accommodating as a naval captain on shore; but when on board he became a peremptory lion. Henry Duncan has behaved very kindly, and says he only discharges the wishes of his service in making me as easy as possible, which is very handsome. No danger of feud, except about politics, which would be impolite on my part, and though it bars out one great subject of discourse, it leaves enough besides. That I might have nothing doubtful, Walter arrives with his wife, ready to sail, so what little remains must be done without loss of time. This is our last morning, so I have money to draw for and pay away. To see our dear Lord Montagu too. The Duchess came yesterday. I suppose £50 will clear me, with some balance for Gibraltar.

I leave this country uncertain if it has got a total pardon or only a reprieve. I won't think of it, as I can do no good. It seems to be in one of those crises by which Providence reduces nations to their original elements. If I had my health, I should take no worldly fee, not to be in the bustle; but I am as weak as water, and I shall be glad when I have put the Mediterranean between the island and me.

October 21 and 22. — Spent in taking of farewell and adieus, which had been put off till now. A melancholy ceremonial, with some a useless one; yet there are friends whom it sincerely touches one to part with. It is the cement of life giving way in a moment. Another unpleasant circumstance is — one is called upon to recollect those whom death or estrangement has severed, after starting merrily together in the voyage of life.

October 23. — Portsmouth; arrived here in the evening. Found the Barham will not sail till 26th October, that is Wednesday next. The girls break loose, mad with the craze of seeing sights, and run the risk of our losing some of our things and deranging the naval officers, who offer their services with their natural gallantry. Captain Pigot came to breakfast, with several other officials. The girls contrived to secure a sight of the Block manufactory, together with that of the Biscuit, also invented by Brunel. I think that I have seen the first of these wonderful [sights] in 1816, or about that time. Sir Thomas Foley gives an entertainment to the Admiralty, and sends to invite [me]; but I pleaded health, and remained at home. Neither will I go out sight-seeing, which madness seems to have seized my womankind. This ancient town is one of the few in England which is fortified, and which gives it a peculiar appearance. It is much surrounded with heaths or thin poor muirs covered with heather, very barren, yet capable of being converted into rich arable and pasturage. I would [not] desire a better estate than to have 2000 acres which would be worth 40 shillings an acre.

October 24. — My womankind are gone out with Walter and Captain Hall. I wish they would be moderate in their demands on people's complaisance. They little know how inconvenient are such seizures. A sailor is in particular a bad refuser, and before he can turn three times round, he is bound with a triple knot to all kinds of [engagements]. The wind is west, that is to say contrary, so our sailing on the day after tomorrow is highly doubtful.

October 25. — A gloomy October day, the wind inflexibly constant in the west, which is fatal. Sir James Graham proposes to wait upon us after breakfast. A trouble occurs about my taking an oath before a master-extraordinary in Chancery; but such cannot easily be found, as they reside in chambers in town, and rusticate after business, so they are difficult to catch as an eel. At ten my children set off to the dockyard, which is a most prodigious effort of machinery, and they are promised the sight of an anchor in the act of being forged, a most cyclopean sight. Walter is to call upon the solicitor and appoint him to be with [me] by twelve.

About the reign of Henry VIII. the French took the pile, as it was called, of — — , but were beat off. About the end of the American war, an

individual named John Aitken, or John the Painter, undertook to set the dockyard on fire, and in some degree accomplished his purpose. He had no accomplice, and to support himself committed solitary robberies. Being discovered, he long hung in chains near the outward fortifications. Last night a deputation of the Literary and Philosophical Society of [Portsmouth] came to present me with the honorary freedom of their body, which I accepted with becoming gratitude. There is little credit in gathering the name of a disabled invalid. Here I am, going a long and curious tour without ability to walk a quarter of a mile; quere, what hope of recovery? I think and think in vain, when attempting to trace the progress of this disease and so gradually has my health declined, that I believe it has been acting upon me for ten years, gradually diminishing my strength. My mental faculties may perhaps recover; my bodily strength cannot return unless climate has an effect on the human frame which I cannot possibly believe or comprehend. The safe resolution is, to try no foolish experiments, but make myself as easy as I can, without suffering myself to be vexed about what I cannot help. If I sit on the deck and look at Vesuvius, it will be all I ought to think of.

Having mentioned John the Painter, I may add that it was in this town of Portsmouth that the Duke of Buckingham was stabbed to death by Felton, a fanatic of the same kind with the Incendiary, though perpetrator of a more manly crime. This monster-breeding age can afford both Feltons and John Aitkens in abundance. Every village supplies them, while in fact a deep feeling of the coarsest selfishness furnishes the ruling motive, instead of an affectation of public spirit — that hackneyed affectation of patriotism, as like the reality as a Birmingham halfpenny to a guinea.

The girls, I regret to see, have got a senseless custom of talking politics in all weathers and in all sorts of company. This can do no good, and may give much offence. Silence can offend no one, and there are pleasanter or less irritating subjects to talk of. I gave them both a hint of this, and bid them both remember they were among ordinary strangers. How little young people reflect what they may win or lose by a smart reflection imprudently fired off at a venture!

Mr. Barrow of the Admiralty came and told us the whole fleet, Barham excepted, were ordered to the North Sea to help to bully the King of Holland, and that Captain Pigot, whose motions are of more importance to

us than those of the whole British Navy, sails, as certainly as these things can be prophesied, on Thursday, 27th October.

October 26. — Here we still are, fixed by the inexorable wind. Yesterday we asked a few old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Osborne, and two or three others, to tea and talk. I engaged in a new novel, by Mr. Smith, called New Forest. It is written in an old style, calculated to meet the popular ideas — somewhat like "Man as he is not" and that class. The author's opinions seem rather to sit loose upon him and to be adopted for the nonce and not very well brought out. His idea of a hero is an American philosopher with all the affected virtues of a Republican which no man believes in.

This is very tiresome — not to be able to walk abroad for an instant, but to be kept in this old house which they call "The Fountain," a mansion made of wood in imitation of a ship. The timbers were well tried last night during the squall. The barometer has sunk an inch very suddenly, which seems to argue a change, and probably a deliverance from port. Sir Michael Seymour, Mr. Harris, Captain Lawrence came to greet us after breakfast; also Sir James Graham. They were all learned on this change of weather which seems to be generally expected. I had a good mess of Tory chat with Mr. Harris. We hope to see his daughters in the evening. He keeps his courage amid the despair of too many of his party. About one o'clock our Kofle, as Mungo Park words it, set out, self excluded, to witness the fleet sailing from the ramparts.

October 27. — The weather is more moderate and there is a chance of our sailing. We whiled away our time as we could, relieved by several kind visits. We realised the sense of hopeless expectation described by Fielding in his Voyage to Lisbon, which identical tract Captain Hall, who in his eagerness to be kind seems in possession of the wishing-cap of Fortunatus, was able to provide for us. Tomorrow is spoken of as certainly a day to move.

October 28. — But the wind is as unfavourable as ever and I take a hobbling morning walk upon the rampart, where I am edified by a goodnatured officer who shows me the place, marked by a buoy, where the Royal George went down "with twice four hundred men." Its hull forms a shoal which is still in existence, a neglect scarcely reconcilable with the

splendour of our proceedings where our navy is concerned. Saw a battle on the rampart between two sailor boys, who fought like gamecocks. Returned to "The Fountain," to a voluminous breakfast. Captain Pigot calls, with little hope of sailing to-day. I made my civil affidavit yesterday to a master extraordinary in Chancery, which I gave to Sophia last night.

October 29 (The Barham). — The weather is changed and I think we shall sail. Captain Forbes comes with offer of the Admiral Sir Michael Seymour's barge, but we must pause on our answer. I have had a very disturbed night. Captain Pigot's summons is at length brought by his own announcement, and the same time the Admiral's barge attends for our accommodation and puts us and our baggage on board the Barham, a beautiful ship, a 74 cut down to a 50, and well deserving all the commendations bestowed on her. The weather a calm which is almost equal to a favourable wind, so we glide beautifully along by the Isle of Wight and the outside of the island. We landsfolk feel these queerish sensations, when, without being in the least sick, we are not quite well. We dine enormously and take our cot at nine o'clock, when we sleep undisturbed till seven.

October 30. — Find the Bill of Portland in sight, having run about forty miles during the night. About the middle of the day turn sea-sick and retire to my berth for the rest of the evening.

October 31. — A sleepless night and a bilious morning, yet not so very uncomfortable as the phrase may imply. The bolts clashed, and made me dream of poor Bran. The wind being nearly completely contrary, we have by ten o'clock gained Plymouth and of course will stand westward for Cape Finisterre; terrible tossing and much sea-sickness, beating our passage against the turn. I may as well say we had a parting visit from Lady Graham, who came off in a steamer, saluted us in the distance and gave us by signal her "bon voyage." On Sunday we had prayers and Service from Mr. Marshall, our Chaplain, a Trinity College youth, who made a very respectable figure.

November

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November 1. — The night was less dismal than yesterday, and we hold our course, though with an unfavourable wind, and make, it is said, about forty miles progress. After all, this sort of navigation recommends the steamer, which forces its way whether the breeze will or no.

November 2. — Wind as cross as two sticks, with nasty squalls of wind and rain. We keep dodging about the Lizard and Land's End without ever getting out of sight of these interesting terminations of Old England. Keep the deck the whole day though bitter cold. Betake myself to my berth at nine, though it is liker to my coffin.

November 3. — Sea-sickness has pretty much left us, but the nights are far from voluptuous, as Lord Stowell says. After breakfast I established myself in the after-cabin to read and write as well as I can, whereof this is a bad specimen.

November 4. — The current unfavourable, and the ship pitching a great deal; yet the vessel on the whole keeps her course, and we get on our way with hope of reaching Cape Finisterre when it shall please God.

November 5. — We still creep on this petty pace from day to day without being able to make way, but also without losing any. Meanwhile, Fröhlich! we become freed from the nausea and disgust of the sea-sickness and are chirruping merrily. Spend the daylight chiefly on deck, where the sailors are trained in exercising the great guns on a new sort of carriage called, from the inventor, Marshall's, which seems ingenious.

November 6. — No progress to-day; the ship begins to lay her course but makes no great way. Appetite of the passengers excellent, which we amuse at the expense of the sea stock. Cold beef and biscuit. I feel myself very helpless on board, but everybody is ready to assist me.

November 7. — The wind still holds fair, though far from blowing steadily,

but by fits and variably. No object to look at —

> "One wide water all around us,
> All above us one 'grey' sky."

There are neither birds in the air, fish in the sea, nor objects on face of the waters. It is odd that though once so great a smoker I now never think on a cigar; so much the better.

November 8. — As we begin to get southward we feel a milder and more pleasing temperature, and the wind becomes decidedly favourable when we have nearly traversed the famous Bay of Biscay. We now get into a sort of trade wind blowing from the East.

November 9. — This morning run seventy miles from twelve at night. This is something like going. Till now, bating the rolling and pitching, we lay

> "… as idle as a painted ship
> Upon a painted ocean."

November 10. — Wind changes and is both mild and favourable. We pass Cape Ortegal, see a wild cluster of skerries or naked rocks called Berlingas rising out of the sea like M'Leod's Maidens off the Isle of Skye.

November 11. — Wind still more moderate and fair, yet it is about eleven knots an hour. We pass Oporto and Lisbon in the night. See the coast of Portugal: a bare wild country, with here and there a church or convent. If it keeps fair this evening we [make] Gibraltar, which would be very desirable. Our sailors have been exercised at a species of sword exercise, which recalls many recollections.

November 12. — The favourable wind gets back to its quarters in the southwest, and becomes what the Italians call the Sirocco, abominated for its debilitating qualities. I cannot say I feel them, but I dreamt dreary dreams all night, which are probably to be imputed to the Sirocco. After all, it is not an uncomfortable wind to a Caledonian wild and stern. Ink won't serve.

November 13. — The wind continues unaccommodating all night, and we see nothing, although we promised ourselves to have seen Gibraltar, or at least Tangiers, this morning, but we are disappointed of both. Tangiers reminded me of my old Antiquarian friend Auriol Hay Drummond, who is Consul there. Certainly if a human voice could have made its hail heard through a league or two of contending wind and wave, it must have been Auriol Drummond's. I remember him at a dinner given by some of his friends when he left Edinburgh, where he discharged a noble part "self pulling like Captain Crowe 'for dear life, for dear life' against the whole boat's crew," speaking, that is, against 30 members of a drunken company and maintaining the predominance. Mons Meg was at that time his idol. He had a sort of avarice of proper names, and, besides half a dozen which were his legitimately, he had a claim to be called Garvadh, which uncouth appellation he claimed on no very good authority to be the ancient name of the Hays — a tale. I loved him dearly; he had high spirits, a zealous faith, good-humour, and enthusiasm, and it grieves me that I must pass within ten miles of him and leave him unsaluted; for mercy-a-ged what a yell of gratitude would there be! I would put up with a good rough gale which would force us into Tangiers and keep us there for a week, but the wind is only in gentle opposition, like a well-drilled spouse. Gibraltar we shall see this evening, Tangiers becomes out of the question. Captain says we will lie by during the night, sooner than darkness shall devour such an object of curiosity, so we must look sharp for the old rock.

November 14. — The horizon is this morning full of remembrances. Cape St. Vincent, Cape Spartel, Tarifa, Trafalgar — all spirit-stirring sounds, are within our ken, and recognised with enthusiasm both by the old sailors whose memory can reinvest them with their terrors, and by the naval neophytes who hope to emulate the deeds of their fathers. Even a non-combatant like myself feels his heart beat faster and fuller, though it is only with the feeling of the unworthy boast of the substance in the fable, nos poma natamus.

I begin to ask myself, Do I feel any symptoms of getting better from the climate? — which is delicious, — and I cannot reply with the least consciousness of certainty; I cannot in reason expect it should be otherwise: the failure of my limbs has been gradual, and it cannot be expected that an

infirmity which at least a year's bad weather gradually brought on should diminish before a few mild and serene days, but I think there is some change to the better; I certainly write easier and my spirits are better. The officers compliment me on this, and I think justly. The difficulty will be to abstain from working hard, but we will try. I wrote to Mr. Cadell to-day, and will send my letter ashore to be put into Gibraltar with the officer who leaves us at that garrison. In the evening we saw the celebrated fortress, which we had heard of all our lives, and which there is no possibility of describing well in words, though the idea I had formed of it from prints, panoramas, and so forth, proved not very inaccurate. Gibraltar, then, is a peninsula having a tremendous precipice on the Spanish side — that is, upon the north, where it is united to the mainland by a low slip of land called the neutral ground. The fortifications which rise on the rock are innumerable, and support each other in a manner accounted a model of modern art; the northern face of the rock itself is hewn into tremendous subterranean batteries called the hall of Saint George, and so forth, mounted with guns of a large calibre. But I have heard it would be difficult to use them, from the effect of the report on the artillerymen. The west side of the fortress is not so precipitous as the north, and it is on this it has been usually assailed. It bristles with guns and batteries, and has at its northern extremity the town of Gibraltar, which seems from the sea a thriving place, and from thence declines gradually to Cape Europa, where there is a great number of remains of old caverns and towers, formerly the habitation or refuge of the Moors. At a distance, and curving into a bay, lie Algeciras, and the little Spanish town of Saint Roque, where the Spanish lines were planted during the siege. From Europa Point the eastern frontier of Gibraltar runs pretty close to the sea, and arises in a perpendicular face, and it is called the back of the rock. No thought could be entertained of attacking it, although every means were used to make the assault as general as possible. The efforts sustained by such extraordinary means as the floating batteries were entirely directed against the defences on the west side, which, if they could have been continued for a few days with the same fury with which they commenced, must have worn out the force of the garrison. The assault had continued for several hours without success on either side, when a private man of the artillery, his eye on the floating batteries, suddenly called with ecstasy, "She burns, by G — — !"; and first that vessel and then others

were visibly discovered to be on fire, and the besiegers' game was decidedly up.

We stood into the Bay of Gibraltar and approached the harbour firing a gun and hoisting a signal for a boat: one accordingly came off — a man-of-war's boat — but refused to have any communication with us on account of the quarantine, so we can send no letters ashore, and after some pourparlers, Mr. L — — , instead of joining his regiment, must remain on board. We learned an unpleasant piece of news. There has been a tumult at Bristol and some rioters shot, it is said fifty or sixty. I would flatter myself that this is rather good news, since it seems to be no part of a formed insurrection, but an accidental scuffle in which the mob have had the worst, and which, like Tranent, Manchester, and Bonnymoor, have always had the effect of quieting the people and alarming men of property. The Whigs will find it impossible to permit men to be plundered by a few blackguards called by them the people, and education and property probably will recover an ascendency which they have only lost by faintheartedness.

We backed out of the Bay by means of a current to the eastward, which always runs thence, admiring in our retreat the lighting up the windows in the town and the various barracks or country seats visible on the rock. Far as we are from home, the general lighting up of the windows in the evening reminds us we are still in merry old England, where in reverse of its ancient law of the curfew, almost every individual, however humble his station, takes as of right a part of the evening for enlarging the scope of his industry or of his little pleasures. He trims his lamp to finish at leisure some part of his task, which seems in such circumstances almost voluntary, while his wife prepares the little meal which is to be its legitimate reward. But this happy privilege of English freemen has ceased. One happiness it is, they will soon learn their error.

November 15. — I had so much to say about Gibraltar that I omitted all mention of the Strait, and more distant shores of Spain and Barbary, which form the extreme of our present horizon; they are highly interesting. A chain of distant mountains sweep round Gibraltar, bold peaked, well defined, and deeply indented; the most distinguishable points occasionally garnished with an old watchtower to afford protection against a corsair. The mountains seemed like those of the first formation, liker, in other words, to the Highlands than those of the South of Scotland. The chains of hills in

Barbary are of the same character, but more lofty and much more distant, being, I conceive, a part of the celebrated ridge of Atlas.

Gibraltar is one of the pillars of Hercules, Ceuta on the Moorish side is well known to be the other; to the westward of a small fortress garrisoned by the Spaniards is the Hill of Apes, the corresponding pillar to Gibraltar. There is an extravagant tradition that there was once a passage under the sea from the one fortress to the other, and that an adventurous governor, who puzzled his way to Ceuta and back again, left his gold watch as a prize to him who had the courage to go to seek it.

We are soon carried by the joint influence of breeze and current to the African side of the straits, and coast nearly along a wild shore formed of mountains, like those of Spain, of varied form and outline. No churches, no villages, no marks of human hand are seen. The chain of hills show a mockery of cultivation, but it is only wild heath intermingled with patches of barren sand. I look in vain for cattle or flocks of sheep, and Anne as vainly entertains hopes of seeing lions and tigers on a walk to the seashore. The land of this wild country seems to have hardly a name. The Cape which we are doubling has one, however — the Cape of the Three Points. That we might not be totally disappointed we saw one or two men engaged apparently in ploughing, distinguished by their turbans and the long pikes which they carried. Dr. Liddell says that on former occasions he has seen flocks and shepherds, but the war with France has probably laid the country waste.

November 16. — When I waked about seven found that we had the town of Oran twelve or fourteen miles off astern. It is a large place on the seabeach, near the bottom of a bay, built close and packed together as Moorish [towns], from Fez to Timbuctoo, usually are. A considerable hill runs behind the town, which seems capable of holding 10,000 inhabitants. The hill up to its eastern summit is secured by three distinct lines of fortification, made probably by the Spanish when Oran was in their possession; latterly it belonged to the State of Algiers; but whether it has yielded to the French or not we have no means of knowing. A French schooner of eighteen guns seems to blockade the harbour. We show our colours, and she displays hers, and then resumes her cruise, looking as if she resumed her blockade. This would infer that the place is not yet in French hands. However, we have in any event no business with Oran,

whether African or French. Bristol is a more important subject of consideration, but I cannot learn there are papers on board. One or two other towns we saw on this dreary coast, otherwise nothing but a hilly coast covered with shingle and gum cistus.

November 17. — In the morning we are off Algiers, of which Captain Pigot's complaisance afforded a very satisfactory sight. It is built on a sloping hill, running down to the sea, and on the water side is extremely strong; a very strong mole or causeway enlarges the harbour, by enabling them to include a little rocky island, and mount immense batteries, with guns of great number and size. It is a wonder, in the opinion of all judges, that Lord Exmouth's fleet was not altogether cut to pieces. The place is of little strength to the land; a high turreted wall of the old fashion is its best defence. When Charles V. attacked Algiers, he landed in the bay to the east of the town, and marched behind it. He afterwards reached what is still called the Emperor's fort, a building more highly situated than any part of the town, and commanding the wall which surrounds it. The Moors did not destroy this. When Bourmont landed with the French, unlike Charles V., that general disembarked to the westward of Algiers, and at the mouth of a small river; he then marched into the interior, and, fetching a circuit, presented himself on the northern side of the town. Here the Moors had laid a simple stratagem for the destruction of the invading army. The natives had conceived they would rush at once to the fort of the Emperor, which they therefore mined, and expected to destroy a number of the enemy by its explosion. This obvious device of war was easily avoided, and General Bourmont, in possession of the heights, from which Algiers is commanded, had no difficulty in making himself master of the place. The French are said now to hold their conquests with difficulty, owing to a general commotion among the Moorish chiefs, of whom the Bey was the nominal sovereign. To make war on these wild tribes would be to incur the disaster of the Emperor Julian; to neglect their aggressions is scarcely possible.

Algiers has at first an air of diminutiveness inferior to its fame in ancient and modern times. It rises up from the shore like a wedge, composed of a large mass of close-packed white houses, piled as thick on each other as they can stand; white-terraced roofs, and without windows, so the number of its inhabitants must be immense, in comparison to the ground the buildings occupy — not less, perhaps, than 30,000 men. Even from the

distance we view it, the place has a singular Oriental look, very dear to the imagination. The country around Algiers is [of] the same hilly description with the ground on which the town is situated — a bold hilly tract. The shores of the bay are studded with villas, and exhibit enclosures: some used for agriculture, some for gardens, one for a mosque, with a cemetery around it. It is said they are extremely fertile; the first example we have seen of the exuberance of the African soil. The villas, we are told, belong to the Consular Establishment. We saw our own, who, if at home, put no remembrance upon us. Like the Cambridge Professor and the elephant, "We were a paltry beast," and he would not see us, though we drew within cannon [shot], and our fifty 36-pounders might have attracted some attention. The Moors showed their old cruelty on a late occasion. The crews of two foreign vessels having fallen into their hands by shipwreck, they murdered twothirds of them in cold blood. There are reports of a large body of French cavalry having shown itself without the town. It is also reported by Lieutenant Walker, that the Consul hoisted, comme de raison, a British flag at his country house, so our vanity is safe.

We leave Algiers and run along the same kind of heathy, cliffy, barren reach of hills, terminating in high lines of serrated ridges, and scarce showing an atom of cultivation, but where the mouth of a river or a sheltering bay has encouraged the Moors to some species of fortification.

November 18. — Still we are gliding along the coast of Africa, with a steady and unruffled gale; the weather delicious. Talk of an island of wild goats, by name Golita; this species of deer-park is free to every one for shooting upon — belongs probably to the Algerines or Tunisians, whom circumstances do not permit to be very scrupulous in asserting their right of dominion; but Dr. Liddell has himself been present at a grand chasse of the goats, so the thing is true.

The wild sinuosities of the land make us each moment look to see a body of Arabian cavalry wheel at full gallop out of one of these valleys, scour along the beach, and disappear up some other recess of the hills. In fact we see a few herds, but a red cow is the most formidable monster we have seen.

A general day of exercise on board, as well great guns as small arms. It was very entertaining to see the men take to their quarters with the unanimity of an individual. The marines shot a target to pieces, the boarders

scoured away to take their position on the yards with cutlass and pistol. The exhibition continued two hours, and was loud enough to have alarmed the shores, where the Algerines might, if they had thought fit, have imputed the firing to an opportune quarrel between the French and British, and have shouted "Allah Kerim" — God is merciful! This was the Dey's remark when he heard that Charles X. was dethroned by the Parisians.

We are near an African Cape called Bugiaroni, where, in the last war, the Toulon fleet used to trade for cattle.

November 19. — Wind favourable during night, dies away in the morning, and blows in flurries rather contrary. The steamboat packet, which left Portsmouth at the same time with us, passes us about seven o'clock, and will reach a day or two before us. We are now off the coast of Tunis: not so high and rocky as that of Algiers, and apparently much more richly cultivated. A space of considerable length along shore, between a conical hill called Mount Baluty and Cape Bon, which we passed last night, is occupied by the French as a coral fishery. They drop heavy shot by lines on the coral rocks and break off fragments which they fish up with nets. The Algerines, seizing about 200 Neapolitans thus employed gave rise to the bombardment of their town by Lord Exmouth. All this coast is picturesquely covered with enclosures and buildings and is now clothed with squally weather. One hill has a smoky umbrella displayed over its peak, which is very like a volcano — many islets and rocks bearing the Italian names of sisters, brothers, dogs, and suchlike epithets. The view is very striking, with varying rays of light and of shade mingling and changing as the wind rises and falls. About one o'clock we pass the situation of ancient Carthage, but saw no ruins, though such are said to exist. A good deal of talk about two ancient lakes called — — ; I knew the name, but little more. We passed in the evening two rocky islands, or skerries, rising straight out of the water, called Gli Fratelli or The Brothers.

November 20. — A fair wind all night, running at the merry rate of nine knots an hour. In the morning we are in sight of the highest island, Pantellaria, which the Sicilians use as a state prison, a species of Botany Bay. We are about thirty miles from the burning island — I mean Graham's — but neither that nor Etna make their terrors visible. At noon Graham's Island appears, greatly diminished since last accounts. We got out the boats

and surveyed this new production of the earth with great interest. Think I have got enough to make a letter to our Royal Society and friends at Edinburgh. Lat. 37° 10’ 31” N., long. 12° 40’ 15” E., lying north and south by compass, by Mr. Bokely, the Captain’s clerk[‘s measurements]. Returned on board at dinner-time.

November 21. — Indifferent night. In the morning we are running off Gozo, a subordinate island to Malta, intersected with innumerable enclosures of drystone dykes similar to those used in Selkirkshire, and this likeness is increased by the appearance of sundry square towers of ancient days. In former times this was believed to be Calypso’s island, and the cave of the enchantress is still shown. We saw the entrance from the deck, as rude a cavern as ever opened out of a granite rock. The place of St. Paul’s shipwreck is also shown, no doubt on similarly respectable authority.

At last we opened Malta, an island, or rather a city, like no other in the world. The seaport, formerly the famous Valetta, comes down to the seashore. On the one side lay the [Knights], on the other side lay the Turks, who finally got entire possession of it, while the other branch remained in the power of the Christians. Mutual cruelties were exercised; the Turks, seizing on the survivors of the knights who had so long defended St. Elmo, cut the Maltese cross on the bodies of the slain, and, tying them to planks, let them drift with the receding tide into the other branch of the harbour still defended by the Christians. The GrandMaster, in resentment of this cruelty, caused his Turkish prisoners to be decapitated and their heads thrown from mortars into the camp of the infidels.

November 22. — To-day we entered Malta harbour, to quarantine, which is here very strict. We are condemned by the Board of Quarantine to ten days’ imprisonment or sequestration, and go in the Barham’s boat to our place of confinement, built by a GrandMaster named Manuel for a palace for himself and his retinue. It is spacious and splendid, but not comfortable; the rooms connected one with another by an arcade, into which they all open, and which forms a delightful walk. If I was to live here a sufficient time I think I could fit the apartments up so as to be handsome, and even imposing, but at present they are only kept as barracks for the infirmary or lazaretto. A great number of friends come to see me, who are not allowed to approach nearer than a yard. This, as the whole affair is a farce, is ridiculous

enough. We are guarded by the officers of health in a peculiar sort of livery or uniform with yellow neck, who stroll up and down with every man that stirs — and so mend the matter. My friends Captain and Mrs. Dawson, the daughter and son-in-law of the late Lord Kinnedder, occupying as military quarters one end of the Manuel palace, have chosen to remain, though thereby subjected to quarantine, and so become our fellows in captivity. Our good friend Captain Pigot, hearing some exaggerated report of our being uncomfortably situated, came himself in his barge with the purpose of reclaiming his passengers rather than we should be subjected to the least inconvenience. We returned our cordial thanks, but felt we had already troubled him sufficiently. We dine with Captain and Mrs. Dawson, sleep in our new quarters, and, notwithstanding mosquito curtains and iron bedsteads, are sorely annoyed by vermin, the only real hardship we have to complain of since the tossing on the Bay of Biscay, and which nothing could save us from.

Les Maltois ne se mariaient jamais dans le mois de mai. Ils espérèrent si mal des ouvrages de tout genre commencé durant son cours qu'ils ne se faisaient pas couper d'habits pendant ce mois.

The same superstition still prevails in Scotland.

November 23. — This is a splendid town. The sea penetrates it in several places with creeks formed into harbours, surrounded by buildings, and these again covered with fortifications. The streets are of very unequal height, and as there has been no attempt at lowering them, the greatest variety takes place between them; and the singularity of the various buildings, leaning on each other in such a bold, picturesque, and uncommon manner, suggests to me ideas for finishing Abbotsford by a screen on the west side of the old barn and with a fanciful wall decorated with towers, to enclose the bleaching green — watchtowers such as these, of which I can get drawings while I am here. Employed the forenoon in writing to Lockhart. I am a little at a loss what account to give of myself. Better I am decidedly in spirit, but rather hampered by my companions, who are neither desirous to follow my amusements, nor anxious that I should adopt theirs. I am getting on with this Siege of Malta very well. I think if I continue, it will be ready in a very short time, and I will get the opinion of others, and if my charm hold I will be able to get home through Italy — and take up my own trade again.

November 24. — We took the quarantine boat and visited the outer harbour or great port, in which the ships repose when free from their captivity. The British ships of war are there, — a formidable spectacle, as they all carry guns of great weight. If they go up the Levant as reported, they are a formidable weight in the bucket. I was sensible while looking at them of the truth of Cooper's description of the beauty of their build, their tapering rigging and masts, and how magnificent it looks as

> "Hulking and vast the gallant warship rides!"

We had some pride in looking at the Barham, once in a particular manner our own abode. Captain Pigot and some of his officers dined with us at our house of captivity. By a special grace our abode here is to be shortened one day, so we leave on Monday first, which is an indulgence. To-day we again visit Dragut's Point. The guardians who attend to take care that we quarantines do not kill the people whom we meet, tell some stories of this famous corsair, but I scarce can follow their Arabic. I must learn it, though, for the death of Dragut would be a fine subject for a poem, but in the meantime I will proceed with my Knights.

[November 25-30.] — By permission of the quarantine board we were set at liberty, and lost no time in quitting the dreary fort of Don Manuel, with all its mosquitoes and its thousands of lizards which [stand] shaking their heads at you like their brother in the new Arabian tale of Daft Jock. My son and daughter are already much tired of the imprisonment. I myself cared less about it, but it is unpleasant to be thought so very unclean and capable of poisoning a whole city. We took our guardians' boat and again made a round of the harbour; were met by Mrs. Bathurst's carriage, and carried to my very excellent apartment at Beverley's Hotel. In passing I saw something of the city, and very comical it was; but more of that hereafter. At or about four o'clock we went to our old habitation the Barham, having promised again to dine in the Ward room, where we had a most handsome dinner, and were dismissed at halfpast six, after having the pleasure to receive and give a couple hours of satisfaction. I took the boat from the chair, and was a little afraid of the activity of my assistants, but it all went off capitally; went to Beverley's and bed in quiet.

At two o'clock Mrs. Col. Bathurst transported me to see the Metropolitan Church of St. John, by far the most magnificent place I ever saw in my life; its huge and ample vaults are of the Gothic order. The floor is of marble, each stone containing the inscription of some ancient knight adorned with a patent of mortality and an inscription recording his name and family. For instance, one knight I believe had died in the infidels' prison; to mark his fate, one stone amid the many-coloured pavement represents a door composed of grates (iron grates I mean), displaying behind them an interior which a skeleton is in vain attempting to escape from by bursting the bars. If you conceive he has pined in his fetters there for centuries till dried in the ghastly image of death himself, it is a fearful imagination. The roof which bends over this scene of death is splendidly adorned with carving and gilding, while the varied colours and tinctures both above and beneath, free from the tinselly effect which might have been apprehended, [acquire a] solemnity in the dim religious light, which they probably owe to the lapse of time. Besides the main aisle, which occupies the centre, there is added a chapter-house in which the knights were wont to hold their meetings. At the upper end of this chapter-house is the fine Martyrdom of St. John the Baptist, by Caravaggio, though this has been disputed. On the left hand of the body of the church lie a series of subordinate aisles or chapels, built by the devotion of the different languages, and where some of the worthies inhabit the vaults beneath. The other side of the church is occupied in the same manner; one chapel in which the Communion was imparted is splendidly adorned by a row of silver pillars, which divided the worshippers from the priest. Immense riches had been taken from this chapel of the Holy Sacrament by the French; a golden lamp of great size, and ornaments to the value of 50,000 crowns are mentioned in particular; the rich railing had not escaped the soldiers' rapacity had it not been painted to resemble wood. I must visit this magnificent church another time. To-day I have done it at the imminent risk of a bad fall. We drove out to see a Maltese village, highly ornamented in the usual taste. Mrs. Bathurst was so good as to take me in her carriage. We dined with Colonel Bathurst.

November 26. — I visited my old and much respected friend, Mr. John Hookham Frere, and was much gratified to see him the same man I had always known him, — perhaps a little indolent; but that's not much. A good

Tory as ever, when the love of many is waxed cold. At night a grand ball in honour of your humble servant — about four hundred gentlemen and ladies. The former mostly British officers of army, navy, and civil service. Of the ladies, the island furnished a fair proportion — - I mean viewed in either way. I was introduced to a mad Italian improvisatore, who was with difficulty prevented from reciting a poem in praise of the King, and imposing a crown upon my head, nolens volens. Some of the officers, easily conceiving how disagreeable this must have been to a quiet man, got me out of the scrape, and I got home about midnight; but remain unpoetised and unspeeched.

November 28. — I have made some minutes, some observations, and could do something at my Siege; but I do not find my health gaining ground. I visited Frere at Sant' Antonio: a beautiful place with a splendid garden, which Mr. Frere will never tire of, unless some of his family come to carry him home by force.

November 29. — Lady Hotham was kind enough to take me a drive, and we dined with them — a very pleasant party. I picked up some anecdotes of the latter siege.

Make another pilgrimage, escorted by Captain Pigot and several of his officers. We took a more accurate view of this splendid structure [Church of St. John]. I went down into the vaults and made a visiting acquaintance with La Valette, whom, greatly to my joy, I found most splendidly provided with a superb sepulchre of bronze, on which he reclines in the full armour of a Knight of Chivalrie.

December

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December 1. — There are two good libraries, on a different plan and for different purposes — a modern subscription library that lends its own books, and an ancient foreign library which belonged to the Knights, but does not lend books. Its value is considerable, but the funds unfortunately are shamefully small; I may do this last some good. I have got in a present from Frere the prints of the Siege of Malta, very difficult to understand, and on loan from Mr. Murray, Agent of the Navy Office, the original of Boiardo, to be returned through Mr. Murray, Albemarle Street. Mr. Murray is very goodnatured about it.

December 2. — My chief occupation has been driving with Frere. Dr. Liddell declines a handsome fee. I will want to send some oranges to the children. I am to go with Col. Bathurst to-day as far as to wait on the bishop. My old friend Sir John Stoddart's daughter is to be married to a Captain Atkinson. Rode with Frere. Much recitation.

December 6. — Captain Pigot inclines to take me on with him to Naples, after which he goes to Tunis on Government service. This is an offer not to be despised, though at the expense of protracting the news from Scotland, which I engage to provide for in case of the worst, by offering Mr. Cadell a new romance, to be called The Siege of Malta, which if times be as they were when I came off, should be thankful[ly received] at a round sum, paying back not only what is overdrawn, but supplying finances during the winter.

December 10, [Naples]. — I ought to say that before leaving Malta I went to wait on the Archbishop: a fine old gentleman, very handsome, and one of the priests who commanded the Maltese in their insurrection against the French. I took the freedom to hint that as he had possessed a journal of this blockade, it was but due to his country and himself to give it to the public, and offered my assistance. He listened to my suggestion, and seemed pleased with the proposal, which I repeated more than once, and apparently with success. Next day the Bishop returned my visit in full state, attended by his clergy, and superbly dressed in costume, the pearls being

very fine. (The name of this fine old dignitary of the Romish Church is Don Francis Caruana, Bishop of Malta.)

The last night we were at Malta we experienced a rude shock of an earthquake, which alarmed me, though I did not know what it was. It was said to foretell that the ocean, which had given birth to Graham's Island, had, like Pelops, devoured its own offspring, and we are told it is not now visible, and will be, perhaps, hid from those who risk the main; but as we did not come near its latitude we cannot say from our own knowledge that the news is true. I found my old friend Frere as fond as ever of old ballads. He took me out almost every day, and favoured me with recitations of the Cid and the continuation of Whistlecraft. He also acquainted me that he had made up to Mr. Coleridge the pension of £200 from the Board of Literature out of his own fortune.

December 13, [Naples]. — We left Malta on this day, and after a most picturesque voyage between the coast of Sicily and Malta arrived here on the 17th, where we were detained for quarantine, whence we were not dismissed till the day before Christmas. I saw Charles, to my great joy, and agreed to dine with his master, Right Hon. Mr. Hill, resolving it should be my first and last engagement at Naples. Next morning much struck with the beauty of the Bay of Naples. It is insisted that my arrival has been a signal for the greatest eruption from Vesuvius which that mountain has favoured us with for many a day. I can only say, as the Frenchman said of the comet supposed to foretell his own death, "Ah, messieurs, la comète me fait trop d'honneur." Of letters I can hear nothing. There are many English here, of most of whom I have some knowledge.

December 25, [Bay of Naples]. — We are once more fairly put into quarantine. Captain Pigot does not, I think, quite understand the freedom his flag is treated with, and could he find law for so doing would try his long thirty-six pounders on the town of Naples and its castles; not to mention a sloop of ten guns which has ostentatiously entered the Bay to assist them. Lord knows we would make ducks and drakes of the whole party with the Barham's terrible battery!

There is a new year like to begin and no news from Britain. By and by I will be in the condition of those who are sick and in prison, and entitled to visits and consolation on principles of Christianity.

December 26, [Strada Nuova]. — Went ashore; admitted to pratique, and were received here. Walter has some money left, which we must use or

try a begging-box, for I see no other resource, since they seem to have abandoned me so. Go ashore each day to sight-seeing. Have the pleasure to meet Mr. and Mrs. Laing-Meason of Lindertis, and have their advice and assistance and company in our wanderings almost every day. Mr. Meason has made some valuable remarks on the lava where the villas of the middle ages are founded: the lava shows at least upon the ancient maritime villas of the Romans; so the boot of the moderns galls the kibe of the age preceding them; the reason seems to be the very great durability with which the Romans finished their domestic architecture of maritime arches, by which they admitted the sea into their lower houses.

We were run away with, into the grotto very nearly, but luckily stopped before we entered, and so saved our lives. We have seen the Strada Nuova — a new access of extreme beauty which the Italians owe to Murat.

The Bay of Naples is one of the finest things I ever saw. Vesuvius controls it on the opposite side of the town.

I never go out in the evening, but take airings in the daytime almost daily. The day after Christmas I went to see some old parts of the city, amongst the rest a tower called Torre del Carmine, which figured during the Duke of Guise's adventure, and the gallery of as old a church, where Masaniello was shot at the conclusion of his career. I marked down the epitaph of a former Empress, which is striking and affecting. It would furnish matter for my Tour if I wanted it.

> "Naples, thou'rt a gallant city,
> But thou hast been dearly bought" —

So is King Alphonso made to sum up the praises of this princely town, with the losses which he had sustained in making himself master of it. I looked on it with something of the same feelings, and I may adopt the same train of thought when I recall Lady Northampton, Lady Abercorn, and other friends much beloved who have met their death in or near this city.

1832.

1832 — January

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January 5. — Went by invitation to wait upon a priest, who almost rivals my fighting bishop of Malta. He is the old Bishop of Tarentum, and, notwithstanding his age, eighty and upwards, is still a most interesting man. A face formed to express an interest in whatever passes; caressing manners, and a total absence of that rigid stiffness which hardens the heart of the old and converts them into a sort of petrifaction. Apparently his foible was a fondness for cats; one of them, a superb brindled Persian cat, is a great beauty, and seems a particular favourite. I think we would have got on well together if he could have spoken English, or I French or Latin; but hélas! I once saw at Lord Yarmouth's house a Persian cat, but not quite so fine as that of the Bishop. He gave me a Latin devotional poem and an engraving of himself, and I came home about two o'clock.

January 6 to 12. — We reach the 12th January, amusing ourselves as we can, generally seeing company and taking airings in the forenoon in this fine country. Sir William Gell, a very pleasant man, one of my chief cicerones. Lord Hertford comes to Naples. I am glad to keep up an old acquaintance made in the days of George IV.

He has got a breed from Maida, of which I gave him a puppy. There was a great crowd at the Palazzo, which all persons attended, being the King's birthday. The apartments are magnificent, and the various kinds of persons who came to pay court were splendid. I went with the boys as Brigadier-General of the Archers' Guard, wore a very decent green uniform, laced at the cuffs, and pantaloons, and looked as well as sixty could make it out when sworded and feathered comme il faut. I passed well enough. Very much afraid of a fall on the slippery floor, but escaped that disgrace. The ceremony was very long. I was introduced to many distinguished persons, and, but for the want of language, got on well enough. The King spoke to me about five minutes, of which I hardly understood five words. I answered him in a speech of the same length, and I'll be bound equally unintelligible. We made the general key-tone of the harangue la belle langue et le beau ciel of sa majesté. Very fine dresses, very many diamonds….

A pretty Spanish ambassadress, Countess da Costa, and her husband. Saw the Countess de Lebzeltern, who has made our acquaintance, and seems to be very clever. I will endeavour to see her again. Introduced to another Russian Countess of the diplomacy. Got from Court about two o'clock. I should have mentioned that I had a letter from Skene and one from Cadell, dated as far back as 2d December, a monstrous time ago, [which] yet puts a period to my anxiety. I have written to Cadell for particulars and supplies, and, besides, have written a great many pages of the Siege of Malta, which I think will succeed.

[January 16-23]. — I think £200 a month, or thereby, will do very well, and it is no great advance.

Another piece of intelligence was certainly to be expected, but now it has come afflicts us much. Poor Johnny Lockhart! The boy is gone whom we have made so much of. I could not have borne it better than I now do, and I might have borne it much worse.

I went one evening to the Opera to see that amusement in its birthplace, which is now so widely received over Europe. The Opera House is superb, but can seldom be quite full. On this night, however, it was; the guards, citizens, and all persons dependent on the Court, or having anything to win or lose by it, are expected to take places liberally, and applaud with spirit. The King bowed much on entrance, and was received in a popular manner, which he has no doubt deserved, having relaxed many of his father's violent persecutions against the Liberals, made in some degree an amnesty, and employed many of this character. He has made efforts to lessen his expenses; but then he deals in military affairs, and that swallows up his savings, and Heaven only knows whether he will bring [Neapolitans] to fight, which the Martinet system alone will never do. His health is undermined by epileptic fits, which, with his great corpulence, make men throw their thoughts on his brother Prince Charles. It is a pity. The King is only two-and-twenty years old.

The Opera bustled off without any remarkable music, and, so far as I understand the language, no poetry; and except the coup d'œil, which was magnificent, it was poor work. It was on the subject of Constantine and Crispus — marvellous good matter, I assure you. I came home at halfpast nine, without waiting the ballet, but I was dog-sick of the whole of it. Went to the Studij to-day. I had no answer to my memorial to the Minister of the

Interior, which it seems is necessary to make any copies from the old romances. I find it is an affair of State, and Monsieur — — - can only hope it will be granted in two or three days; — to a man that may leave Naples tomorrow! He offers me a loan of what books I need, Annals included, but this is also a delay of two or three days. I think really the Italian men of letters do not know the use of time made by those of other places, but I must have patience. In the course of my return home I called, by advice of my valet de place, at a bookseller's, where he said all the great messieurs went for books. It had very little the air of a place of such resort, being kept in a garret above a coach-house. Here some twenty or thirty odd volumes were produced by an old woman, but nothing that was mercantile, so I left them for Lorenzo's learned friends. And yet I was sorry too, for the lady who showed them to me was very [civil], and, understanding that I was the famous Chevalier, carried her kindness as far as I could desire. The Italians understand nothing of being in a hurry, but perhaps it is their way.

January 24. — The King grants the favour asked. To be perfect I should have the books [out] of the room, but this seems to [hurt?] Monsieur Delicteriis as he, kind and civil as he is, would hardly [allow] me to take my labours out of the Studij, where there are hosts of idlers and echoes and askers and no understanders of askers. I progress, however, as the Americans say. I have found that Sir William Gell's amanuensis is at present disengaged, and that he is quite the man for copying the romances, which is a plain black letter of 1377, at the cheap and easy rate of 3 quattrons a day. I am ashamed at the lowness of the remuneration, but it will dine him capitally, with a share of a bottle of wine, or, by 'r lady, a whole one if he likes it; and thrice the sum would hardly do that in England. But we dawdle, and that there is no avoiding. I have found another object in the Studij — the language of Naples.

Jany. 2. — One work in this dialect, for such it is, was described to me as a history of ancient Neapolitan legends — quite in my way; and it proves to be a dumpy fat 12mo edition of Mother Goose's Tales, with my old friends Puss in Boots, Bluebeard, and almost the whole stock of this very collection. If this be the original of this charming book, it is very curious, for it shows the right of Naples to the authorship, but there are French editions very early also; — for there are two — whether French or Italian, I

am uncertain — of different dates, both having claims to the original edition, each omitting some tales which the other has.

To what common original we are to refer them the Lord knows. I will look into [this] very closely, and if this same copiator is worth his ears he can help me. My friend Mr. D. will aid me, but I doubt he hardly likes my familiarity with the department of letters in which he has such an extensive and valuable charge. Yet he is very kind and civil, and promises me the loan of a Neapolitan vocabulary, which will set me up for the attack upon Mother Goose. Spirit of Tom Thumb assist me! I could, I think, make a neat thing of this, obnoxious to ridicule perhaps; — what then! The author of Ma Sœur Anne was a clever man, and his tale will remain popular in spite of all gibes and flouts soever. So Vamos Caracci! If it was not for the trifling and dawdling peculiar to this country, I should have time enough, but their trifling with time is the devil. I will try to engage Mr. Gell in two researches in his way and more in mine, namely, the Andrea Ferrara and the Bonnet piece. Mr. Keppel Craven says Andrea de Ferraras are frequent in Italy. Plenty to do if we had alert assistance, but Gell and Laing Meason have both their own matters to puzzle out, and why should they mind my affairs? The weather is very cold, and I am the reverse of the idiot boy —

> "For as my body's growing worse,
> My mind is growing better."

Of this I am distinctly sensible, and thank God that the mist attending this whoreson apoplexy is wearing off.

I went to the Studij and copied Bevis of Hampton, about two pages, for a pattern. From thence to Sir William Gell, and made an appointment at the Studij with his writer tomorrow at ten, when, I trust, I shall find Delicteriis there, but the gentleman with the classical name is rather kind and friendly in his neighbour's behalf.

January 26. — This day arrived (for the first time indeed) answer to last post end of December, an epistle from Cadell full of good tidings. Castle Dangerous and Sir Robert of Paris, neither of whom I deemed seaworthy, have performed two voyages — that is, each sold about 3400, and the same of the current year. It proves what I have thought almost impossible, that I might write myself [out], but as yet my spell holds fast.

I have besides two or three good things on which I may advance with spirit, and with palmy hopes on the part of Cadell and myself. He thinks he will soon cry victoria on the bet about his hat. He was to get a new one when I had paid off all my debts. I can hardly, now that I am assured all is well again, form an idea to myself that I could think it was otherwise.

And yet I think it is the public that are mad for passing those two volumes; but I will not be the first to cry them down in the market, for I have others in hand, which, judged with equal favour, will make fortunes of themselves. Let me see what I have on the stocks —

Castle Dangerous (supposed future Editions), £1000
Robert of Paris, " " " 1000
Lady Louisa Stuart, " " " 500
Knights of Malta, " " " 2500
Trotcosianæ Reliquiæ, " " 2500

I have returned to my old hopes, and think of giving Milne an offer for his estate.

Letters or Tour of Paul in 3 vols. 3000
Reprint of Bevis of Hampton for Roxburghe Club,
Essay on the Neapolitan dialect,

February

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February 10. — We went to Pompeii to-day: a large party, all disposed to enjoy the sight in this fine weather. We had Sir Frederick and Lady Adam, Sir William Gell, the coryphæus of our party, who played his part very well. Miss de la Ferronays, daughter of Monsieur le Duc de la Ferronays, the head, I believe, of the constitutional Royalists, very popular in France, and likely to be called back to the ministry, with two or three other ladies, particularly Mrs. Ashley, born Miss Baillie, very pretty indeed, and lives in the same house. The Countess de la Ferronays has a great deal of talent both musical and dramatic.

February 16. — Sir William Gell called and took me out tonight to a bookseller whose stock was worth looking over.

We saw, among the old buildings of the city, an ancient palace called the Vicaría, which is changed into a prison. Then a new palace was honoured with royal residence instead of the old dungeon. I saw also a fine arch called the Capuan gate, formerly one of the city towers, and a very pretty one. We advanced to see the ruins of a palace said to be a habitation of Queen Joan, and where she put her lovers to death chiefly by potions, thence into a well, smothering them, etc., and other little tenderly trifling matters of gallantry.

March

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March. — Embarked on an excursion to Paestum, with Sir William Gell and Mr. Laing-Meason, in order to see the fine ruins. We went out by Pompeii, which we had visited before, and which fully maintains its character as one of the most striking pieces of antiquity, where the furniture treasure and household are preserved in the excavated houses, just as found by the labourers appointed by Government. The inside of the apartments is adorned with curious paintings, if I may call them such, in mosaic. A meeting between Darius and Alexander is remarkably fine. A street, called the street of Tombs, reaches a considerable way out of the city, having been flanked by tombs on each side as the law directed. The entrance into the town affords an interesting picture of the private life of the Romans. We came next to the vestiges of Herculaneum, which is destroyed like Pompeii but by the lava or molten stone, which cannot be removed, whereas the tufa or volcanic ashes can be with ease removed from Pompeii, which it has filled up lightly. After having refreshed in a cottage in the desolate town, we proceed on our journey eastward, flanked by one set of heights stretching from Vesuvius, and forming a prolongation of that famous mountain. Another chain of mountains seems to intersect our course in an opposite direction and descends upon the town of Castellamare. Different from the range of heights which is prolonged from Vesuvius, this second, which runs to Castellamare, is entirely composed of granite, and, as is always the case with mountains of this formation, betrays no trace of volcanic agency. Its range was indeed broken and split up into specimens of rocks of most romantic appearance and great variety, displaying granite rock as the principal part of its composition. The country on which these hills border is remarkable for its powers of vegetation, and produces vast groves of vine, elm, chestnut, and similar trees, which grow when stuck in by cuttings. The vines produce Lacryma Christi in great quantities — not a bad wine, though the stranger requires to be used to it. The seashore of the Bay of Naples forms the boundary on the right of the country through which our journey lies, and we continue to approach to the granite chain of eminences which stretch before us, as if to bar our passage.

As we advanced to meet the great barrier of cliffs, a feature becomes opposed to us of a very pronounced character, which seems qualified to interrupt our progress. A road leading straight across the branch of hills is carried up the steepest part of the mountain, ascending by a succession of zigzags, which the French laid by scale straight up the hill. The tower is situated upon an artificial eminence, worked to a point and placed in a defensible position between two hills about the same height, the access to which the defenders of the pass could effectually prohibit.

Sir William Gell, whose knowledge of the antiquities of this country is extremely remarkable, acquainted us with the history.

In the middle ages the pasturages on the slope of these hills, especially on the other side, belonged to the rich republic of Amain, who built this tower as an exploratory gazeeboo from which they could watch the motions of the Saracens who were wont to annoy them with plundering excursions; but after this fastness [was built] the people of Amalfi usually defeated and chastised them. The ride over the opposite side of the mountain was described as so uncommonly pleasant as made me long to ride it with assistance of a pony. That, however, was impossible. We arrived at a country house, near a large town situated in a ravine or hollow, which was called La Cava from some concavities which it exhibited.

We were received by Miss Whyte, an English lady who has settled at La Cava, and she afforded us the warmest hospitality that is consistent with a sadly cold chilling house. They may say what they like of the fine climate of Naples — unquestionably they cannot say too much in its favour, but yet when a day or two of cold weather does come, the inhabitants are without the means of parrying the temporary inclemency, which even a Scotsman would scorn to submit to. However, warm or cold, to bed we went, and rising next morning at seven we left La Cava, and, making something like a sharp turn backwards, but keeping nearer to the Gulf of Salerno than in yesterday's journey, and nearer to its shore. We had a good road towards Paestum, and in defiance of a cold drizzling day we went on at a round pace. The country through which we travelled was wooded and stocked with wild animals towards the fall of the hills, and we saw at a nearer distance a large swampy plain, pastured by a singularly bizarre but fierce-looking buffalo, though it might maintain a much preferable stock. This palace of Barranco was anciently kept up for the King's sport, but any young man having a certain degree of interest is allowed to share in the

chase, which it is no longer an object to preserve. The guest, however, if he shoots a deer, or a buffalo, or wild boar, must pay the keeper at a certain fixed price, not much above its price in the market, which a sportsman would hardly think above its worth for game of his own killing. The town of Salerno is a beautiful seaport town, and it is, as it were, wrapt in an Italian cloak hanging round the limbs, or, to speak common sense, the new streets which they are rebuilding. We made no stop at Salerno, but continued to traverse the great plain of that name, within sight of the sea, which is chiefly pastured by that queer-looking brute, the buffalo, concerning which they have a notion that it returns its value sooner, and with less expense of feeding, than any other animal.

At length we came to two streams which join their forces, and would seem to flow across the plain to the bottom of the hills. One, however, flows so flat as almost scarcely to move, and sinking into a kind of stagnant pool is swallowed up by the earth, without proceeding any further until, after remaining buried for two or three [miles?] underground, it again bursts forth to the light, and resumes its course. When we crossed this stream by a bridge, which they are now repairing, we entered a spacious plain, very like that which we had [left] and displaying a similar rough and savage cultivation. Here savage herds were under the guardianship of shepherds as wild as they were themselves, clothed in a species of sheepskins, and carrying a sharp spear with which they herd and sometimes kill their buffaloes. Their farmhouses are in very poor order, and with every mark of poverty, and they have the character of being moved to dishonesty by anything like opportunity; of this there was a fatal instance, but so well avenged that it is not like to be repeated till it has long faded out of memory. The story, I am assured, happened exactly as follows: — A certain Mr. Hunt, lately married to a lady of his own age, and, seeming to have had what is too often the Englishman's characteristic of more money than wit, arrived at Naples a year or two ago en famille, and desirous of seeing all the sights in the vicinity of this celebrated place. Among others Paestum was not forgot. At one of the poor farmhouses where they stopped, the inhabitant set her eyes on a toilet apparatus which was composed of silver and had the appearance of great value. The woman who spread this report addressed herself to a youth who had been [under] arms, and undoubtedly he and his companions showed no more hesitation than the person with whom the idea had originated. Five fellows, not known before this time for

any particular evil, agreed to rob the English gentleman of the treasure of which he had made such an imprudent display. They were attacked by the banditti in several parties, but the principal attack was directed to Mr. Hunt's carriage, a servant of that gentleman being, as well as himself, pulled out of the carriage and watched by those who had undertaken to conduct this bad deed. The man who had been the soldier, probably to keep up his courage, began to bully, talk violently, and strike the valet de place, who screamed out in a plaintive manner, "Do not injure me." His master, hoping to make some impression, said, "Do not hurt my servant," to which the principal brigand replied, "If he dares to resist, shoot him." The man who stood over Mr. Hunt unfortunately took the captain at the word, and his shot mortally wounded the unfortunate gentleman and his wife, who both died next day at our landlady's, Miss Whyte, who had the charity to receive them that they might hear their own language on their deathbed. The Neapolitan Government made the most uncommon exertions. The whole of the assassins were taken within a fortnight, and executed within a week afterwards. In this wild spot, rendered unpleasing by the sad remembrance of so inhuman an accident, and the cottages which served for refuge for so wretched and wild a people, exist the celebrated ruins of Paestum. Being without arms of any kind, the situation was a dreary one, and though I can scarce expect now to defend myself effectually, yet the presence of [illegible] would have been an infinite cordial. The ruins are of very great antiquity, which for a very long time has not been suspected, as it was never supposed that the Sybarites, a luxurious people, were early possessed of a style of architecture simple, chaste, and inconceivably grand, which was lost before the time of Augustus, who is said by Suetonius to have undertaken a journey on purpose to visit these remains of an architecture, the most simple and massive of which Italy at least has any other specimen. The Greeks have specimens of the same kind, but they are composed not of stone, like Paestum, but of marble. All this has been a discovery of recent date. The ruins, which exist without exhibiting much demolition, are three in number. The first is a temple of immense size, having a portico of the largest columns of the most awful species of classic architecture. The roof, which was composed of immense stones, was destroyed, but there are remains of the Cella, contrived for the sacrifices to which the priests and persons of high office were alone [admitted].

A piece of architecture more massive, without being cumbrous or heavy, was never invented by a mason.

A second temple in the same style was dedicated to Ceres as the large one was to Neptune, on whose dominion they looked, and who was the tutelar deity of Paestum, and so called from one of his Greek names. The fane of Ceres is finished with the greatest accuracy and beauty of proportion and taste, and in looking upon it I forgot all the unpleasant feelings which at first oppressed me. The third was not a temple, but a Basilica, or species of townhouse, as it was called, having a third row of pillars running up the middle, between the two which surrounded the sides, and were common to the Basilica and temple both. These surprising public edifices have therefore all a resemblance to each other, though also points of distinction. If Sir William Gell makes clear his theory he will throw a most precious light on the origin of civilisation, proving that the sciences have not sprung at once into light and life, but rose gradually with extreme purity, and continued to be practised best by those who first invented them. Full of these reflections, we returned to our hospitable Miss Whyte in a drizzling evening, but unassassinated, and our hearts completely filled with the magnificence of what we had seen. Miss Whyte had in the meanwhile, by her interest at La Trinità with the Abbot, obtained us permission to pay a visit to him, and an invitation indeed to dinner, which only the weather and the health of Sir William Gell and myself prevented our accepting. After breakfast, therefore, on the 18th of March, we set out for the convent, situated about two or three miles from the town in a very large ravine, not unlike the bed of the Rosslyn river, and traversed by roads which from their steepness and precipitancy are not at all laudable, but the views were beautiful and changing incessantly, while the spring advancing was spreading her green mantle over rock and tree, and making that beautiful which was lately a blighted and sterile thicket. The convent of Trinità itself holds a most superb situation on the projection of an ample rock. It is a large edifice, but not a handsome one — the monks reserving their magnificence for their churches — but was surrounded by a circuit of fortifications, which, when there was need, were manned by the vassals of the convent in the style of the Feudal system. This was in some degree the case at the present day. The Abbot, a gentlemanlike and respectable-looking man, attended by several of his monks, received us with the greatest politeness, and conducted us to the building, where we saw two great

sculptured vases, or more properly sarcophagi, of [marble?], well carved in the antique style, and adorned with the story of Meleager. They were in the shape of a large bath, and found, I think, at Paestum. The old church had passed to decay about a hundred years ago, when the present fabric was built; it is very beautifully arranged, and worthy of the place, which is eminently beautiful, and of the community, who are Benedictines — the most gentlemanlike order in the Roman Church.

We were conducted to the private repertory of the chapel, which contains a number of interesting deeds granted by sovereigns of the Grecian, Norman, and even Saracen descent. One from Roger, king of Sicily, extended His Majesty's protection to some half dozen men of consequence whose names attested their Saracenism.

In all the society I have been since I commenced this tour, I chiefly regretted on the present occasion the not having refreshed my Italian for the purpose of conversation. I should like to have conversed with the Churchmen very much, and they seem to have the same inclination, but it is too late to be thought of, though I could read Italian well once. The church might boast of a grand organ, with fifty-seven stops, all which we heard played by the ingenious organist. We then returned to Miss Whyte's for the evening, ate a mighty dinner, and battled cold weather as we might.

In further remarks on Paestum I may say there is a city wall in wonderful preservation, one of the gates of which is partly entire and displays the figure of a Syren under the architrave, but the antiquity of the sculpture is doubted, though not that of the inner part of the gate — so at least thinks Sir William, our best authority on such matters. Many antiquities have been, and many more probably will be, discovered. Paestum is a place which adds dignity to the peddling trade of the ordinary antiquarian.

March 19. — This morning we set off at seven for Naples; we observed remains of an aqueduct in a narrow, apparently designed for the purpose of leading water to La Cava, but had no time to conjecture on the subject, and took our road back to Pompeii, and passed through two towns of the same name, Nocera dei [Cristiani] and Nocera dei Pagani. In the latter village the Saracens obtained a place of refuge, from which it takes the name. It is also said that the circumstance is kept in memory by the complexion and features of this second Nocera, which are peculiarly of the African caste and

tincture. After we passed Pompeii, where the continued severity of the weather did not permit us, according to our purpose, to take another survey, we saw in the adjacent village between us and Portici the scene of two assassinations, still kept in remembrance. The one I believe was from the motive of plunder. The head of the assassin was set up after his execution upon a pillar, which still exists, and it remained till the skull rotted to pieces. The other was a story less in the common style, and of a more interesting character: — A farmer of an easy fortune, and who might be supposed to leave to his daughter, a very pretty girl and an only child, a fortune thought in the village very considerable. She was, under the hope of sharing such a prize, made up to by a young man in the neighbourhood, handsome, active, and of a very good general character. He was of that sort of person who are generally successful among women, and the girl was supposed to have encouraged his addresses; but her father, on being applied to, gave him a direct and positive refusal. The gallant resolved to continue his addresses in hopes of overcoming this obstacle by his perseverance, but the father's opposition seemed only to increase by the lover's pertinacity. At length, as the father walked one evening smoking his pipe upon the terrace before his door, the lover unhappily passed by, and, struck with the instant thought that the obstacle to the happiness of his life was now entirely in his own power, he rushed upon the father, pierced him with three mortal stabs of his knife, and killed him dead on the spot, and made his escape to the mountains. What was most remarkable was that he was protected against the police, who went, as was their duty, in quest of him, by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who afforded him both shelter and such food as he required, looking on him less as a wilful criminal than an unfortunate man, who had been surprised by a strong and almost irresistible temptation. So congenial, at this moment, is the love of vengeance to an Italian bosom, and though chastised in general by severe punishment, so much are criminals sympathised with by the community.

March 20. — I went with Miss Talbot and Mr. Lushington and his sister to the great and celebrated church of San Domenico Maggiore, which is the most august of the Dominican churches. They once possessed eighteen shrines in this part of Naples. It contains the tomb of St. Thomas Aquinas, and also the tombs of the royal family, which remain in the vestry. There are some large boxes covered with yellow velvet which contain their remains,

and which stand ranged on a species of shelf, formed by the heads of a set of oaken presses which contain the vestments of the monks. The pictures of the kings are hung above their respective boxes, containing their bones, without any other means of preserving them. At the bottom of the lofty and narrow room is the celebrated Marquis di [Pescara], one of Charles V.'s most renowned generals, who commanded at the battle of Pavia…. The church itself is very large and extremely handsome, with many fine marble tombs in a very good style of architecture. The time being now nearly the second week in Lent, the church was full of worshippers.

[While at Naples Sir Walter wrote frequently to his daughter, to Mr. Cadell, Mr. Laidlaw, and Mr. Lockhart. The latter says, "Some of these letters were of a very melancholy cast; for the dream about his debts being all settled was occasionally broken." One may be given here. It is undated, but was written some time after receiving the news of the death of his little grandson, and shows the tender relations which existed between Sir Walter and his son-in-law: —

> "MY DEAR LOCKHART, — I have written with such regularity that … I will not recur to this painful subject. I hope also I have found you both persuaded that the best thing you can do, both of you, is to come out here, where you would find an inestimable source of amusement, many pleasant people, and living in very peaceful and easy society. I wrote you a full account of my own matters, but I have now more complete [information]. I am ashamed, for the first time in my life, of the two novels, but since the pensive public have taken them, there is no more to be said but to eat my pudding and to hold my tongue. Another thing of great interest requires to be specially mentioned. You may remember a work in which our dear and accomplished friend Lady Louisa condescended to take an oar, and which she has handled most admirably. It is a supposed set of extracts relative to James VI. from a collection in James VI.'s time, the costume (?) admirably preserved, and, like the fashionable wigs, more natural than one's own hair. This, with the Lives of the Novelists and some other fragments of my wreck, went ashore in Constable's, and were sold off to the highest bidder, viz., to Cadell, for himself and me. I wrote one

or two fragments in the same style, which I wish should, according to original intention, appear without a name, and were they fairly lightly let off there is no fear of their making a blaze. I sent the whole packet either to yourself or Cadell, with the request. The copy, which I conclude is in your hands by the time this reaches you, might be set up as speedily and quietly as possible, taking some little care to draw the public attention to you, and consulting Lady Louisa about the proofs. The fun is that our excellent friend had forgot the whole affair till I reminded her of her kindness, and was somewhat inclined, like Lady Teazle, to deny the butler and the coach-horse. I have no doubt, however, she will be disposed to bring the matter to an end. The mode of publication I fancy you will agree should rest with Cadell. So, providing that the copy come to hand, which it usually does, though not very regularly, you will do me the kindness to get it out. My story of Malta will be with you by the time you have finished the Letters, and if it succeeds it will in a great measure enable me to attain the long projected and very desirable object of clearing me from all old encumbrances and expiring as rich a man as I could desire in my own freehold. And when you recollect that this has been wrought out in six years, the sum amounting to at least £120,000, it is somewhat of a novelty in literature. I shall be as happy and rich as I please for the last days of my life, and play the good papa with my family without thinking on pounds, shillings, and pence. Cadell, with so fair a prospect before him, is in high spirits, as you will suppose, but I had a most uneasy time from the interruption of our correspondence. However, thank God, it is all as well as I could wish, and a great deal better than I ventured to hope. After the Siege of Malta I intend to close the [series] of Waverley with a poem in the style of the Lay, or rather of the Lady of the Lake, to be a L'Envoy, or final postscript to these tales. The subject is a curious tale of chivalry belonging to Rhodes. Sir Frederick Adam will give me a cast of a steamboat to visit Greece, and you will come and go with me. We live in a Palazzo, which with a coach and the supporters thereof does not, table included, cost £120 or £130 a month. So

you will add nothing to our expenses, but give us the great pleasure of assisting you when I fear literary things have a bad time. We will return to Europe through Germany, and see what peradventure we shall behold. I have written repeatedly to you on this subject, for you would really like this country extremely. You cannot tread on it but you set your foot upon some ancient history, and you cannot make scruple, as it is the same thing whether you or I are paymaster. My health continues good, and bettering, as the Yankees say. I have gotten a choice manuscript of old English Romances, left here by Richard, and for which I know I have got a lad can copy them at a shilling a day. The King has granted me liberty to carry it home with me, which is very goodnatured. I expect to secure something for the Roxburghe Club. Our posts begin to get more regular. I hope dear baby is getting better of its accident, poor soul. — Love to Sophia and Walter.

Your affectionate Father,
Walter SCOTT.]

April

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April 15, Naples. — I am on the eve of leaving Naples after a residence of three or four months, my strength strongly returning, though the weather has been very uncertain. What with the interruption occasioned by the cholera and other inconveniences, I have not done much. I have sent home only the letters by L.L. Stuart and three volumes of the Siege of Malta. I sent them by Lord Cowper's son — Mr. Cowper returning, his leave being out — and two chests of books by the Messrs. Turner, Malta, who are to put them on board a vessel, to be forwarded to Mr. Cadell through Whittaker. I have hopes they will come to hand safe. I have bought a small closing carriage, warranted new and English, cost me £200, for the convenience of returning home. It carries Anne, Charles, and the two servants, and we start tomorrow morning for Rome, after which we shall be starting homeward, for the Greek scheme is blown up, as Sir Frederick Adam is said to be going to Madras, so he will be unable to send a frigate as promised. I have spent on the expenses of medical persons and books, etc., a large sum, yet not excessive.

Meantime we [may] have to add a curious journey of it. The brigands, of whom there are so many stories, are afloat once more, and many carriages stopped. A curious and popular work would be a history of these ruffians. Washington Irving has attempted something of the kind, but the person attempting this should be an Italian, perfectly acquainted with his country, character, and manners. Mr. R — — , an apothecary, told me a singular [occurrence] which happened in Calabria about six years ago, and which I may set down just now as coming from a respectable authority, though I do not [vouch it].

Death of il BIZARRO.

This man was called, from his wily but inexorable temper, Il Bizarro, *i.e.* the Bizar. He was captain of a gang of banditti, whom he governed by his own authority, till he increased them to 1000 men, both on foot and horseback, whom he maintained in the mountains of Calabria, between the French and Neapolitans, both of which he defied, and pillaged the country. High rewards were set upon his head, to very little purpose, as he took care to guard himself against being betrayed by his own gang, the common fate

of those banditti who become great in their vocation. At length a French colonel, whose name I have forgot, occupied the country of Bizarro, with such success that he formed a cordon around him and his party, and included him between the folds of a military column. Wellnigh driven to submit himself, the robber with his wife, a very handsome woman, and a child of a few months old, took a position beneath the arch of an old bridge, and, by an escape almost miraculous, were not perceived by a strong party whom the French maintained on the top of the arch. Night at length came without a discovery, which every moment might have made. When it became quite dark, the brigand, enjoining strictest silence on the female and child, resolved to steal from his place of shelter, and as they issued forth, kept his hand on the child's throat. But as, when they began to move, the child naturally cried, its father in a rage stiffened his grip so relentlessly that the poor infant never offended more in the same manner. This horrid [act] led to the conclusion of the robber's life.

His wife had never been very fond of him, though he trusted her more than any who approached him. She had been originally the wife of another man, murdered by her second husband, which second marriage she was compelled to undergo, and to affect at least the conduct of an affectionate wife. In their wanderings she alone knew where he slept for the night. He left his men in a body upon the top of an open hill, round which they set watches. He then went apart into the woods with his wife, and having chosen a glen — an obscure and deep thicket of the woods, there took up his residence for the night. A large Calabrian sheepdog, his constant attendant, was then tied to a tree at some distance to secure his slumbers, and having placed his carabine within reach of his lair, he consigned himself to such sleep as belongs to his calling. By such precautions he had secured his rest for many years.

But after the death of the child, the measure of his offence towards the unhappy mother was full to the brim, and her thoughts became determined on revenge. One evening he took up his quarters for the night with these precautions, but without the usual success. He had laid his carabine near him, and betaken himself to rest as usual, when his partner arose from his side, and ere he became sensible she had done so, she seized [his carabine], and discharging [it] in his bosom, ended at once his life and crimes. She finished her work by cutting off the brigand's head, and carrying it to the principal town of the province, where she delivered it to the police, and

claimed the reward attached to his head, which was paid accordingly. This female still lives, a stately, dangerous-looking woman, yet scarce ill thought of, considering the provocation.

The dog struggled extremely to get loose on hearing the shot. Some say the female shot it; others that, in its rage, it very nearly gnawed through the stout young tree to which it was tied. He was worthy of a better master.

The distant encampment of the band was disturbed by the firing of the Bizarro's carabine at midnight. They ran through the woods to seek the captain, but finding him lifeless and headless, they became so much surprised that many of them surrendered to the government, and relinquished their trade, and the band of Bizarro, as it lived by his ingenuity, broke up by his death.

A story is told nearly as horrible as the above, respecting the cruelty of this bandit, which seems to entitle him to be called one of the most odious wretches of his name. A French officer, who had been active in the pursuit of him, fell into his hands, and was made to die [the death] of Marsyas or Saint Polycarp — that is, the period being the middle of summer, he was flayed alive, and, being smeared with honey, was exposed to all the intolerable insects of a southern sky. The corps were also informed where they might find their officer if they thought proper to send for him. As more than two days elapsed before the wretched man was found, nothing save his miserable relics could be discovered.

I do not warrant these stories, but such are told currently.

[Tour from Naples to Rome], April 16. — Having remained several months at Naples, we resolved to take a tour to Rome during the Holy Week and view the ecclesiastical shows which take place, although diminished in splendour by the Pope's poverty. So on the 15th we set out from Naples, my children unwell. We passed through the Champ de Mars, and so on by the Terra di Lavoro, a rich and fertile country, and breakfasted at St. Agatha, a wretched place, but we had a disagreeable experience. I had purchased a travelling carriage, assured that it was English-built and all that. However, when we were half a mile on our journey, a bush started and a wheel came off, but by dint of contrivances we fought our way back to Agatha, where we had a miserable lodging and wretched dinner. The people were civil, however, and no bandits abroad, being kept in awe by the escort of the King of Westphalia, who was on his road to Naples. The wheel was effectually

repaired, and at seven in the morning we started with some apprehension of suffering from crossing the very moist marshes called the Pontine Bogs, which lie between Naples and Rome. This is not the time when these exhalations are most dangerous, though they seem to be safe at no time. We remarked the celebrated Capua, which is distinguished into the new and old. The new Capua is on the banks of the river Volturno, which conducts its waters into the moats. It is still a place of some strength in modern war. The approach to the old Capua is obstructed by an ancient bridge of a singular construction, and consists of a number of massive towers half ruined. We did not pass very near to them, but the site seems very strong. We passed Sinuessa or Sessa, an ancient Greek town, situated not far from shore. The road from Naples to Capua resembles an orchard on both sides, but, alas! it runs through these infernal marshes, which there is no shunning, and which the example of many of my friends proves to be exceeding dangerous. The road, though it has the appearance of winding among hills, is in fact, on the left side, limited by the seacoast running northward. It comes into its more proper line at a celebrated sea-marsh called Cameria, concerning which the oracle said "Ne moveas Camarinam," and the transgression of which precept brought on a pestilence. The road here is a wild pass bounded by a rocky precipice; on one hand covered with wild shrubs, flowers, and plants, and on the other by the sea. After this we came to a military position, where Murat used to quarter a body of troops and cannonade the English gunboats, which were not slow in returning the compliment. The English then garrisoned Italy and Sicily under Sir [John Stuart]. We supped at this place, half fitted up as a barrack, half as an inn. (The place is now called Terracina.) Near this a round tower is shown, termed the tomb of Cicero, which may be doubted. I ought, before quitting Terracina, to have mentioned the view of the town and castle of Gaeta from the Pass. It is a castle of great strength. I should have mentioned Aversa, remarkable for a house for insane persons, on the humane plan of not agitating their passions. After a long pilgrimage on this beastly road we fell asleep in spite of warnings to the contrary, and before we beat the reveille were within twenty miles of the city of Rome. I think I felt the effects of the bad air and damp in a very bad headache.

After a steep climb up a slippery ill-paved road Velletri received us, and accommodated us in an ancient villa or château, the original habitation of an old noble. I would have liked much to have taken a look at it; but I am

tired by my ride. I fear my time for such researches is now gone. Monte Albano, a pleasant place, should also be mentioned, especially a forest of grand oaks, which leads you pretty directly into the vicinity of Rome. My son Charles had requested the favour of our friend Sir William Gell to bespeak a lodging, which, considering his bad health, was scarcely fair. My daughter had imposed the same favour, but they had omitted to give precise direction how to correspond with their friends concerning the execution of their commission. So there we were, as we had reason to think, possessed of two apartments and not knowing the [way] to any of them. We entered Rome by a gate renovated by one of the old Pontiffs, but which, I forget, and so paraded the streets by moonlight to discover, if possible, some appearance of the learned Sir William Gell or the pretty Mrs. Ashley. At length we found our old servant who guided us to the lodgings taken by Sir William Gell, where all was comfortable, a good fire included, which our fatigue and the chilliness of the night required. We dispersed as soon as we had taken some food, wine, and water.

We slept reasonably, but on the next morning

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No. II.

Letter from Mr. Carlyle referred to in vol. ii. p. 160.

EDINBURGH, 21 COMELY BANK, 13th April 1828.

SIR, — In February last I had the honour to receive a letter from Von Goethe, announcing the speedy departure, from Weimar, of a Packet for me, in which, among other valuables, should be found "two medals," to be delivered "mit verbindlichsten Grüssen" to Sir Walter Scott. By a slow enough conveyance this Kästchen, with its medals in perfect safety, has at length yesterday come to hand, and now lays on me the enviable duty of addressing you.

Among its multifarious contents, the Weimar Box failed not to include a long letter — considerable portion of which, as it virtually belongs to yourself, you will now allow me to transcribe. Perhaps it were thriftier in me to reserve this for another occasion; but considering how seldom such a Writer obtains such a Critic, I cannot but reckon it pity that this friendly intercourse between them should be anywise delayed.

> "Sehen Sie Herrn Walter Scott, so sagen Sie ihm auf das verbindlichste in meinem Namen Dank für den lieben heitern Brief, gerade in dem schönen Sinne geschrieben, dass der Mensch dem Menschen werth seyn müsse. So auch habe ich dessen Leben Napoleon's erhalten und solches in diesen Winterabenden und Nächten von Anfang bis zu Ende mit Aufmerksamkeit durchgelesen.
>
> "Mir war höchst bedeutend zu sehen, wie sich der erste Erzähler des Jahrhunderts einem so ungemeinen Geschäft unterzieht und uns die überwichtigen Begebenheiten, deren Zeuge zu seyn wir gezwungen wurden, in fertigem Zuge vorüberführt. Die Abtheilung durch Capitel in grosse zusammengehörige Massen giebt den verschlungenen

> Ereignissen die reinste Fasslichkeit, und so wird dann auch der Vortrag des Einzelnen auf das unschätzbarste deutlich und anschaulich.
>
> “Ich las es im Original, und da wirkte es ganz eigentlich seiner Natur nach. Es ist ein patriotischer Britte der spricht, der die Handlungen des Feindes nicht wohl mit günstigen Augen ansehen kann, der als ein rechtlicher Staatsbürger zugleich mit den Unternehmungen der Politik auch die Forderungen der Sittlichkeit befriedigt wünscht, der den Gegner, im frechen Laufe des Glücks, mit unseligen Folgen bedroht, und auch im bittersten Verfall ihn kaum bedauern kann.
>
> “Und so war mir noch ausserdem das Werk von der grössten Bedeutung, indem es mich an das Miterlebte theils erinnerte, theils mir manches Uebersehene nun vorführte, mich auf einem unerwarteten Standpunkt versetzte, mir zu erwägen gab was ich für abgeschlossen hielt, und besonders auch mich befähigte die Gegner dieses wichtigen Werkes, an denen es nicht fehlen kann, zu beurtheilen und die Einwendungen, die sie von ihrer Seite vortragen, zu würdigen.

Sie sehen hieraus dass zu Ende des Jahres keine höhere Gabe hätte zu mir gelangen können. Es ist dieses Werk mir zu einem goldenen Netz geworden, womit ich die Schattenbilder meines vergangenen Lebens aus den Lethes-Fluthen mit reichem Zuge herauszuforschen mich beschäftige.

> “Ungefähr dasselbige denke ich in dem nächsten Stücke von Kunst und Alterthum zu sagen.”

With regard to the medals, which are, as I expected, the two wellknown likenesses of Goethe himself, it could be no hard matter to dispose of them safely here, or transmit them to you, if you required it, without delay: but being in this curious fashion appointed as it were Ambassador between two Kings of Poetry, I would willingly discharge my mission with the solemnity that beseems such a business, and naturally it must flatter my vanity and love of the marvellous, to think that, by means of a Foreigner whom I have never seen, I might now have access to my native Sovereign, whom I have

so often seen in public and so often wished that I had claim to see and know in private and near at hand. — Till Whitsunday I continue to reside here; and shall hope that some time before that period I may have opportunity to wait on you, and, as my commission bore, to hand you these memorials in person.

Meanwhile I abide your further orders in this matter; and so, with all the regard which belongs to one to whom I in common with other millions owe so much, — I have the honour to be,

Sir, most respectfully your servant, THOMAS CARLYLE.

Besides the two medals specially intended for you, there have come four more, which I am requested generally to dispose of amongst "Wohlwollenden," Perhaps Mr. Lockhart, whose merits in respect of German Literature, and just appreciation of this its Patriarch and Guide, are no secret, will do me the honour to accept of one and direct me through your means how I am to have it conveyed?

Translation of the Letter from Goethe.

> "Should you see Sir Walter Scott, be so kind as return to him my most grateful thanks for his dear and cheerful letter, — a letter written in just that beautiful temper which makes one man feel himself to be worth something to another. Say, too, that I received his Life of Napoleon, and have read it this winter — in the evening and at night — with attention from beginning to end. To me it was full of meaning to observe how the first novelist of the century took upon himself a task and business, so apparently foreign to him, and passed under review with rapid stroke those important events of which it had been our fate to be eyewitnesses. The division into chapters, embracing masses of intimately connected events, gives a clearness to the historical sequence that otherwise might have been only too easily confused, while, at the same time, the individual events in each chapter are described with a clearness and a vividness quite invaluable.

I read the work in the original, and the impression it made upon me was thus free from the disturbing influence of a foreign medium. I found myself listening to the words of a patriotic Briton, who finds it impossible to regard the actions of the enemy with a favourable eye, — an honest citizen this, whose desire is, that while political considerations shall always receive due weight, the demands of morality shall never be overlooked; one who, while the enemy is borne along in his wanton course of good fortune, cannot forbear to point with warning finger to the inevitable consequences, and in his bitterest disaster can with difficulty find him worthy of a tear.

The book was in yet another respect of the greatest importance to me, in that it brought back to my remembrance events through which I had lived — now showing me much that I had overlooked, now transplanting me to some unexpected standpoint, thus forcing me to reconsider a question which I had looked upon as settled, and in a special manner putting me in a position to pass judgment upon the unfavourable critics of this book — for these cannot fail — and to estimate at their true value the objections which are sure to be made from their side. From all this you will understand how the end of last year could have brought with it no gift more welcome to me than this book. The work has become to me as it were a golden net, wherewith I can recover from out the waves of Lethe the shadowy pictures of my past life, and in that rich draught I am finding my present employment.

I intend making a few remarks to the same purpose in the next number of Kunst und Alterthum.

No. III.

Contents of the Volume of Irish Manuscript referred to, vol. ii. p. 289.

1. The rudiments of an Irish Grammar and Prosody; the first leaf wanting.

2. The Book of Rights; giving an account of ye rents and subsidies of the kings and princes of Ireland. It is said to have (been) written by Beinin MacSescnen, the Psalmist of Saint Patrick. It is entirely in verse, except a few sentences of prose taken from ye booke of Glandelogh.

3. A short poem giving an account of ye disciples and favourites of St. Patrick.

4. A poem of Eochy O Flyn's; giving an account of the followers of Partholan, the first invader of Ireland after the flood.

5. A poem written by Macliag, Brian Boruay's poet Laureat. It gives an account of the twelve sons of Kennedy, son of Lorcan, Brian's father; and of ye Dalcassian race in general.

6. A book of annals from the year 976 to 1014, including a good account of the battle of Clontarf, *etc.*

7. A collection of Historical poems by different authors, such as O Dugan, etc., and some extracts, as they seem, from the psalter of Cashill, written by Cormac-mac-Cuilinan, Archbishop and King of Leath Mogha, towards the beginning or middle of the ninth century; Cobhach O Carmon and O Heagusa have their part in these poems. In them are interspersed many other miscellaneous tracts, among which is one called Sgeul-an-Erin, but deficient, wherein mention is made of Garbh mac Stairn, said to be slain by Cuchullin; a treatise explaining the Ogham manner of writing which is preserved in this book; the privileges of the several kings and princes of Ireland, in making their tours of the Kingdom, and taking their seats at the Feis of Tara; and an antient moral and political poem as an advice to princes and chieftains, other poems and prophecies, etc., chronological and religious, disposed in no certain order.

8. The last will and testament of Cormac-mac-Cuilinan in verse.

9. The various forms of the Ogham.

10. The death of Cuchullin, an antient story interspersed with poems, which, if collected, would contain the entire substance of the composition, which is very good (except in one instance) and founded on real fact.

11. The bloody revenge of Conall Cearnach for the death of Cuchullin. This may be considered as the sequel of the preceding story, and of equal

authority and antiquity. It is written in the very same style, and contains a beautiful elegy on Cuchullin by his wife Eimhir.

12. The death of Cormac Con luings, written in the same style with the foregoing stories.

13. The genealogies of all ye principal Irish and Anglo-Norman families of Ireland to the end.

14. A very good copy of the Cath-Gabhra.

The above table of contents is in the handwriting of Dr. Matthew Young, late Bishop of Clonfert, a man possessing the highest talents and learning, and who had been acquainted with the Irish language from his infancy. J.B.

No. IV.

"A Former Empress." — p. 451.

The Church of Santa Maria del Carmine contains relics dear alike to the romance of democracy and empire. It was from this church that Masaniello harangued the fickle populace in vain; it was here that he was despatched by three bandits in the pay of the Duke of Maddaloni; and here he found an honourable interment during a rapid reflux of popular favour. In this church, too, lies Conradin the last prince of the great house of Suabia, with his companion in arms and in death, Frederic, son of the Margrave of Baden, with pretensions, through his mother, to the Dukedom of Austria. The features of the mediæval building have long since been obliterated by reconstructions of the 17th and 18th centuries, while round the tomb of Conradin a tissue of fictions has been woven by the piety and fondness of after times. The sceptics of modern research do not, however, forbid us to believe that there may be an element of truth in the beautiful legend of the visit and benefactions of Elizabeth Margaret of Bavaria, the widowed mother of Conradin, erroneously dignified with the title of Empress, to the resting-place of her son. Her statue in the convent, with a purse in her hand, seems to attest the tale, which was no doubt related to the Scottish Poet, and may well have stirred his fancy. What the epitaph was which he copied we cannot now determine. It is not pretended that the unhappy lady was buried

here, but two inscriptions commemorate the ferocity of Charles of Anjou, and the vicissitudes of fortune which befell his victims. One, believed to be of great antiquity, is attached to a cross or pillar erected at the place of execution. It breathes the insolence of the conqueror mingled with a barbarous humour embodied in a play on words — for "Asturis" has a double reference to the kite and to the place "Astura," at which the fugitive Princes were captured:

"Asturis ungue Leo Pullum rapiens Aquilinum
Hic deplumavit, acephalumque dedit."

The other lines, in the Church, of more modern date, are conceived in a humaner spirit, and may possibly be those which touched the heart of the old worshipper of chivalry.

Ossibvs et memoriæ Conradini de Stovffen, vltimi ex sva progenie Sveviæ dveis, Conradi Rom. Regis F. et Friderici II, imp. nepotis, qui cvm Siciliæ et Apvliæ regna exercitv valido, vti hereditaria vindicare proposvisset, a Carolo Andegavio I. hvivs nominis rege Franco cæperani in agro Palento victvs et debellatvs extitit, deniqve captvs cvm Frederico de Asbvrgh vltimo ex linea Avstriæ dvce, itineris, ac eivsdem fortvnæ sotio, hic cvm aliis (proh scelvs) a victore rege secvri percvssvs est.

Pivm Neap. coriariorvm collegivm, hvmanarvm miseriarvm memor, loco in ædicvlam redacto, illorvm memoriam ab interitv conservavit.

(For the details of the death of Conradin and the stories connected with his memory see Summonte, Storia di Napoli, vol. ii. Celano, Notizie di Napoli Giornata Quarta, and St. Priest, Histoire de la Conquête de Naples, vol. iii.)

No. V.

> "Mother Goose's Tales," p. 459. The following note by a distinguished authority on Nursery Tales, will be read with interest.
>
> "It is unfortunate that Sir Walter Scott did not record in his Diary the dates of the Neapolitan collection of 'Mother Goose's Tales,' and of the early French editions with which he was

acquainted. He may possibly have meant Basile's Lo Cunto de li cunti (Naples, 1637-44 and 1645), which contains some stories analogous to those which Scott mentions. There can be no doubt, however, that France, not Italy, can claim the shapes of Blue Beard, The Sleeping Beauty, Puss in Boots, and the other 'Tales of Mother Goose,' which are known best in England. Other forms of these nursery traditions exist, indeed, not only in Italian, but in most European and some Asiatic and African languages. But their classical shape in literature is that which Charles Perrault gave them, in his Contes de ma Mère l'Oie, of 1697. Among the 'early French editions' which Sir Walter knew, probably none were older than Dr. Douce's copy of 1707, now in the Bodleian. The British Museum has no early copy. There was an example of the First Edition sold in the Hamilton sale: another, or the same, in blue morocco, belonged to Charles Nodier, and is described in his Mélanges. The only specimen in the Public Libraries of Paris is in the Bibliothèque Victor Cousin. It is probable that the 'dumpy duodecimo' in the Neapolitan dialect, seen by Scott, was a translation of Perrault's famous little work. The stories in it, which are not in the early French editions, may be L'Adroite Princesse, by a lady friend of Perrault's, and Peau d'Ane in prose, a tale which Perrault told only in verse. These found their way into French and Flemish editions after 1707. Our earliest English translation seems to be that of 1729, and the name of 'Mother Goose' does not appear to occur in English literature before that date. It is probably a translation of 'Ma Mère l'Oie,' who gave her name to such old wives' fables in France long before Perrault's time, as the spider, Ananzi, gives his name to the 'Nancy Stories' of the negroes in the West Indies. Among Scott's Century of Inventions, unfulfilled projects for literary work, few are more to be regretted than his intended study of the origin of Popular Tales, a topic no longer thought 'obnoxious to ridicule.'" — A.L.

No. VI.

DESCENDANTS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Sir walter SCOTT, == CHARLOTTE CARPENTER,
d. Sept. 21, 1832. d. May 14, 1826.

|

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| | | |

SOPHIA, == JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART, WALTER, = JANE JOBSON. ANNE, CHARLES,
d. May 1837. | d. Nov. 25, 1854. d. Feb. 8, d. 1877. d. June 1833. d. Oct. 28, 1841,
| 1847, s.p.
| s.p.

|

| | |

JOHN HUGH, WALTER SCOTT, CHARLOTTE, == JAMES HOPE.
d. Dec. 15, 1831. d. Jan. 1853, d. Oct. 26, | d. April 29,
s.p. 1858. | 1873.

|

| | |

MARY MONICA,==HON. JOSEPH MAXWELL, WALTER MICHAEL, MARGARET ANNE,
| d. 1858. d. 1858.

|

|

| | | | | |

WALTER MARY WINIFRED MARY JOSEPH MICHAEL, ALICE MARY MALCOLM JOSEPH MARGARET MARY
JOSEPH, JOSEPHINE, JOSEPHINE, b. May 25, JOSEPHINE, RAPHAEL, LUCY,

b. April 10, b. June 5, b. March 7, 1878, 1880. b. Oct. 9, b. Oct. 22, b. Dec. 13,
1875. 1876. d. March 12, 1880. 1881. 1883. 1886.

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PAUL'S LETTERS TO HIS KINSFOLK

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Letter I

Paul to His Sister Margaret

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It is three long weeks since I left the old mansion-house, which, for years before, has not found me absent for three days, and yet no letter has assured its quiet inmates and neighbours whether my curiosity has met its punishment. Methinks I see the evening circle assembled, and anxiously expressing their doubts and fears on account of the adventurous traveller. The. Major will talk of the dangers of outposts and free corps, and shall be somewhat disappointed, if the Major has displayed alacrity in putting his double-barrel in order for the moors; or if the Laird has shewn his usual solicitude for a seasonable sprinkling of rain to refresh the turnip-field. Peter's speculations on. politics, and his walks to the bowling-green, have been darkened, doubtless, and saddened by the uncertainty of my fate; and I even suspect the Parson has spared his flock one Seventhly of his text in his anxiety upon my account.

For you, my dear Margaret, can I doubt the interest you have given me in your affections from the earliest period of recollection, when we pulled gowans together upon the green, until the moment when my travelling trunk, packed by your indefatigable exertions, stood ready to be locked; but, ere the key could be turned, reversing the frolics of the enchanted chest of the Merchant Abudah, sprung once more open, as if in derision of your labours. To you, therefore, in all justice, belong the first fruits of my correspondence; and while I dwell upon topics personal to myself, and therefore most interesting to you, do not let our kind friends believe that I have forgotten my promise, to send each of them, from foreign parts, that species of information with which each is most gratified. No! the Major shall hear of more and bloodier battles than ever were detailed to Young Norval by his tutor the Hermit. The Laird shall know all I can tell him on the general state of the country. Peter shall be refreshed with politics, and the Minister with polemics $ that is, if I can find any thing of the latter description wrorth sending; for if ever there existed a country without a sense of religion of any kind, it is that of France. The churches indeed remain, but the worship to which they are dedicated has as little effect upon

the minds of the people, as that of the heathen Pantheon on the inhabitants of modern Rome. I must take Ovid's maxim, " Tamen excute nullumand endeavour to describe the effects which the absence of this salutary restraint upon our corrupt and selfish passions, of this light, which extends our views beyond the bounds of a transitory world, has produced upon this unhappy country. More of this, however, hereafter. My first letter is addressed to you, my dear sister, and must therefore be personal.

Even your partiality would be little interested in my journey through England, or the circumstances attending my embarkation. And of my passage, it is enough to say, that sea-sick I was even unto the uttermost. All your fifteen infallible recipes proved unavailing. I could not brook the sight of lavender-drops; gingerbread-nuts were detestable to my eyes, and are so to my recollection even at this moment. I could as soon have swallowed the horns of the Archfiend himself as the dose of hartshorn; and for the great goblet of sea-water, " too much of water had I, poor Ophelia." In short, he that would see as much misery, and as much selfishness, as can well be concentrated, without any permanent evil being either done or suffered, I invite him to hire a birth aboard a packet. Delicacy is lost; sympathy is no more; the bands of love and friendship are broken; one class of passengers eat and drink joyously, though intermingled with another, who are expressing their inward grievances, in a manner, which, in any other situation, seldom fails to excite irresistible sympathy. The captain and the mate, comforters by profession, indeed exhort you, from time to time, to be of good cheer, and recommend a glass of grog, or possibly a pipe of tobacco, or it may be a morsel of fat bacon, to allay the internal commotion; but it is unnecessary to say how ill the remedies apply to the disorder. In short, if you are sick, siek you must be; and can have little better comfort than in reflecting that the evil must be of short duration, though, were you to judge from your immediate feelings, you might conceive your life was likely to end first. As I neither met with a storm nor sea-fight, I do not know what effect they might produce upon a sea-sick patient j but such is the complete annihilation of energy $ such the headache, the nausea, and depression of spirits, that I think any stimulus, short of the risque of being shot or drowned, would fail of rousing him to any exertion. The best is, that arrival on the land proves a certain remedy for the sorrows of the sea; and I do not think that even your materia medica could supply any other. v Suppose your brother then landed among the mynheers and yafrows of

Holland and Belgium, as it is now the fashion to call what, before our portentous times, was usually named Flanders. Strange sights meet his eyes; strange voices sound in his ears; and yet, by a number of whimsical associations, he is eternally brought back to the land of his nativity. The Flemings, in particular, resemble the Scotch in the cast of their features, the sound of their language, and, apparently, in their habits of living, and of patient industry. They are, to be sure, a century at least behind in costume and manners; but the old chateau, consisting of two or three narrow houses, joined together by the gables, with a slender round turret ascending in the centre of the building, for the purpose of containing the staircase, is completely in the old style of Scottish dwellinghouses. Then the avenue, and the acre or two of ground, planted with fruit-trees in straight lines; the garden, with high hedges, clipped by the gardener's art into verdant walls; the intermixture of statues and vases; the fountains and artificial pieces of water, may still be seen in some of our ancient mansions; and, to my indifferent taste, are no unnatural decorations in the immediate vicinity of a dwelling-place, and infinitely superior to the meagreness of bare turf and gravel. At least they seem peculiarly appropriate to so flat a country as Belgium, which, boasting no objects of natural beauty or grandeur, and being deprived, in a great measure, even of the grace of living streams of water, must necessarily supply these deficiencies by the exertions of art. Nor does their taste appear to have changed since the days of William III. There seem to be few new houses built; and the old chateaux, and grounds around them, are maintained in the original style in which they were constructed. Indeed, an appearance of antiquity is one of the most distinguishing features which strikes the traveller in the Low Countries. Dates, as far back as the fifteenth, and even fourteenth centuries, are inscribed upon the front of many of the houses both in the country and in the towns and villages. And although I offended your national pride, my dear sister, when I happened to observe, that the Scotch, who are supposed to boast more than other nations of their ancient descent, in reality know less of their early history than any other people in Europe, yet, I think, you will allow, that our borough towns afford few visible monuments of the high claims we set up to early civilization.

Our neighbours, the English, are not much more fortunate in this respect, unless we take into the account the fortresses built for the purpose of defence on the frontiers of Wales and Scotland, or their ancient and

beautiful churches. But we look in vain for antiquity in the houses of the middling ranks; for the mansions of the country gentlemen, and the opulent burghers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, have, generally speaking, long since given place to the town-mansions of the earlier part of the last age, or the more fantastic structures of our own day. It is in the streets of Antwerp and Brussels that the eye still rests upon the forms of architecture which ap pear in the pictures of the Flemish school; those fronts, richly decorated with various ornaments, and terminating in roofs, the slope of which is concealed from the eye by windows and gables still more highly ornamented; the whole comprising a general effect, which, from its grandeur and intricacy, amuses at once and delights the spectator. In fact, this rich intermixture of towers, and battlements, and projecting windows, highly sculptured, joined to the height of the houses, and the variety of ornament upon their fronts, produce an effect as superior to those of the tame uniformity of a modern street, as the casque of the warrior exhibits over the slouched broad-brimmed beaver of a Quaker. I insist the more on this, for the benefit of those of the fireside at ****, who are accustomed to take their ideas of a fine street from Portland place, or from the George's street of Edinburgh, where a long and uniform breadth of causeway extends between two rows of ordinary houses of three stories, whose appearance is rendered mean, by the disproportioned space which divides them, and tame from their unadorned uniformity.

If you talk, indeed, of comforts, I have no doubt that the internal arrangement of the last-named ranges of dwellings is infinitely superior to those of the ancient Flemings, where the windows are frequently high, narrow, and dark; where the rooms open into each other in such a manner as seems to render privacy impossible; where you sometimes pass into magnificent saloons, through the meanest and darkest of all possible entrances; and where a magnificent corridore conducts you, upon other occasions, to a room scarce worthy of being occupied as a pig-stye, — -by such pigs at least, whose limbs are bred in England. It is for the exterior alone that I claim the praise of dignity and romantic character; and I cannot but think, that, without in the least neglecting the interior division necessary for domestic comfort, some of these beauties might, with great advantage, be adopted from the earlier school of architecture. That of the present day seems to me too much to resemble the pinched and pared foot of the

ambitious Princess, who submitted to such severe discipline, in order to force her toes into the memorable glass-slipper.

These marks of ancient wealth, and burgher-like opulence, do indeed greatly excel what could be expected from the architecture of Scotland at the same period. But yet, to return to the point from which I set out, there is something in the height of the houses, and the mode of turning their gables toward the street, which involuntarily reminds me of what the principal street of our northern capital was when I first recollect it.

If you enter one of these mansions, the likeness is far from disappearing. The owner, if a man of family, will meet you with his scraggy neck rising in shrivelled longitude out of the foldsr of a thinly-plaited stock. The cut of his coat, of his waistcoat, his welt preserved cocked-hat, his periwig, and camblet riding-coat, his mode of salutation, the kiss bestowed on each side of the face, all remind you of the dress and manners of the old Scotch laird. The women are not, I think, so handsome as my fair countrywomen, or my walks and visits were unfortunate in the specimens they presented of female beauty. But, then, you have the old dress, with the screen, or mantle, hanging over the head, and falling down upon each shoulder, which was formerly peculiar to Scotland. The colour of this mantle is indeed different — in Scotland it was usually tartan, and in Flanders it is uniformly black. The inhabitants say they derive the use of it from the Spaniards, of whose dominions their country was so long a principal part. The dress and features of the lower class bear also close resemblance to those of Scotland, and favour the idea held by most antiquaries, that the lowlanders, at least, are a kindred tribe. The constant intercourse our ancestors maintained with Flanders, from which, according to contemporary accounts, they derived almost every article which required the least skill in manufacture,, must have added greatly to those points of original similarity.

The Flemings are said to be inferior to their neighbours of Holland in the article of scrupulous attention to cleanliness. But their cot tages are neat and comfortable, compared to those of our country; and the garden and orchard, which usually surround them, give them an air of ease and comfort, far preferable to the raw and uninviting appearance of a Scotch cottage, with its fractured windows stuffed with old hats and pieces of tattered garments, and its door beset on one side by a dunghill, on the other by a heap of coals.

These statistics, my dear Margaret, rather fall in the Laird's province than yours. But your departments border closely upon each other; for those facts, in which he is interested as a Seigneur de Village, affect you as a Lady Bountiful, and so the state of the cottages is a common topic, upon which either may be addressed with propriety.

Adieu! I say nothing of the pad nag and poor old Shock, because I am certain that whatever belongs peculiarly to Paul will be the object of special care during his absence. But I recommend to you to take some of the good advice which you lavish upon others; to remember that there are damps in Scotland as well as in Holland, and that colds and slow fevers may be caught by late evening walks in our own favoured climate, as well as in France or Belgium. Paul ever remains your affectionate Brother.

Letter II

Paul to His Cousin the Major

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After all the high ideas, my dear Major, which your frequent and minute and reiterated details had given me, concerning the celebrated fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom, in former years the scene of your martial exploits, I must own its exterior has sadly disappointed me. I am well enough accustomed, as you know, to read the terms of modern fortification in the Gazette, and to hear them in the interesting narratives of your military experiences; and I must own, that bastions and ravelins, half-moons, curtains, and palisades, have hitherto sounded in my ears every whit as grand and poetical as donjons and barbicans and portcullisses, and other terms of ancient warfare. But I question much if I shall hereafter be able to think of them with exactly the same degree of respect.

A short reflection upon the principles of modern defence, and upon the means which it employs, might, no doubt, have saved me from the disappointment which I experienced. But I was not, as it happened, prepared to expect, that the strongest fortress in the Netherlands, or, for aught I know, in the world, the masterpiece of Coehorn, that prince of engineers, should, upon the first approach of a stranger, prove so utterly devoid of any thing striking or imposing in its aspect. Campbell is, I think, the only English poet who has ventured upon the appropriate terms of modern fortification, and you will not be surprised that I recollect the lines of a favourite author, —

> — the tower
> That, like, a standard-bearer, frown’d
> Defiance on the roving Indian power.
> Beneath, each bold and promontory mound,
> With embrasure emboss’d and armour-crowned,
> And arrowy frize, and wedged ravelin,
> Wove like a diadem its tracery round
> The lofty summit of that mountain green.

But, in order to give dignity to his arrowy frize and ravelin, the Bard has placed his works on the edge of a steepy ascent. Bergen-op-Zoom is nothing less. Through a country as level as the surface of a lake, you jolt onward in your cabriolet, passing along a paved causeway, which, as if an inundation were apprehended, is raised upon a mound considerably higher than the champaign country which it traverses. At length, you spy the top of a poor-looking spire or two, not rising proudly preeminent from a group of buildings, but exhibiting their slender and mean pinnacles above the surrounding glacis, as if they belonged to a subterranean city, or indicated the former situation of one which had been levelled with the ground. The truth is, that the buildings of the town, being sunk to a considerable depth beneath the sloping ramparts by which it is surrounded and protected, are completely hidden, and the defences themselves, to an inexperienced eye, present nothing but huge sloping banks of earth, cut into fanciful shapes and angles, and carefully faced with green turf. Yet the arrangement of these simple barriers, with reference to the command of each other, as well as of the neighbouring country, has been held, and, 1 doubt not, justly, the very perfection of military science. And, upon a nearer approach, even the picturesque traveller finds some gratification. This is chiefly experienced upon his entrance into the town. Here, turning at a short angle into a deep and narrow avenue, running through these mounds which at a distance seemed so pacific and unimportant, he finds himself still excluded by drawbridges and ditches, while guns, placed upon the adjoining batteries, seem ready to sweep the ground which he traverses. Still moving forward, he rolls over drawbridges, whose planks clatter under the feet of his horses, and through vaulted arches, which resound to the eternal smack of his drivers whip. He is questioned by whiskered sentinels, his passports carefully examined, and his name recorded in the orderly-book; and it is only after these precautions that a stranger, though as unwarlike as myself, is permitted to enter the town. The impression is a childish one; yet a Briton feels some degree of unpleasant restraint, not only at undergoing a scrutiny, to which he is so little accustomed, but even from the consciousness of entering a place guarded with such scrupulous minuteness. It is needless to tell you, my dear Major, how much this is a matter of general routine in fortified places on the continent, and how soon the traveller becomes used to it as a matter of course. But I conclude you would desire to have some account of my first impressions upon such an occasion. To you, who speak

as familiarly of roaring cannon As maids of fifteen do of puppy-dogs, my expectations, my disappointment, and my further sensations, will probably appear ridiculous enough.

These formidable fortifications will soon be of little consequence, and may probably be permitted to go to decay. Bergen-op-Zoom, a frontier town of the last importance, while the Princes of Orange were only Stadtholders of the Seven United Provinces, is a central part of their dominions, since the Netherlands have been united into a single kingdom. Meantime, the town is garrisoned by a body of Land-poliz, which corresponds nearly to our local militia in the mode in which it is levied. All the disposable forces of the Netherlands have been sent forward into France, and more are still organizing to be dispatched in the same direction.

In the evening, by permission of the commandant, I walked round the scene of your former exploits. But you must forgive me, if my attention was chiefly occupied by the more recent assault under our brave countryman, Lord Lyndoch, which was so boldly undertaken, and so strangely disappointed, when success seemed almost certain. I was accompanied in my walk by a sensible native of the place, a man of Scotch descent, who spoke good English. He pretended to point out with accuracy the points on which the various assaults were made, and the spots where several of the gallant leaders fell. I cannot rest implicit faith in his narrative, because I know, and you know still better, how difficult it is to procure a just and minute account of such an enterprise, even from those who have been personally engaged in it, and how imperfect, consequently, must be the information derived from one who himself had it at second hand. Some circumstances, however, may be safely taken upon my guide's averment, because they are such as must have consisted with his own knowledge. But, first, It may be observed in general, that the history of war contains no example of a bolder attempt; and, if it failed of success, that failure only occurred after almost all the difficulties which could have been foreseen had been encountered and surmounted. In fact, the assailants, successful upon various points, were already in possession of the greater number of the bastions; and had they fortunately been in communication with each other, so as to have taken uniform measures for attacking the French in the town, they must have become masters of the place. It is even confidently said, that the French commandant sent his aid-de-camp to propose a capitulation; but the officer being killed in the confusion, other and more favourable

intelligence induced the Frenchman to alter his purpose. It has been generally alleged, that some disorder was caused by the soldiers, who had entered the town, finding access to the wine-houses. My conductor obstinately denied this breach of discipline. He said, that one of the attacking columns destined to cross the stream which forms the harbour, had unhappily attempted it before the tide had ebbed, and were obliged to wade through when it was of considerable depth; and he allowed, that the severity of the cold, joined to the wetting, might give them the appearance of intoxication. But when the prisoners were put under his charge in the church, of which he was sexton, he declared solemnly, that he did not see among them one individual who seemed affected by liquor.

The fate of a Dutch officer in our service, who led the attack upon one of the bastions, was particularly interesting. He was a native of the town, and it was supposed had been useful in furnishing hints for the attack. He led on his party with the utmost gallantry; and although the greater number of them fled, or fell, under a heavy fire, — for the enemy were by this time upon the alert, — he descended into the main ditch, crossed it upon the ice, and forced his way, followed by a handful of men, as far as the internal defences of the place. He had already mounted the inner glacis, when he was wounded in many places, and precipitated into the ditch and, as his followers were unable to bring him out he remained on the ice until next morning, when, being still alive, he became a prisoner to the French. Their first purpose was to execute him as a traitor, from which they were with difficulty diverted by a letter from the British general, accompanied by documents to establish how long he had been in the English service. The unfortunate gentleman was then permitted to retire from the hospital to his own house in the town, where he did not long survive the wounds he had received.

I did not, you may believe, fail to visit the unfortunate spot where Skerret, so celebrated for his gallantry in the peninsula, Gower, Mercer, Carleton, Macdonald, and other officers of rank and distinction, fell upon this unfortunate occasion. It is said that General Skerret, after receiving a severe wound by which he was disabled, gave his watch and purse to a French soldier, requesting to be carried to the hospital; but the ruffian dragged him down from the banquette only to pierce him with his bayonet.

While I listened to the details of this unhappy affair, and walked slowly and sadly with my conductor from one bastion to another, admiring the

strength of the defences which British valonr had so nearly surmounted, and mourning over the evil fate which rendered that valour fruitless, the hour of the evening, gradually sinking from twilight into darkness, suited well with the melancholy subject of my enquiries. Broad flashes of lambent lightning illuminated, from time to time, the bastions which we traversed; and the figure of my companion, a tall, thin, elderly man, of a grave and interesting appearance, and who seemed, from his voice and manner, deeply impressed by recollection of the melancholy events which he detailed, was such as might appear to characterize their historian. A few broad and heavy drops of rain occasionally fell and ceased. And to aid the general effect, we heard from below the hollow roll of the drums announcing the setting of the watch, and the deep and sullen Wer da of the sentinels, as they challenged those who passed their station. I assure you this is no piece of imaginary scenery got up to adorn my letter, but the literal circumstances of my perambulation around the ramparts of Bergen-op-Zoom.

I presume you are now in active preparation for the moors, where I wish you much sport. Do not fail to preserve for me my due share in your friendship, notwithstanding that, on the subject of Bergen-op-Zoom, I am now qualified to give you story for story. Such are the advantages which travellers gain over their friends, My next letter to you shall contain more interesting, as well as more recent and more triumphant, military details.

I must not omit to mention, that in the church of Bergen-op-Zoom, a tablet of marble, erected by their brother officers, records the names of the brave men who fell in the valorous but illfated attack upon this famous fortress. For them, as for their predecessors who fell at Fontenoy, the imagination of the Briton will long body forth the emblematic forms of Honour and Freedom weeping by their monuments. Once more farewell, and remember me.

Letter III

Paul to His Cousin Peter

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Thy politics, ray clear Peter, are of the right Scottish cast. Thou knowest our old proverbial character of being wise behind the hand. After all, the wisdom which is rather deduced from events, than formed upon predictions, is best calculated for a country politician, and smacks of the prudence as well as of the aforesaid proverbial attribute of our national character. Yet, believe me, that though a more strict seclusion of the dethroned emperor of France might have prevented his debarkment at Cannes, and although we and our allies might have spared the perilous farce of leaving him a globe and sceptre to play withal, there were, within France itself, elements sufficiently jarring to produce, sooner or later, a dreadful explosion. You daily politicians are so little in the practice of recollecting last year's news, that I may be excused recalling some leading facts to your recollection, which will serve as a text to my future lucubrations.

The first surrender of Paris had been preceded by so much doubt, and by so many difficulties, that the final victory seems to have been a matter not only of exultation, but even of surprise, to the victors themselves. This great event was regarded, rather as a gratification of the most romantic and extravagant expectations, than as a natural consequence of that course of reaction, the ebb of which brought the allies to the gates of Paris, as its tide had carried Buonaparte to those of Berlin and Vienna. Pleased and happy with themselves, and dazzled with the glory of their own exploit, the victors were in no humour to impose harsh conditions upon the vanquished; and the French, on their part, were delighted at their easy escape from the horrors of war, internal and external, of siege, pillage, and contribution. Buonaparte's government had of late become odious to the bulk of the people, by the pressure of taxation, by the recurring terrors of the proscription, but, above all, by the repeated disasters which the nation had latterly sustained. The constitutional charter, under which the Bourbon family were restored, was not only a valuable gift to those who really desired to be insured against the reestablishment of despotism, but operated as a salvo to the wounded feelings of the still more numerous class who

wished that the crimes and calamities of the Revolution should not appear to be altogether thrown away, and who could now appeal to this Bill of Rights, as a proof that the French nation had not sinned and suffered in vain. The laboratory and chemical apparatus which was to have produced universal equality of rights, had indeed exploded about the ears of the philosophical experimentalists, yet they consoled themselves with the privileges which had been assured to them by the King upon his Restoration.

> So though the Chemist his great secret miss,
> For neither it in art or nature is,
> Yet things well worth his toil he gains,
> And doth his charge and labour pay,
> With good unsought experiments by the way.

All parties being thus disposed to be pleased with themselves, and with each other, the occupation of the capital was considered as the close of the disasters which France had sustained, and converted into a subject of general jubilee, in which the Parisians themselves rejoiced, or affected to rejoice, as loudly as their unbidden guests. But this desirable state of the public mind was soon overcast, and the French, left to their own reflections, began speedily to exhibit symptoms both of division and dissatisfaction.

The first, but not the most formidable of their causes of discontent, arose from the pretensions of the emigrant noblesse and clergy.

At the restoration of Charles II., (to which we almost involuntarily resort as a parallel case,) the nobility and gentry of England, who had espoused the cause of his father, were in a very different condition from the emigrant nobles of France. Many had indeed fallen in battle, and some few by the arbitrary sentence of the usurper's courts of justice; but the majority, although impoverished by fines and sequestrations, still resided upon their patrimonial estates, and exercised over their tenantry and cottagers the rights of proprietors.' Their influence, though circumscribed, was therefore considerable j and had they been disposed to unite themselves into a party, separate from the other orders of the state, they had power to support the pretensions which they might form. But here the steady sense and candour, not alone of Ormond and Clarendon, but of all the leading Cavaliers, induced them to avoid a line of conduct so tempting yet so dangerous. The dangers of reaction, according to the modern phrase, were no sooner

sounded into the public ear by the pamphlets and speeches of those who yet clung to a republic, than every purpose, whether of revenge, or of a selfish and separate policy, was disowned in a manifesto, subscribed by the principal Royalists, in which they professed to ascribe their past misfortunes, not to any particular class of their fellowcitizens, but to the displeasure of the Almighty, deservedly visiting upon them their own sins and those of the community. Such was the declaration of the Cavaliers at that important crisis; and though there were not wanting royalistes purs et par excellence, who, like Swift's correspondent, Sir Charles Wogan, censured the conduct of Clarendon for suffering to escape so admirable an opportunity to establish despotic authority in the crown, and vest feudal power in the nobility, I need not waste words in vindicating his moderate and accommodating measures to my discerning friend Peter.

The scattered remnants of the French noblesse, who survived to hail the restoration of the Bourbons, while they possessed no efficient power, held much more lofty pretensions than had been preferred by the aristocracy of Britain at the Restoration. It would be unjust to subscribe to the severe allegation, that they had forgot nothing, and learned nothing, during their long exile j yet it can hardly be either doubted, or wondered at, that they retained their prejudices and claims as a separate and privileged class, distinguished alike by loyalty and sufferings in the cause of the exiled family, to a point inconsistent with the more liberal ideas of a community of rights, which, in despite both of the frenzy of the Revolution and the tyranny of Buonaparte, had gradually gained ground among the people at large. And, while the once-privileged classes maintained such pretensions, they were utterly devoid of the means of effectually asserting them. Long years of banishment had broken off their connection with the soil of France, and their influence over those by whom it is cultivated. They were even divided amongst themselves into various classes; and the original emigrants, whose object it was to restore the royal authority by the sword, looked with dislike and aversion upon the various classes of exiles of a later date, whom each successive wave of the Revolution had swept from their native land. Their own list did not appear to exhibit any remarkable degree of talent; those among them, whose exile was contemporary with their manhood, were now too old for public business, and those who were younger, had become, during their long residence abroad, strangers, in a manner, to the customs and habits of their country; while neither the aged

nor the young had the benefit of practical experience in public affairs. It was not among such a party, however distinguished by birth, by loyalty, by devotion in the royal cause, that Louis XVIII. could find, or hope to find, the members of an useful, active, and popular administration. Their ranks contained many well qualified to be the grace and ornament of a court; but few, it would seem, fitted for the support and defence of a throne. Yet who can wonder, that the men who had shared the misfortunes of their sovereign, and shewn in his cause such proofs of the most devoted zeal, were called around him in his first glimpse of prosperity; and that, while ascending the throne, he entertained towards this class of his subjects, bound to him, as they were,

"By well-tried faith and friendship's holy ties,"

the affections of a kind and grateful master. One distinguished emigrant, observing the suspicion and odium which so excusable a partiality awakened against the monarch, had the courage to urge, that, to ensure the stability of the throne, their sentence of banishment should have continued by the royal edict for ten years at least after the restoration of the house of Bourbon. It was in vain that the advocates of Louis called upon the people to observe, that no open steps had been taken in favour of the emigrants. Their claims were made and pleaded upon every hand; and, if little was expressly done in their favour, suspicion whispered, that the time was only waited for when all could be granted with safety. These suspicions, which naturally occurred even to the candid, were carefully fostered and enlarged upon by the designing; and the distant clank of the feudal fetters were sounded into the ears of the peasants and burghers, while the uncertainty of property alarmed the numerous and powerful proprietors of forfeited domains.

The dislike to the clergy, and the fear of their reviving claims upon the confiscated church-lands, excited yet greater discontent than the king's apprehended partiality to the emigrants. The system of the Gallic church had been thoroughly undermined before its fall. Its constitution had been long irretrievably shattered; the whole head was sore, and the whole heart was sick. Doctrines of infidelity, every where general among the higher ranks, were professed by none with more publicity than by the superior orders of the clergy; and respecting moral profligacy, it might be said of the church of France as of Ilion,

Intra moenia peccatur, et extra.

It is no wonder, that, in a system so perverted, neither the real worth of many of the clergy, nor the enthusiastic zeal of others, was able to make a stand against the tide of popular odium, skilfully directed towards the church and its ministers by the reigning demagogues. Our catholic Highland neighbour must also pardon us, if we account the superstitious doctrines of his church among the chief causes of her downfall. The necessity of manning outworks, which are incapable of being effectually defended, adds not a little to the perplexities of a besieged garrison. Thus the sarcasms and sneers, justified, at least in our heretical eyes, by some part of the catholic doctrines, opened the way for universal contempt of the Christian system. At any rate, nothing is more certain than that a general prejudice was, during the Revolution, successfully excited against the clergy, and that among the lower Parisians in particular it still exists with all its violence. Even on the day when the rabble of the Fauxbourgs hailed the triumphal return of Buonaparte to his throne, their respect for the hero of the hour did not prevent them from uttering the most marked expressions of dislike and contempt when Cardinal Fesch appeared in the procession. The cry was general, A has la calotte! and the uncle of the restored emperor was obliged to dismount from his palfrey, and hide himself in a carriage.

The king and the Comte D'Artois are, in their distresses, Understood to have sought and found consolation in the exercise of religious duties. They continued, in gratitude, those devotions which they had commenced in humble submission, and their regard was naturally extended to the ministers of that religion which they professed and practised. Conduct in itself so estimable, was, in the unhappy state of the public mind, misrepresented to their subjects. The landholders were alarmed by fear of the reestablishment of tithes; the labouring poor, and the petty shopkeeper, regarded the enforcing the long-neglected repose of the Sabbath, as a tax upon their industry and time, amounting to the hire of one day's labour out of the seven. The proprietors of church-lands were alarmed, more especially when the rash zeal of some of the priesthood refused the offices of the church to those who had acquired its property. The protestants in the south of France remembered the former severities exercised against them by the sovereigns of the house of Bourbon, and trembled for their repetition under a dynasty of monarchs, who professed the catholic faith with sincerity and zeal. Add

to these the profligate who hate the restraints of religion, and the unthinking who ridicule its abstracted-doctrines, and you will have some idea how deeply this cause operated in rendering the Bourbons unpopular.

Those who dreaded, or affected to dread, the innovations which might be effected by the influence of the clergy and the nobles, — a class which included, of course, all the old partizans of democratical principles, — assumed the name of Constitutionalists, and afterwards of Liberalists. The one was derived from their great zeal for the constitutional charter; the other from their affected superiority to the prejudices of ancient standing. Their ranks afforded a convenient and decent place of refuge for all those who, having spent their lives in opposing the Bourbon interest, were now compelled to submit to a monarch of that family. They boasted, that it was not the person of the king to which they submitted, but the constitution which he had brought in his hand. Their party contained many partizans, especially among men distinguished by talent. Democracy, according to Burke, is the foodful nurse of ambition; and men, who propose to rise by the mere force of their genius, naturally favour that form of government which offers fewest restraints to their career. This party was also united and strengthened by possessing many of those characters who had played the chief parts in the revolution, and were qualified, both by talents and experience, to understand and conduct the complicated ramifications of political intrigue.

Among those best qualified to " ride on the whirlwind and direct the storm," was the celebrated Fouché, Duke of Otranto, whose intimate acquaintance with every intrigue in France had been acquired when he exercised the office of minister of the police under the emperor. There is every reason to think that this person had no intention of pushing opposition into rebellion j and that it wais only his purpose to storm the cabinet, not to expel the monarch. It cannot be denied, that there were among the Liberalists the materials for forming, what is called in England, a constitutional opposition, who, by assailing the ministry in the two chambers, might have compelled them to respect the charter of the constitution. And to those amongst them,; who were actuated either by the love of rational liberty, or by a modified and regulated spirit of ambition, the reign of the Bourbons afforded much greater facilities than the restoration of the military despotism of Buonaparte. Even to the very last moment, Fouché is said to have looked round for some mezzo termine,

some means of compromise, which might render unnecessary the desperate experiment of the emperor's restoration. When Napoleon had landed, and was advancing towards Lyons, Fouché demanded an audience of the king upon important business. The interview was declined, but two noblemen were appointed by Louis to receive his communication. He adverted to the perilous situation of the king \ and offered even yet, provided his terms were granted, to arrest Napoleon's progress towards the capital. The ministers required to know the means which he meant to employ. He declined to state them, but professed himself confident of success. His terms he announced to be, that the Duke of Orleans should be proclaimed lieutenantgeneral of the kingdom \ and that Fouché him self and his party should immediately be called to offices of trust and power. These terms were of course rejected; but it was the opinion of the wellinformed person from whom I had this remarkable anecdote, that Fouché would have been able to keep his word.

His recipe was not, however, put to the test; and he and his party immediately acceded to the conspiracy, and were forced onward by those formidable agents, of whom it may be observed, that, like fire and water, they are excellent servants, but dreadful masters; I mean the army, whose state, under the Bourbons, deserves the consideration of a separate epistle. — Ever, my dear friend, I remain sincerely yours.

Letter IV

to the Same

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I left off in my last with some account of the Constitutionalists, Liberalists, or whatsoever they are called, who opposed, from various causes, the measures of Louis XVIII., without having originally any purpose of throwing themselves into the arms of Buonaparte. To this desperate step they were probably induced by the frank and universal adhesion of the army to the commander under whom they had so often conquered. No man ever better understood both how to gain and how to maintain himself in the hearts of his soldiers than Buonaparte. Brief and abrupt in his speech, austere and inaccessible in his manners to the rest of his subjects, he was always ready to play the bon camarade with his soldiers j to listen to their complaints j to redress their grievances, and even to receive their suggestions. This accessibility was limited to the privates and inferior officers. To the mareschals and generals he was even more distant and haughty than to his other subjects. Thus he connected himself intimately and personally with the main body of the army itself, but countenanced no intermediate favourite, whose popularity among the troops might interfere with his own.

To the motives of personal attachment, so deeply rooted and so industriously fostered, must be added the confidence of the soldiers in military talents so brilliantly displayed, and in the long course of victory which had identified the authority of Napoleon with the glory of the French arms. To a train of the most uniform and splendid success, they might indeed have opposed the reverses of the peninsular war, or the disastrous retreat from Moscow and the battle of Leipsic, with all the subsequent reverses. But, as soldiers and as Frenchmen, they were little inclined to dwell upon the darker shades of the retrospect. Besides, partiality and national vanity found excuses for these misfortunes. In the peninsula, Buonaparte did not command; in Russia, the elements fought against him; at Leipsic, he was deserted by the Saxons; and in France betrayed by Marmont. Besides, a great part of the soldiers who, in 1814-15, filled the French ranks, had been “ prisoners of war during Buonaparte’s last

unfortunate campaigns, and he was only experimentally known to them as the victor of Marengo, Ulm, Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, and Wagram. You cannot have forgotten the enthusiasm with which the prisoners on parole at — used to speak of the military renown of the emperor; nor their frank declaration at leaving us, that they might fight with their hands for the Bourbons, but would fight with hand and heart for Napoleon. Even the joy of their return seemed balanced, if not overpowered, by the reflection, that it originated in the dethronement of the emperor. To recollect the sentiments of these officers, unsuppressed even in circumstances most unfavourable for expressing them, will give you some idea of the ardour with which they glowed when they found themselves again in arms, and forming part of a large and formidable military force, actuated by the same feelings.

It was the obvious policy of the Bourbons to eradicate, if possible, this dangerous attachment, or to give it a direction towards the reigning family. For this purpose, every attention was paid to the army; they were indulged, praised, and flattered; but flattery, praise, and indulgence, were only received as the surly mastiff accepts, with growling sullenness, the food presented to him by a new master. There was no common tone of feeling to which the Bourbons could successfully appeal. It was in vain they attempted to conjure up the antiquated fame of Henri Quatre to men who, if ever they had heard of that monarch, must have known that his martial exploits were as much beneath those of Buonaparte, as his moral character was superior to the Corsican's. In the reigning family there was no individual who possessed so decided a military character as to fill, even in appearance, the loss which the army had sustained in their formidable commander, and the moment of national difficulty was unfortunately arrived, in which the personal activity of the monarch, a circumstance which, in peaceful times, is of little' consequence, was almost indispensably essential to the permanence of his authority.

Burke says somewhere, that the king of France, when restored, ought to spend six hours of the day on horseback. " I speak," he adds, " according to the letter." The personal infirmities of the good old man, who has been called to wear this crown of thorns, put the required activity out of the question. But the justice of the maxim has not been the less evident. Not only the soldiers, but the idle and gaping population of Paris, despised the peaceful and meritorious tranquillity of Louis XVIII., and recalled with regret the bustling and feverish movements of Buonaparte, which

alternately gave them terror and surprise and amusement. Indeed, such was the restless activity of the ex-emperor's disposition, that he contrived, as it were, to multiply himself in the eyes of the Parisians. In an incredibly short space of time, he might be seen in the most distant quarters of the city, and engaged in the most different occupations. Now he was galloping along a line of troops, — now alone, or with a single aid-de-camp, inspecting some public building, — in another quarter you beheld him in his carriage, — and again found him sauntering among the objects of the fine arts in the Louvre. With a people/, so bustling, so active, and so vainglorious as the French, this talent of ubiquity went a great way to compensate the want of those virtues which the emperor did not pretend to, and which the legitimate monarch possesses in such perfection. " The King," said an Englishman to a Frenchman, " is a man of most excellent dispositions." — " Sans doute." — " Well read and well informed." — " Mais out" — " A gentleman in his feelings and manners." — " Assurement, Monsieur, il est nc Frangois." — " Placable, merciful, moral, religious." — " Ah, daccord — mats aprbs tout" (a mode in which a Frenchman always winds up his argument,) " il faut avouer, qu'an Roi qui ne pent monier d, cheval est un bien chetif animal" — This opinion, in which the posses sion of the equestrian art was balanced against all mental qualities, is not peculiar to the person by whom it was delivered; and it is certain that the king's affairs suffered greatly by his being unable to shew himself, even in the exterior appearance, as a military commander. Ney, who was probably for the time sincere in his professions of zeal to the sovereign, whom he so soon afterwards deserted, recommended that he should review the regiments as they passed through Paris, even if it were in a litter. But the affecting apology of the king is best pleaded in the words of his own manifesto: " Enfeebled by age, and twentyfive years of misfortunes, I cannot say, like my ancestor, Rally around my white plume; but I am willing to follow to the dangers to which I cannot lead."

None of the royal family, unfortunately, possessed the temper and talents necessary for supplying the king's deficiencies. The Duke d'Angouleme, like his father Monsieur, was retired, and understood to be bigotted to the catholic observances, and much ruled by the clergy. The Duke de Berri, with more activity, had a fierce and ungovernable temper, which often burst out upon improper and unseemly occasions. Under their auspices, the attempts to newmodel the army, by gradually introducing

officers attached to the royal family, gave much offence, without producing any sensible advantage. In sortie instances the new officers were not received by the corps to whom they were sent; in some they were deprived of the influence which should attend their rank, by the combination of thcsoldiers and officers; in other cases, they were perverted by the universal principles of the corps whom they were appointed to command; and, finally, there were instances, as in the case of Labedoyere, in which the court were imposed upon by specious professions, and induced to promote persons the most inimical to the royal interests. The reestablishment of the household troops, in which a comparatively small body of gardes de corps were, at a great expence, and with peculiar privileges, established as the immediate guardians of the king's person, was resented by the army in general, but more especially by the ci~devant imperial, now royal, guards.

In a word, matters had gone so far, that the army, as in Cromwell's time, existed as an isolated and distinct body, not under the government of the legislature, but claiming exclusive rights and privileges, and enjoying a separate and independent political existence of its own. Whenever this separation between the civil and military orders takes place, revolution and civil war cannot be far distant.

But there was one powerful cause of irritation common to the French nation in general, though particularly affecting the army. That very people of Europe, the most ambitious of fame in arms, who so lately and so fully stood possessed of the palm of conquest, which for centuries had been the object of their national ambition, had at once lost that preeminence, and with it

> The earthquake-voice of victory,
> To "them" the breath of life.

The height to which their military reputation had been raised, the enormous sacrifices which had been made to attain it, the rapid extension of their empire, and the suddenness of their fall in power and in esteem, were subjects of the most embittered reflection. We in Britain vainly imagined, that the real losses which France sustained in extending her influence and her triumphs, must have disgusted her with the empty fame for which she paid so dearly. But however the French might feel under the immediate pressure of each new conscription, nothing is more certain than that their griefs, like the irritation of men impressed into our naval service, were

forgotten in the eclat of the next victory, and that all the waste of blood and treasure by which it was obtained, was accounted a cheap expenditure for the glory of France.

When a people, with minds so constituted, beheld within the walls of their capital the troops of the nations whom they had so often subdued, their first effort was to disguise, even from themselves, the humiliation to which they were subjected. When they had looked so long upon a stranger as to be certain he was not laughing at them, which seemed to be their first apprehension, their usual opening was a begging of the general question, " You know we were not conquered-our reception of the king was a voluntary act — our general and unanimous joy bears witness that this is the triumph of peace over war, not of Europe over France." With such emollients did they endeavour to dress the surface of a wound which internally was inflamed and rankled.

These harmless subterfuges of vanity held good, until they had forgotten the late alarming and precarious state in which their country had been placed, and particularly until the departure of the allied troops (a measure most impolitically precipitate) had removed the wholesome awe which their presence necessarily imposed. Then instantly operated the principle of Tacitus — qui timeri desierint, odisse incipient. A thousand hostile indications, trifling perhaps individually, but important from their number and reiteration, pointed out the altered state of the public mind towards the allies. The former complaisance of the French nation, founded perhaps as much upon their good opinion of themselves as in their natural disposition to oblige others, was at once overclouded, and the sight of a foreigner became odious, as reminding them of the aspect of a conqueror. Caricatures, farces, lampoons, all the petite guerre, by which individual malice has occasionally sought gratification, were resorted to, as the only expressions of wounded feeling now competent to the Great Nation. The equanimity with which the English in particular gave the losers leave to laugh as loudly as losers and beaten men could, rather exasperated than appeased the resentment of the French. The most unoffending foreigners were exposed to insult, and embroiled in personal quarrels with gratuitous antagonists in the public places of Paris, where, in former times, the name of a stranger was a sufficient protection even when an aggressor. All these circumstances indicated a tone of feeling, ulcerated by the sense of degradation, and which burned to regain self-opinion by wreaking

vengeance on their conquerors. The nation was in the situation of losing gamblers, who reflect indeed upon their losses with mortification and regret, but without repenting the folly which caused them \ and, like them also, the French only waited some favourable conjuncture again to peril the remains of their fortune upon the same precarious hazard.

The language of the government of France was gradually and insensibly tinged by the hostile passions of her population. The impatient and irritated state of the army dictated to her representative, even at the Congress, a language different from what the European republic had a right to expect from the counsellors of the monarch whom their arms had restored. It is probable the government felt that their army resembled an evoked fiend pressing for employment, and ready to tear to pieces even the wizard whom he serves, unless instantly supplied with other means of venting his malevolence. But if it was a part of the Bourbon policy, rather to encounter the risk and loss of an external war, than to leave their army in peace and at leisure to brood over their discontents and disgraces, they had no time allowed them to make the ungracious experiment. A plot was already on foot and far advanced, to ensure, as it was supposed, the recovery of the national glory, by again placing on the throne, him, under whose auspices, and by whose unparalleled military successes, it had been formerly raised to the highest pitch of military splendour.

Such was the influence of the various causes which I have endeavoured to detail, that the reception of the insinuations of the conspirators, particularly in the army, exceeded their wishes, and nearly broke out before the time proposed. It is at least pretty certain that their zeal outwent the discretion of their principal, and that Napoleon more than once declined the invitations which he received to return from Elba. The cooperation of Murat was a point of extreme moment; and until a Neapolitan army could approach the north of Italy, Buonaparte's situation must have been desperate, supposing him to have received a check in the south of Prance at the outset of his expedition. A series of dark intrigues, therefore, commenced between the principal conspirators and King Joachim, which ended in his winding up his courage to the perilous achievement which they recommended. In the north of Italy were many officers and soldiers who had formerly served under Eugene Beauharnois. And it was reasonably believed, considering jthe weak state of the Austrian?, that Murat's army,

Neapolitans as they were, might have at least made their way so far as to have recruited their ranks by the union of these veterans.

Internally the conspiracy proceeded with the most surprising secrecy and success. The meetings of the chief leaders were held under the auspices of Madame Maret, Duchess of Bassano. But subordinate agents were to be found every where, and more especially among the coffeehouses and brothels of the Palais Royale, those assemblages of every thing that is desperate and profligate. “ Buonaparte,” said a Royalist to me the other day, “ had with him all the rogue-men and all the rogue-women, and, in our country, their numbers are nineteen out of twenty,” One of these places of nocturnal rendezvous, called the Caffe Montaussier, was distinguished for the audacity with which its frequenters discussed national politics, and the vociferous violence with which they espoused the cause of the dethroned emperor. That the police, whose surveillance, in Buonaparte’s reign, extended to the fireside and bedchamber of every citizen, should have either overlooked, or observed with supine indifference, those indications of treason in places open for public rendezvous, argues the incapacity of the superior directors, and the treachery of those who were employed under them. Even the partial discovery of Excelman’s correspondence with Murat served but to shew the imbecility of a government who could not, or durst not, bring him to punishment. The wellknown symbol of the Violet, by which Buonaparte’s friends intimated his return to France with the reappearance of that flower in spring, was generally known and adopted, at least two months before the period of his landing, yet attracted no attention on the part of the police. Indeed, so gross was their negligence, that a Frenchman, finding his friend ignorant of some wellknown piece of news, observed, in reply, Vous etes appareminent de la police? as if to belong to that body inferred a necessary ignorance of every thing of importance that was going forward in the kingdom.

With so much activity on the one side, and such supine negligence on the other, joined to a state of public feeling so favourable to his enterprise, one is scarcely surprised at Napoleon’s wonderful success. The mass of the army went over to him as one man; and the superior officers, who found their influence too feeble to check the progress of the invader, took, with a few distinguished exceptions, the resolution to swim along with the stream which they could not oppose. But however discontented with the government of the Bourbons, the middling ranks in civil life were alarmed

as with a clap of thunder by this momentous event. They beheld themselves once more engaged in a war with all Europe, and heard once more the Prussian trumpets at the gates of the metropolis. To dispel these alarms, Napoleon, with a versatile address, which could hardly have succeeded any where save in France, endeavoured to put such a colour upon his own views as best suited those whom he was immediately addressing. To the army, his proclamation, issued at Lyons, held forth immediate war, conquest, and the reestablishment of the military fame of France. But when he reached Paris, he seemed anxious to modify this declaration. He appealed to the Treaty of Paris, by which: he pretended to abide, and he expressed himself contented that the rights and boun-A daries of France should be limited according to the wishes of the allied powers as there expressed. He did more; he even alleged that his enterprise was executed with their connivance. With the assurance of a shameless charlatan, as one author expresses it, he asserted that his escape was countenanced by England otherwise, as he reasoned with apparent force, how was he permitted to leave Elba? and that his restoration had the approbation of Austria would be made manifest, he pretended, by the immediate return of Maria Louisa and her son to' the French territory. He even carried the farce so far as to prepare and send away state carriages to meet those valued pledges of his fatherin-law's amity, conscious that the success of this gross imposition would serve his cause during the moments of general doubt and indecision, though certain to be discovered in a very few days. Meanwhile, an attempt was actually made to carry off his son from the city of Vienna, and defeated only by the want of presence of mind in one of the conspirators, who, being arrested by the police, imprudently offered a handful of gold to obtain his escape, which excited the attention and suspicion of the officer. No doubt, had the attempt succeeded, the restoration of the child would have been represented as the effects of the favour of Austria towards the father.

The declarations of the allied powers soon removed the hopes of peace, by which those who were peaceably disposed had been, for a short time, flattered. A war, of a kind altogether new, with respect to the extent of the military preparations, was now approaching and imminent, and the address of Chatterton's Sir Charles Baudin to the English might have been well applied to the people of France, —

Say, were ye tired of godly peace,
And godly Henry's reign,
That you would change your easy days
For those of blood and pain?
Ah! fickle people, ruin'd land,
Thou wilt know peace noe moe;
When Richard's sons exalt themselves,
Thy streets with blood shall flow.

But there remained comfort to the more peaceable part of the community in the confidence of assured victory, so warmly expressed by the soldiers, and then they hoped that the short and successful war would conclude so soon as France should be restored to, what they were pleased to term, her natural boundaries. Paix au dela du Rhin was the general wish — the soldiers affected to aim at no more remote conquest — the citizen was willing to face the burthens of a war for an object so limited, and for the reestablishment of la gloire nationale. And thus were the versatile people of Paris induced to look with an eye of hope, instead of terror, upon the approaching storm.

Those who were attached to the parties of the Liberalists and Royalists saw Buonaparte's successful progress with other eyes. But the Liberalists, severed from the family of Bourbon by the opinions and incidents which I have already detailed to you, were, in a manner, forced into the service of the new emperor, although, doubtless, their wishes were to Substitute a government of a more popular construction. Their chiefs too, the philosophical Carnot and the patriotic Fouché, did not disdain to accept, from the hand of the restored heir of the Revolution, the power, dignities, and emoluments which he artfully held out to them. And, in becoming a part of his administration, they were supposed to warrant to him the attachment of their followers, while Napoleon, by professing to embrace the constitution with some stipulations in favour of general freedom, was presumed to give a sufficient pledge that henceforth he was to regard himself only as the head of a limited monarchy. How far this good understanding would have survived his return to Paris with victory, it is scarce necessary to enquire; for not even the adhesion of Carnotand Fouché prevented some tart debates in the lower Chamber of Representatives; from which it is evident, that the Imperialists and Jacobins regarded each other

with aversion and suspicion, and that their union was not likely to survive the circumstances which occasioned it.

In the meanwhile, they were embarked in a common cause; and it does not appear that the Liberalists were slack in affording assistance to Buonaparte in his preparations for external war. Like the factions in Jerusalem, during her final siege, they suspended their mutual dissensions until they should have repulsed the common enemy. There is nevertheless a rumour, which is at least countenanced by the favour which for some time held at the court of Louis XVIII., that even while that king was at Ghent, the wily chief of the Liberalists maintained a correspondence with his ex-monarch. But, in general, that party, comprehending the various classes of Liberalists, from the Constitutionalist to the Jacobin, may be considered. as having identified themselves with the Imperialists, and undertaken the same chance of battle to which the adherents of Buonaparte had made their solemn appeal.

There was a third party in France, and a powerful one, if its real force could have been mustered and called into action. For, notwithstanding all that I have said of the various causes which divided the opinions of the nation, it must necessarily be supposed that the Bourbon family had, in many provinces, an equal, and in some, a, predominating interest. Unfortunately, the Royalists being taken at unawares, remained altogether stupified and paralysed by the sudden and unanimous defection of the army. The premature or ill-conducted attempts of resistance at Marseilles and Bourdeaux were so easily subdued, as to discredit and discountenance all farther opposition. In La Vendee only there was an open military resistance to Buonaparte under the banners of the king. The Royalists, in the other provinces, contented themselves with opposing a sort of vis inertia to the efforts which Napoleon made for calling forth the national force, and awaited with anxiety, but without any active exertion, the expected progress of the allies. This passive resistance was particularly remarkable in the departments of the north, several of which would render Napoleon no assistance, either in recruits or money, and where entreaties, threats, and even attempts at force, could not put in motion a single battalion of the national guard.

On the other hand, the eastern departments which bordered on Germany met the wishes of Buonaparte in their utmost extent. They remembered the invasion of the preceding year with all the feelings of irritation which such

recollections naturally produce. Accordingly, they formed free corps of volunteers, — laboured at fortifying towns and passes, — constructed tetes du-pont, — and multiplied all means of defence which the face of the country afforded. Thus it happened, fortunately for Buonaparte, that the part of the kingdom, whose inhabitants were most disposed to consider the war as a national quarrel, was that of which the territory was most immediately open to invasion.

I shall continue this statement, my dear Peter, in a letter to the Major, to whose department the military details properly belong, and, in the meanwhile, am ever your's.

Letter V

Paul to the Major

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I presume, my dear Major, that pur political friend has communicated to you my last epistle. My next enters upon high matters, which I have some scruple to treat of to you; for who would willingly read lectures upon the art of war before Alexander the Great? But, after all, as Waterloo was a battle very different from that of Bunker's-hill, and from two or three other later actions with the details of which you often regale us, I conceive that even a bungling account of it from a tactician so wretched as I am, may afford some matter for your military commentaries. At any rate, active investigation has not been wanting; as I have surveyed the fields of action, and conversed familiarly with many of the distinguished officers, who there laid a claim to the eter nal gratitude of their country. Your kindness will excuse my blunders, and your ingenuity will be applied to detect and supply my deficiencies..

No part of Napoleon's political life, marked as it has always been by the most rapid and extraordinary promptitude in military preparation, affords such a display of activity, as the brief interval which occurred between his resuming the imperial sceptre and resigning it, it is to be presumed, for ever. Although the conciliating the Liberalists, and paralysing the Royalists, occupied some time; and although it was necessary to sacrifice several days to shew, and to the national love of fanfaronade, he was never an instant diverted from his purpose. While he seemed to be fully occupied with the political discussions of the various parties, — with shews, and processions, and reviews of corps of children under twelve years old, his more serious preparations for the death-struggle which he expected to encounter, were as gigantic in their charac?-ter as incessant in their progress. Every effort was used to excite the population to assume arms, and to move forward corps of national guards to relieve in garrison the troops of the line now.called into more active service. And while Buonaparte was convoking in the Champ de Mai, as his mock assembly of the people was fantastically entitled, a number of persons to whom the revolution had given dangerous celebrity, together with his own military adherents, — a class of men of all others

most unfit for being members of a deliberative assembly, — while, I say, this political farce was rehearsing and acting, the real tragedy was in active preparation. Cannon, musquets, arms of every description, were forged and issued from the manufactories and arsenals with incredible celerity. The old corps were recruited from the conscripts of 1814; retired veterans were again called forth to their banners; new levies were instituted, under the various names of free-corps, feders, and volunteers j the martial spirit of France was again roused to hope and energy; and the whole kingdom seemed transformed at once into an immense camp, of which Napoleon was the leader and soul. One large army defiled towards Bel=

gium, where the neighbourhood of the English and Prussian troops excited alarm; other armies were assembled in Alsace, in Lorraine, in Franche Compte, at the foot of the Alps, and on the verge of the Pyrenees. It only remained to be discovered on which side the storm was to burst.

There is little doubt, that Buonaparte, reckoning upon the success of Murat, or hoping at least on his making a permanent diversion, had destined the north of Italy for the first scene of active and personal warfare. A threat in that quarter would have been sufficient to divert from the main struggle the whole force of Austria, already sensible, from sad experience, how vulnerable she was through her Italian frontier. Many of the Russian troops would probably have been detached to her assistance, and while a triple barrier of fortresses and garrisons of the first order, with a strong covering army, was opposed on the frontier of Flanders to the English and Prussian armies, Buonaparte himself might have taken the field on the theatre of his original triumphs, and have removed the war from the French territory, with the certainty, in case of success, that his army would be recruited among the Cisalpine veterans of Eugene Beauharnois. But Austria, on this pressing alarm, exerted herself with an activity unknown to her annals; and the troops which she rapidly hurried forward to meet Murat, exhibited, in the very first conflicts, the military superiority of the northern warriors.- — ” These barbarians,” said the Neapolitans, after the skirmish at Rimini, “ fight as if they had two lives; what chance have we against them, who pretend only to one And to save that single title to existence, Murat’s army fled with such celerity, and so little resistance, that the campaign was ended almost as soon as begun, and with it terminated the reign of King Joachim over the delicious kingdom of Naples. No king, in a fairy tale, ever obtained a crown so easily, or lost it in a manner so simple, and at the same time so speedy.

His discomfiture was attended with the most disadvantageous consequences to Buonaparte, who thus appeared hermetically sealed within the realm of France, by hostile armes advancing on all hands, and compelled to await the conflict upon his own ground.

But he neither lost courage nor slackened his preparations on account of his relative's disaster. The French grand army, already in the highest order, was still farther augmented in number and equipments. It became now obvious, that Flanders, or the adjoining French frontier, must be the scene of action. The general headquarters were fixed at Laon; a very strong position, where some preparations were made for forming an army of reserve, in case of a disaster. The first corps occupied Valenciennes, and the second Maubeuge, communicating by their right wing with the armies assembled in the Ardennes and on the Moselle, and resting their left upon the strong fortifications of Lisle. Here they waited the numerous reinforcements of every kind which Buonaparte poured towards their position.

The deficiency of artillery was chiefly apprehended. The allies had, in 1814, carried off most of the French field-trains. But, by incredible exertions, the loss was more than supplied; for, besides the usual train attached to separate corps, each division of the army had a park of reserve, and the imperial guard, in particular, had a superb train of guns, consisting almost entirely of new pieces. It is remarkable, that in casting these fine engines of war, the old republican moulds had, in general, been employed; for I observed, that most of the guns taken at Waterloo have engraved upon them the emphatic inscriptions, Libert, Egalite, Fraternity, and so forth; not to mention others, which, in honour of philosophy, bore the names of Voltaire, Rousseau, and other writers of deistical eminence. The army in all possessed more than three hundred guns; a quantity of artillery which has been thought rather beyond the proportion of its numbers.

Cavalry was another species of force in which Buonaparte was supposed to be peculiarly weak. But the very reverse proved to be the case. The care of Louis XVIII. had remounted several of the regiments which had suffered in the campaigns of 1813 and 1814 and the exertions of Napoleon and his officers completed their equipment, as well as the levy of others; so that a finer body of cavalry never took the field. They were upwards of twenty thousand in number; of whom the lancers were distinguished by their address, activity, and ferocity; and the cuirassiers, of whom there are

said to have been nine regiments, by the excellence of their appointments, and the superior power of their horses. This last corps was composed of soldiers selected for their bravery and experience, and gave the most decisive proofs of both in the dreadful battle of Waterloo. Their cuirasses consisted of a breastplate and back, joined together by clasps, like the ancient plate-armour. Those of the soldiers were of iron, those of the officers of brass, inlaid with steel. They are proof against a musquet-ball, unless it comes in a perfectly straight direction. To these arms was added a helmet, with cheek-pieces, and their weapons of offence were a long broadsword and pistols. They carried no carabines. The horses of the cuirassiers, although, upon trial, they proved inferior to those of our heavy cavalry, were probably better than those of any other corps in Europe. They were selected with great care, and many of the carriage and saddle-horses, which Buonaparte had pressed for the equipment of the army, were assigned to mount these formidable regiments.

Of the infantry of the French, it was impossible to speak too highly, in point of bravery and discipline in the field. The elite of the army consisted of the imperial guards, who were at least 20,000 strong. These chosen cohorts had submitted with the most sullen reluctance to the changie of sovereigns in 1814; and no indulgence nor flattery, which the members of the Bourbon family could bestow upon them, had availed to eradicate their affection to their former master, which often displayed itself at times and in a manner particularly offensive to those who were their temporary and nominal commanders. The imperial guards were pledged, therefore, as deeply as men could be, to maintain the new. revolution which their partiality had accomplished, and to make good the boast, which had called France to rely “ upon their stars, their fortune, and their strength.” The other corps of infantry, all of whom participated in the same confidence in themselves and their general, might amount, including the artillery, to 110,000 men, which, with the guards and cavalry, formed a gross total of 150,000 soldiers, completely armed and equipped, and supplied, even to profusion, with every kind of ammunition. So fascinated was this brilliant army with recollection of former victories, and confidence in their present strength, that they not only heard with composure the report of the collected armies which marched against them from every quarter of Europe, but complained of the delay which did not lead them into instant battle. They

were under a General who knew well how to avail himself of those feelings of confidence and ardour.

It had been supposed, as well in France and in the army, as in other parts of Europe, that Buonaparte meant to suffer the allies to commit the first hostile act, by entering the French territory. And although the reputation of being the actual aggressor was of little consequence where both parties had so fully announced their hostile intentions, it was still supposed that a defensive war, in which he could avail himself of the natural and artificial strength of French Flanders, might have worn out, as in the early war of the revolution, the armies and spirits of the allies, and exposed them to all those privations and calamities peculiar to an invading army, in a country which is resolutely defended.

But the temper of Buonaparte, ardent, furious, and impetuous, always aiming rather at attack than defence, combined, with the circumstances in which he found himself, to dictate a more daring system of operations.

His power was not yet so fully established as to ensure him the national support during a protracted war of various chances, and he needed now, more than ever, the dazzling blaze of decisive victory to renew the charm, or prestige, as he himself was wont to call it, once attached to his name and fortunes. Considerations peculiar to the nature of the approaching campaign, probably united with those which were personal to himself. The forces now approaching France greatly exceeded in numbers those which that exhaust ed kingdom could levy to oppose them, and it seemed almost impossible to protect her frontiers at every vulnerable point. If the emperor had attempted to make head against the British and Prussians in French Flanders, he must have left open to the armies of Russia and Austria the very road by which they had last year advanced to Paris. On the other hand, if, trusting to the strength of the garrison towns and fortresses on the Flanders frontiers, Napoleon had conducted his principal army against those of the Emperors of Russia and Austria, the numerous forces of the Duke of Wellington and Blucher might have enabled them to mask these strong places by a covering army, and either operate upon the flank of Napoleon's forces, or strike directly at the root of his power by a rapid march upon the capital. Such were the obvious disadvantages of a defensive system.

A sudden irruption into Belgium, as it was more suited to the daring genius of Napoleon, and better calculated to encourage the ardour of his troops, afforded him also a more reasonsable prospect of success. He might,

by a ra pid movement, direct his whole force against the army either of England or of Prussia, before its strength could be concentrated and united to that of its ally. He might thus defeat his foes in detail, as he had done upon similar occasions, with the important certainty, that one great and splendid victory would enable him to accomplish a levy en masse, and thus bring to the field almost every man in France capable of bearing arms j an advantage which would infinitely more than compensate any loss of lives which might be sustained in effecting it. Such an advantage, and the imposing attitude which he would be thereby entitled to assume towards the allies, might have affected the very elements lipbn which the coalition was founded, and afforded to Buonaparte time, means, and opportunity of intimidating the weak and seducing the stronger members of the confederacy. In Belgium also, if successful, he might hope to recruit ahd extend his army by new levies, drawn from a country which had so lately been a part of his own kingdom, and which had not yet had time to attach itself to the new dynasty of powers to whom it had been assigned. For this purpose, he carried musquets with him to equip an insurrectionary army, and officers of their own nation to command them; and although the loyal Belgians were much shocked and scandalized at the hopes expressed by those preparations, it may be presumed they would not have been so confidently entertained without some degree of foundation.

The proposed advance into Belgium had the additional advantage of relieving the people of France from the presence of an army which, even upon its native soil, was a scourge of no ordinary severity. The superiority which long war and a train of success had given to the military profession in France, over every other class of society, totally reversed in that country the wholesome and pacific maxim, Cedant arma toga. In the public walks, in the coffeehouses and theatres of Paris, the conduct of the officers towards a Pekin, (a cant word by which, in their arrogance, they distinguished any citizen of a peaceful profession,) was, in the highest degree, insolent and overbearing. The late events had greatly contributed to inflame the self-importance of the soldiery. Like the praetorian bands of Rome, the janizaries of Constantinople, or the strelitzes of Moscow, the army of France possessed all the real power of the state. They had altered the government of their country, deposed one monarch, and re-elevated another to the throne which he had abdicated. This gave them a consciousness of power and importance, neither favourable to moderation of conduct nor to

military discipline. Even while yet in France, they did not hesitate to inflict upon their fellow-subjects many of those severities, which soldiery in general confine to the country of an enemy; and, to judge from the accounts of the peasantry, the subsequent march of the allies inflicted upon them fewer, or at least less wilful evils, than those which they had experienced at the hands of their own countrymen. These excesses were rarely checked by the officers; some of whom indulged their own rapacity under cover of that of the soldiers, while the recent events which invited soldiers to judge and act for themselves, had deprived others, who, doubtless, viewed this licence with grief and resentment, of the authority necessary to enforce a wholesome restraint upon their followers.

This looseness of discipline was naturally and necessarily followed by dissensions and quarrels among the troops themselves the guards, proud of their fame in arms, and of their title and privileges, were objects of the jealousy of the other corps of the army, and this they repaid by contumely and arrogance, which led, in many cases, to bloody affrays. The cavalry and infantry had dissensions of old standing, which occasioned much mutiny and confusion. Above all, the licence of pillage led to perpetual quarrels, where one regiment or body of troops, who were employed in plundering a village of district, were interrupted by others who desired to share with them in the gainful task of oppression.

These feuds, and the laxity of discipline in which chiefly they originated, may be traced to Buonaparte's total disuse in this, as in his more fortunate campaigns, of the ordinary precautions for maintaining an army by the previous institution of magazines. By neglecting to make such provision, he no doubt greatly simplified his own task as a generali and accelerated, in the same degree, his preparations for a campaign, and the march of an army unincumbered with forage-carts. But he injured, in a much greater proportion, the discipline and moral qualities of his soldiery, thus turned loose upon the country to shift fqr their own subsistence; and, — had such a motive weighed with him, — he aggravated, in a tenfold degree, the horrors of warfare.

The evils arising from the presence of his army were now to be removed into the territories of an enemy. The marches and combination of the various corps d'armee were marked in a distinguished manner by that high military talent which planned Buonaparte's most fortunate campaigns. In the same day, and almost at the same hour, three large armies; that from

Laon, headed by the emperor himself; that of the Ardennes, commanded by the notorious Vandamme; and that of the Moselle, under the orders of General Girard, having broken up from their different cantonments, attained, by a simultaneous movement, an united alignement up on the extreme frontiers of Belgium. The good order and combination with which the grand and complicated movements of these large, armies were executed, was much admired among the French officers, and received as the happy augury of future success.

To his army thus assembled, Buonaparte, upon the 14th of June, 1815, made one of those inflated and bombastic addresses, half riddle, half prophecy, which he had taught the French armies to admire as masterpieces of eloquence. He had not neglected his system of fortunate days; for that upon which he issued his last proclamation was the anniversary of the Marengo and Friedland victories; on which, as well as after those of Austerlitz and Wagram, he assured his troops he had fallen into the generous error of using his conquests with too much lenity. He reminded his soldiers of his victory over Prussia at Jena \ and having no such advantage to boast over the English, he could only appeal to those among his ranks who had been prisoners in Britain, whether their situation had not been very uncomfortable. He assured them they had the private good wishes of the Belgians, Hanoverians, and soldiers of the confederation of the Rhine, although for the present forced into the enemy's ranks; and concluded, by asserting, that the moment was arrived for every courageous Frenchman to conquer or to die.

This speech was received with infinite applause (comme de raison,) and on the morning of the subsequent day (15th June) his army was in motion to enter Belgium.

But my exhausted paper reminds me that this must be the boundary of my present epistle. — Yours, affectionately,

Paul,

Letter VI

Paul to Major, in Continuation

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I gave you, in my last, some account of the auspices under which Buonaparte opened the last of his fields. The bloody game was now begun; but, to understand its progress, it is necessary to mark the position of the opposite party.

Notwithstanding the fertility of Belgium, the maintenance of the numerous troops which were marched into that kingdom from Prussia, and transported thither from England, was attended with great burthens to the inhabitants. They were therefore considerably dispersed, in order to secure their being properly supplied with provisions. The British cavalry, in particular, were cantoned upon the Dender, for the convenience of forage. The Prussians held the line upon the Sambre, which might be considered as the advanced posts of the united armies.

Another obvious motive contributed to the dislocation of the allied force. The enemy having to chuse his point of attack along an extended frontier, it was impossible to concentrate their army upon any one point, leaving the other parts of the boundary exposed to the inroads of the enemy j and this is an advantage which the assailant must, in war, always possess over his antagonist, who holds a defensive position. Yet the British and Prussian divisions were so posted, with reference to each other, as to afford the means of sudden combination and mutual support; and, indeed, without such an arrangement, they could not have ultimately sustained the attack of the French, and Buonaparte's scheme of invasion must have been successful on all points.

But though these precautions were taken, it was generally thought they would not be necessary. A strong belief prevailed among the British officers, that the campaign was to be conducted defensively on the part of the French; and when the certain tidings of the concentration of the enemy's forces, upon the extreme frontier of Belgium, threatened an immediate irruption into that kingdom, it was generally supposed, that, as upon former occasions, the road adopted by the invaders would be that of Namur, which, celebrated for the sieges it had formerly undergone, had been dismantled

like the other fortified places in Flanders by the impolicy of Joseph II., and is now an open town. And I have heard it warmly maintained by officers of great judgment and experience, that Buonaparte would have had considerable advantages by adopting that line of march in preference to crossing at Charleroi. Probably, however, these were compensated by the superior advantage of appearing on the point where he was least expected. In fact, his first movements seem to have partaken of a surprise.

It is not to be supposed that the Duke of Wellington had neglected, upon this important occasion, the necessary means to procure intelligence, — for skill in obtaining which, as Well as for talent in availing himself of the information when gained, he was preeminently distinguished on the peninsula. But it has been supposed, either that the persons whom he employed as his sources of intelligence, were, upon this occasion, seduced by Buonaparte, or that false information was conveyed to the English general, leading him to believe that such had been the case, and of course inducing him to doubt the reports of his own spies. The story is told both ways; and I need hardly add, that very possibly neither may be true. But I have understood from good authority, that a person, bearing, for Lord Wellington's information, a detailed and authentic account of Buonaparte's plan for the campaign, was actually dispatched from Paris in time to have reached Brussels before the commencement of hostilities. This communication was entrusted to a female, who was furnished with a pass from Fouché himself, and who travelled with all dispatch in order to accomplish her mission; but being stopped for two days on the frontiers of France, did not arrive till" after the battle of the 16th. This fact, for such I believe it to be, seems to countenance the opinion, that Fouché maintained a correspondence with the allies, and may lead, on the other hand, to suspicion, that though he dispatched the intelligence in question, he contrived so to manage, that its arrival should be too late for the purpose which it was calculated to serve. At all events, the appearance of the French upon the Sambre was at Brussels an unexpected piece of intelligence.

The advance of Buonaparte was as bold as it was sudden. The second corps of the French attacked the outposts of the Prussians, drove them in, and continued the pursuit to Marchienne-du-pont, carried that village, secured the bridge, and there crossing the Sambre, advanced towards a large village, called Gosselies, in order to intercept the Prussian garrison of Charleroi should it retreat in that direction. The light cavalry of the French,

following the movement of the second corps as far as Marchienne, turned to their right after crossing that river, swept its left bank as far as Charleroi, which they oc cupied without giving the Prussians time to destroy the bridge. The third corps d'armee occupied the road to Namur, and the rest of the troops were quartered between Charleroi and Gosselies, in the numerous villages which everywhere occur in that rich and populous country. The Prussian garrison of Charleroi, with the other troops which had sustained this sudden attack, retired in good order upon Fleurus, on which point the army of Blucher was now concentrating itself.

The advantages which the French reaped by this first success, were some magazines taken at Charleroi, and a few prisoners; but, above all, it contributed to raise the spirits and confirm the confidence of their armies.

Upon the 16th, at three in the morning, the troops which had hitherto remained on the right of the Sambre, crossed that river; arid now Buonaparte began to develope the daring plan which he had formed, of attacking, upon one and the same day, two such opponents as Wellington and Blucher.

The left wing of the French army, consisting of the I st and 2d corps, and of four divisions of cavalry, was entrusted to Ney, who had been suddenly called from a sort of disgraceful retirement to receive this mark of the emperor's confidence. He was commanded to march upon Brussels by Gosselies and Frasnes, overpowering such opposition as might be offered to him in his progress by the Belgian troops, and by the British who might advance to their support.

The centre and right wing of the army, with the imperial guards, (who wrere kept in reserve) marched to the right towards Fleurus against Blucher and the Prussians. They were under the immediate command of Buonaparte himself.

The news of Napoleon's movements in advance, and of the preliminary actions between the French and Prussians, reached Brussels upon the evening of the 15th. The Duke of Wellington, the Prince of Orange, and most other officers of distinction, were attending a ball given on that evening by the Duchess of Richmond. This festivity was soon overclouded. Instant orders were issued that the garrison of Brussels, the nearest disposable force, should move out to meet the approaching enemy; similar orders were issued to the cavalry, artillery, and the guards, who were

quartered at Enghien; other troops, cantoned at greater distances, received orders to move to their support.

Our two distinguished Highland corps, the 42d and 92d, were among the first to muster. They had lain in garrison in Brussels during the winter and spring, and their good behaviour had attracted the affection of the inhabitants in an unusual degree. Even while I was there, Les pet its Ecossois, as they called them, were still the theme of affectionate praise among the Flemings. They were so domesticated in the houses where they were quartered, that it was no uncommon thing to see the Highland soldier taking care of the children, or keeping the shop, of his host. They were now to exhibit themselves in a different character. They assembled with the utmost alacrity to the sound of the wellknown pibroch, " Come to me and I will give you flesh " an invitation to the wolf and the raven, for which the next day did, in fact, spread an ample banquet at the expence of our brave countrymen as well as of their enemies. They composed part of Sir Thomas Picton's division, and early in the morning of the 16th marched out together with the other troops, under the command of that distinguished and lamented officer. The Duke of Brunswick, also, took the field at the head of his " black Brunswickers," so termed from the mourning which they wore for his father, and which they continue to wear for the gallant prince who then led them. Those whose fate it was to see so many brave men take their departure on this eventful day, " gay in the morning as for summer-sport," will not easily forget the sensations which the spectacle excited at the moment, and which were rendered permanent by the slaughter which awaited them. Fears for their own safety mingled with nxiety for their brave defenders, and the agony of suspense sustained by those who remained in Brussels to await the issue of the day, was described to me in the most lively manner by those whose lot it was to sustain such varied emotions. It has been excellently described in a small work, entitled " Circumstantial Details of the Battle of Waterloo," which equals, in interest and authenticity, the Account of the Battle of Leipsic by an Eyewitness, which we perused last year with such eager avidity.

The anxiety of the inhabitants of Brussels was increased by the frightful reports of the intended vengeance of Napoleon. It was firmly believed that he had promised to his soldiers the unlimited plunder of this beautiful city if they should be able to force their way to it. Yet, even under such apprehensions, the bulk of the population shewed no inclination to purchase

mercy by submitting to the invader, and there is every reason to believe, that the friends whom he had in the city were few and of little influence. Reports, however, of treachery were in circulation, and tended to augment the horrors of this agonizing period. It is said there was afterwards found, in Buonaparte?s portfolio, a list, containing the names of twenty citizens, who, as

friends of France, were to be exempted from the general pillage. I saw also a superb house in the Place Royale employed as a military hospital, which I was told belonged to a man of rank, who, during the battle of the 18th, believing the victory must rest with Buonaparte, had taken the ill-advised step of joining the French army. But whatever might be the case with some individuals, by far the majority of the inhabitants of every class regarded the success of the French as the most dreadful misfortune which could befal their city, and listened to the distant cannonade as to sounds upon which the crisis of their fate depended. They were doomed to remain long in uncertainty; for a struggle, on which the fate of Europe depended, was not to be decided in a single day.

Upon the 16th, as I have already mentioned, the left wing of the French under General Ney, commenced its march for Brussels by the road of Gosselies. At Frasnes they encountered and drove before them some Belgian troops who were stationed in that village. But the gallant Prince of Orange, worthy of his name, of his education under Wellington, and of the rank which he is likely to hold in Europe, was now advancing to the support of his advanced posts, and re-enforced them so as to keep the enemy in check.

It was of the utmost importance to maintain the position which was now occupied by the Belgians, being an alignement between the villages of Sart a Mouline and Quatre Bras. The latter farmhouse, or village, derives its name from being the point where the highway from Charleroi to Brussels is intersected by another road at nearly right angles. These roads were both essential to the allies; by the highroad they communicated with Brussels, and by that which intersected it with the right of the Prussian army stationed at St Amand. A large and thick wood, called Le Bois de Bossu, skirted the road to Brussels on the right hand of the English position; along the edge of that wood was a hollow way, which might almost be called a ravine; and between the wood and the French position were several fields of rye, which grows in Flanders to an unusual and gigantic height.

In this situation, it became the principal object of the French to secure the wood from which they might debouche upon the Brussels road. The Prince of Orange made every effort to defend it; but, in spite of his exertions, the Belgians gave way, and the French occupied the disputed post. At this critical moment, the division of Picton, the corps of the Duke of Brunswick, and shortly after the division of the guards from Enghien, came up and entered into action. " What soldiers are those in the wood?" said the Duke of Wellington to the Prince of Orange " Belgians," answered the prince, who had not yet learned the retreat of his troops from this important point. " Belgians!" said the Duke, whose eagle eye instantly discerned what had happened, " they are French, and about to debouche on the road; they must instantly be driven out of the wood." This task was committed to General Maitland, with the grenadiers of the Guards, who, after sustaining a destructive fire from an invisible enemy, rushed into the wood with the most determined resolution. The French, who were hitherto supposed unrivalled in this species of warfare, made every tree, every bush, every ditch, but more especially a small rivulet which run through the wood, posts of determined and deadly defence, but were pushed from one point to another until they were fairly driven out of the position. Then followed a struggle of a new and singular kind, and which was maintained for a length of time. As often as the British endeavoured to advance from the skirts of the wood, in order to form in front of it, they were charged by the cavalry of the enemy, and compelled to retire. The French then advanced their columns again to force their way into the wood, but were compelled to desist by the heavy fire and threatened charge of the British. And thus there was an alternation of advance and retreat, with very great slaughter on both sides, until, after a conflict of three hours, General Maitland retained undisputed possession of this important post, which commanded the road to Brussels.

Meantime the battle was equally fierce on every other point. Picton's brigade, comprehending the Scotch Royals, 92d, 42d, and 44th regiments, was stationed near the farmhouse of Quatre Bras, and was the object of a most destructive fire, rendered more murderous by the French having the advantage of the rising ground $ while our soldiers, sunk to the shoulders among the tall rye, could not return the vollies with the same precision of aim. They were next exposed to a desperate charge of the French heavy cavalry, which was resisted by each regiment separately throwing itself into

a solid square. But the approach of the enemy being partly concealed from the British by the nature of the ground, and the height of the rye, the 42d regiment was unable to form a square in the necessary time. Two companies, which were left out of the formation, were swept off and cut to pieces by the cavalry. Their veteran colonel, Macara, was amongst those who fell. Some of the men stood back to back, and maintained an unyielding and desperate conflict with the horsemen who surrounded them, until they were at length cut down. Nothing could be more galling for their comrades than to witness their slaughter, without having the power of giving them assistance. But they adopted the old Highland maxim, " To-day for revenge, and tomorrow for mourning," and received the cuirassiers with so dreadful and murderous a fire, as compelled them to wheel about. These horsemen, however, displayed the most undaunted resolution. After being beaten off in one point, they made a desperate charge down the causeway leading to Brussels, with the purpose of carrying twro guns, by which it was defended. But at the moment they approached the guns, a fire of grapeshot was opened upon them; and, at the same time, a body of Highlanders, posted behind the farmhouse, flanking their advance, threw in so heavy a discharge of musketry, that the regiment was in an instant nearly annihilated.

The result of these various attacks was, that the French retreated with great loss, and in great confusion; and many of the fugitives fled as far as Charleroi, spreading the news that the British were in close pursuit. But pursuit was impracticable, for the English cavalry had so far to march, that when they arrived upon the ground night was approaching, and it was impossible for them to be of service. Ney therefore reestablished himself in his original position at Frasnes, and the combat died away with nightfall. The British had then leisure to contemplate the results of the day. Several regiments were reduced to skeletons by the number of killed and wounded. Many valuable officers had fallen. Among these were distinguished the gallant Duke of Brunswick, who in degenerate times had remained an unshaken model of ancient German valour and constancy. Colonel Cameron, so often distinguished in Lord Wellington's dispatches from Spain, fell while leading the 92d to charge a body of cavalry, supported by infantry. Many other regretted names were read on the bloody list. But if it was a day of sorrow, it was one of triumph also.

It is true, that no immediate and decisive advantage resulted from this engagement, farther than as for the present it defeated Napoleon's plan of advancing on Brussels. But it did not fail to inspire the troops engaged with confidence and hope. If, when collected from different quarters, after a toilsome march, and in numbers one half inferior to those of the enemy, they had been able to resist his utmost efforts, what had they not to hope when their forces were concentrated, and when their artillery and cavalry, the want of which had been so severely felt during the whole of that bloody day, should be brought up into line? Meanwhile they enjoyed the most decided proof of victory, for the British army bivouacked upon the ground which had been occupied by the French during the battle, with the strongest hopes that the conflict would be renewed in the morning with the most decisive success. This, however, depended upon the news they should hear from Fleurus, where a furious cannonade had been heard during the whole day, announcing a general action between Napoleon and Prince Marshal Blucher. Even the Duke of Wellington was long ere he learned the result of this engagement, upon which his own ulterior measures necessarily must be regulated. The Prussian officer sent to acquaint him with the intelligence had been made prisoner by the French light troops; and when the news arrived, they bore such a cloudy aspect as altogether destroyed the agreeable hopes which the success at Quatre Bras had induced the troops to entertain.

But pledged as I am to give you a detailed account of this brief campaign, I must reserve the battle of Ligny to another occasion. Meanwhile I am ever sincerely yours.

Letter VII.

Paul to Major, in Continuation

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When Buonaparte moved with his centre and right wing against Blucher, he certainly conceived that he left to Ney a more easy task than his own; and that the Mareschal would find no difficulty in pushing his way to Brussels, or near it, before the English army could be concentrated in sufficient force to oppose him. To himself he reserved the task of coping with Blucher, and by his overthrow cutting off all communication between the Prussian and British armies, and compelling each to seek safety in isolated and unconnected movements.

The Prussian veteran was strongly posted to receive the enemy, whom upon earth he hated most. His army occupied a line where three villages, built upon broken and unequal ground, served each as a separate redoubt, defended by infantry, and well furnished with artillery. The village of St Amand was occupied by his right wing, his centre was posted at Ligny, and his left at Sombref. All these hamlets are strongly built, and contain several houses, with large courtyards and orchards, each of which is capable of being converted into a station of defence. The ground behind these villages forms an amphitheatre of some elevation, in front of which was a deep ravine, edged by straggling thickets of trees. The villages were in front of the ravine; and masses of infantry were stationed behind each, destined to reinforce the defenders as occasion required.

In this strong position Blucher had assembled three corps of his army, amounting to 80,000 men. But the fourth corps, commanded by Bulow, (a general distinguished in the campaign of 1814,) being in distant cantonments between Liege and Hannut, had not yet arrived at the point of concentration. The force of the assailants is stated in the Prussian dispatches at 130,000 men. But as Ney had at least 30,000 soldiers under him at Quatre Bras, it would appear that the troops under Buonaparte's immediate command at the battle of Ligny, even including a strong reserve, which consisted of the first entire division, could not exceed 100,000 men. The forces, therefore, actually engaged on both sides, might be nearly equal. They were equal also in courage and in mutual animosity.

The Prussians of our time will never forget, or forgive, the series of dreadful injuries inflicted by the French upon their country after the defeat of Jena. The plunder of their peaceful hamlets, with every inventive circumstance which the evil passions of lust, rapine, and cruelty could suggest; the murder of the father, or the husband, because " the pekin looked dangerous," when he beheld his property abandoned to rapine, his wife, or daughters, to violation, and his children to wanton slaughter; such were the tales which the Prussian Landwehr told over their watchfires to whet each other's appetite to revenge. The officers and men of rank thought of the period when Prussia had been blotted out of the book of nations, her queen martyred by studied and reiterated insult, until she carried her sorrows to the grave, and her king only permitted to retain the name of a sovereign to increase his disgrace as a bondsman. The successful campaign of 1814 was too stinted a draught for their thirst of vengeance, and the hour was now come when they hoped for its amplest gratification.

The French had, also, their grounds of personal animosity not less stimulating. These very Prussians, to whom (such was their mode of stating the account) the emperor's generosity had left the name of independence, when a single word could have pronounced them a conquered province; these Prussians, admitted to be companions in arms to the victors, had been the first to lift the standard of rebellion against them, when the rage of the elements had annihilated the army with which Napoleon invaded Russia. They had done more: they had invaded the sacred territory of.France j defeated her armies upon her own soil; and contributed chiefly to the hostile occupation of her capital. They were commanded by Blucher, the inveterate foe of the French name and empire, whom no defeat could ever humble, and no success could mitigate. Even when the Treaty of Paris was received by the other distinguished statesmen and commanders of the allies as a composition advantageous for all sides, it was known that this veteran had expressed his displeasure at the easy terms on which France was suffered to escape from the conflict. Amid the general joy and congratulation, he retained the manner (in the eyes of the Parisians) of a gloomy malcontent. A Frenchman, somewhat acquainted with our literature, described to me the Prussian general, as bearing upon that occasion the mien and manner of Dryden's spectre-knight: —

Stern look'd the fiend, and frustrate of his will,
Not half sufficed, and greedy yet to kill.

And now this inveterate enemy was before them, leading troops, animated by his own sentiments, and forming the vanguard of the immense armies, which, unless checked by decisive defeat, were about to overwhelm France, and realize those scenes of vengeance which had been in the preceding year so singularly averted.

Fired by these sentiments of national hostility, the ordinary rules of war, those courtesies and acts of lenity which on other occasions afford some mitigation of its horrors, were renounced upon both sides. The Prussians declared their purpose to give and receive no quarter. Two of the French divisions hoisted the black flag, as an intimation of the same intention j and it is strongly affirmed that they gave a more sanguinary proof of their mortal hatred by mutilating and cutting off the ears of the prisoners who fell into their hands at crossing the Sambre. With such feelings towards each other, the two armies joined battle.

The engagement commenced at three in the afternoon, by a furious cannonade, under cover of which the third corps of the French army, commanded by Vandamme, attacked the village of St Amand. They were received by the Prussians with the most determined resistance, in despite of which they succeeded in carrying the village at the point of the bayonet, and established themselves in the church and churchyard. The Prussians made the most desperate efforts to recover possession of this village, which was the key of their rightwing. Blucher put himself at the head of a battalion in person, and impelled them on the French with such success, that one end of the village was again occupied; and the Prussians regained possession of that part of the heights behind it, which, in consequence of VandammeY success, they had been obliged to abandon. The village of Ligny, attacked and defended with the same fury and inveteracy, was repeatedly lost and regained, each party being alternately reinforced from masses of infantry, disposed behind that part of the village which they respectively occupied. Several houses inclosed with courtyards, according to the Flemish fashion, formed each a separate redoubt, which was furiously assailed by the one party, and obstinately made good by the other. It is impossible to conceive the fury with which the troops on both sides were animated. Each soldier appeared to be avenging his own personal quarrel; and the slaughter was in

proportion to the length and obstinacy of a five hours combat, fought hand to hand, within the crowded and narrow streets of a village. There was also a sustained cannonade on both sides through the whole of the afternoon. But in this species of warfare the Prussians sustained a much heavier loss than their antagonists, their masses being drawn up in an exposed situation upon the ridge and sides of the heights behind the villages, while those of the French were sheltered by the winding hollows of the lower grounds.

While this desperate contest continued, Buonaparte apparently began to doubt of its ultimate success. To ensure the storming of Saint Amand, he ordered the first corps of infatitry, which was stationed near Frasnes, with a division of the second corps commanded by Girard, and designed to be a reserve either to his own army or to that of Marshal Ney, to move to the right to assist in the attack. Of this movement Ney complained heavily in a letter to Fouché, as depriving him of the means of ensuring a victory at Quatre Bras.

The reinforcement, as it happened, was unnecessary, so far as the first corps was concerned; for about seven o'clock Vandamme had, after reiterated efforts, surmounted the resistance of the Prussians at St Amand; and Girard had obtained possession of Ligny. Sombref, upon the left of the Prussian line, was still successfully defended by the Saxon general, Thielman, against Mareschal Grouchy, and the Prussians, though driven from the villages in front of the amphitheatre of hills, still maintained their alignement upon the heights themselves, impatiently expecting to be succoured, either by the English or by their own fourth division under Bulow. But the Duke of Wellington was himself actively engaged at Quatre Bras; and Bulow had found it impossible to surmount the difficulties attending a long march through bad roads and a difficult country. In the meanwhile Buonaparte brought this dreadful engagement to a decision, by one of those skilful and daring manoeuvres which characterize his tactics.

Being now possessed of the village of Ligny, which fronted the centre of the Prussian line, he concentrated upon that point the imperial guards, whom he had hitherto kept in reserve. Eight battalions of this veteran and distinguished infantry, formed into one formidable column, supported by four squadrons of cavalry, two regiments of cuirassiers, and the horse-grenadiers of the guard, traversed the village of Ligny at the pas dc charge, threw themselves into the ravine which separates the village from the heights, and began to ascend them, under a dreadful fire of grape and

musketry from the Prussians. They sustained this murderous discharge with great gallantry, and, advancing against the Prussian line, made such an impression upon the masses of which it consisted, as threatened to break through the centre of their army, and thus cut off the communication between the two wings; the French cavalry, at the same time, charged and drove back that of the Prussians.

In this moment of consternation, the cause of Europe had nearly suffered a momentous loss in the death or captivity of the indomi table Blucher. The gallant veteran had himself headed an unsuccessful charge against the French cavalry; and his horse being shot under him in the retreat, both the fliers and pursuers passed over him as he lay on the ground an adjutant threw himself down beside his general, to share his fate; and the first use which the Prince-Marshal made of his recovered recollection was, to conjure his faithful attendant rather to shoot him than to permit him to fall alive into the hands of the French. Meantime, the Prussian cavalry had rallied, charged, and in their turn repulsed the French, who again galloped past the Prussian general, as he lay on the ground, covered with the cloak of the adjutant, with the same precipitation as in their advance. The general was then disengaged and remounted, and proceeded to organize the retreat, which was now become a measure of indispensable necessity.

The Prussian artillery, being dispersed along the front of an extended line, could not be easily withdrawn, and several pieces fell into the hands of the French. Blucher's official dispatch limits the number of guns thus lost to fifteen, which Buonaparte extends to fifty. But the infantry, retiring regularly, and in masses impenetrable to the cavalry of the pursuers, amply preserved that high character of discipline, which, in the campaigns of the preceding year, had repeatedly enabled them to convert retreat and disorder of Qne day into advance and victory upon the next. In their retreat, which they continued during the night, they took the direction of Tilly; and in the next morning were followed by General Thielman with the left wing, who, after'evacuating the village of Sombref, which he had maintained during the whole preceding day, formed the rearguard of the Princes Marshal's army. Being at length joined by the fourth corps, under General Bulow, the Prussian army was once more concentrated in the neighbourhood of the village of Wavre, ten miles behind the scene-of their former defeat; and the utmost exertions were used by Blucher, and the officers under him, to place it in a condition for renewing the conflict.

The carnage of the Prussians in this unsuccessful battle was very great. I have heard it estimated at twenty thousand men, being onefourth part of their whole army. Buonaparte, however, only rates it at.fifteen thousand hors de combat; an enormous loss, especially considering, that, owing to the inveteracy of the combat, and the steady valour displayed by the vanquished in their retreat, there were hardly any prisoners taken.

The events of the 16th had a material influence on the plans of the generals on either side. While the Duke of Wellington was proposing to follow up his advantage at Quatre Bras, by attacking Ney at Frasnes, he received, on the morning of the 17th, the news that Blucher had been defeated on the preceding day, and was in full retreat. This left the Duke no option but to fall back to such a corresponding position as might maintain his lateral communication with the Prussian right wing $ since to have remained in advance would have given Buonaparte an opportunity either to have placed his army betwixt those of England and Prussia, or, at his choice, to have turned his whole force against the Duke's army, which was inferior in numbers. The English general accordingly resolved upon retreating towards Brussels; a movement which he accomplished in the most perfect order, the rear being protected by the cavalry under the gallant Earl of Uxbridge.

Meantime, Buonaparte had also taken his resolution. The defeat of the Prussians had placed it in his option to pursue them with his whole army, excepting those troops under Ney, who were in front of the Duke of Wellington. But this would have been to abandon Ney to almost certain destruction; since, if he was unable, on the preceding day, to make any impression on the van of the British army alone, it was scarce possible he could withstand them, when supported by their main body and joined by reinforcements of every kind. In the supposed event of Ney's defeat, Buonaparte's rear would have been exposed to a victorious English army, while he knew, by repeated experience, how speedily and effectually Blucher could rally his Prussians, even after a severe defeat. He made it his choice, therefore, to turn his whole force against the English, leaving only Grouchy and Vandamme, with about twentyfive thousand men, to hang upon the rear of Blucher; and, by pursuing his retreat from Sombref to Wavre, to occupy his attention, and prevent his attempting to take a share in the expected action with the British.

Napoleon probably expected to find the English army upon the ground which it had occupied during the 16th. But the movement of his own forces from St Amand and Ligny to Frasnes, had occupied a space of time which was not left unemployed by the Duke of Wellington. The retreat had already commenced, and the position atQuatre Bras was, about eleven in the forenoon, only occupied by a strong rearguard, destined to protect the retrograde movement of the British general. Buonaparte put his troops in motion to pursue his retiring enemy. The day was stormy and rainy in the extreme; and the roads, already broken up by the English artillery in tlieir advance and retreat, were very nearly impassable. The cavalry, whose duty it became to press upon the rear of the English, were obliged to march through fields of standing corn, which being reduced to swamps by the wetness of the season, rendered rapid movement impossible. This state of the weather and roads was of no small advantage to the British army, who had to defile through the narrow streets of the village of Genappe, and over the bridge which there crosses a small river, in the very face of the pursuing enemy. Their cavalry once or twice attacked the rearguard, but received so severe a check from the Life Guards and Oxford Blues, that they afterwards left the march undisturbed. I am assured, that the Duke of Wellington, in passing Genappe, expressed his surprise that he had been allowed to pass through that narrow defile, unharrassed by attack and interruption, and asserted his belief, founded upon that circumstance, that Napoleon did not command in person the pursuing divisions of the French army. A French officer, to whom I mentioned this circumstance, accounted for this apparent want of activity, by alleging the heavy loss sustained upon the 16th in the battles of Quatre Bras and Ligny $ the necessary disorganization of the French cavalry after two such severe actions; the stormy state of the weather upon the 17th, and the impracticability of the roads for the movements of cavalry. You, as a military critic, will be best judge how far this defence is available. I notice the same observation in an Account of the Battle of Waterloo, by a British Officer on the Staff.

With little further interruption on the part of the enemy, the British army retired upon the ever-memorable field of Waterloo, and there took up a position upon the road to Brussels, which I shall endeavour to describe more fully in my next Letter. The Duke had caused a plan of this and other military positions in the neighbourhood of Brussels to be made some time before by Colonel Carmichael Smith, the chief engineer. He now called for

that sketch, and, with the assistance of the regretted Sir William de Lancey and Colonel Smith, made his dispositions for the momentous events of next day. The plan itself, a relique so precious, was rendered yet more so, by being found in the breast of Sir William de Lancey's coat, when he fell, and stained with the blood of that gallant officer. It is now in the careful preservation of Colonel Carmichael Smith, by whom it was originally sketched.

When the Duke of Wellington had made his arrangements for the night, he established his headquarters at a petty inn in the small village of Waterloo, about a mile in the rear of the position. The army slept upon their arms upon the ridge of a gentle declivity, chiefly covered with standing corn.

The French, whose forces were gradually coming up during the evening, occupied a ridge nearly opposite to the position of the English army. The villages in the rear of that rising ground were also filled with the soldiers of their numerous army. Buonaparte established his headquarters at Planchenoit, a small village in the rear of the position.

Thus arranged, both generals and their respective armies waited the arrival of morning, and the events it was to bring. The night, as if the elements meant to match their fury with that which was preparing for the morning, was stormy in the extreme, accompanied by furious gusts of wind, heavy bursts of rain, continued and vivid flashes of lightning, and the loudest thunder our officers had ever heard. Both armies had to sustain this tempest in the exposed situation of an open bivouack, without means either of protection or refreshment. But though these hardships were common to both armies, yet, (as was the case previous to the battle of Agincourt,) the moral feelings of the English army were depressed below their ordinary tone, and those of the French exalted to a degree of confidence and presumption unusual even to the soldiers of that nation.

The British could not help reflecting, that the dear-bought success at Quatre Bras, while it had cost so many valuable lives, had produced, in appearance at least, no corresponding result: a toilsome advance and bloody action had been followed by a retreat equally laborious to the soldier; and the defeat of the Prussians, which was now rumour ed with the usual allowance of exaggeration; had left Buonaparte at liberty to assail them separately, and with his whole force, except what sin all proportion might be necessary to continue the pursuit of their defeated and dispirited allies. If

to this it was added, that their ranks contained many thousand foreigners, on whose faith they could not implicitly depend, it must be owned there was sufficient scope for melancholy reflections. To balance these, remained their confidence in their commander, their native undaunted courage, and a stern resolution to discharge their duty, and leave the result to Providence.

The French, on the other hand, had forgotten, in their success at Ligny, their failure at Quatre Bras, or, if they remembered it, their miscarriage was ascribed to treachery; and it was said that Bourmont and other officers had been tried by a military commission and shot, for having, by their misconduct, occasioned the disaster. This rumour, which had no foundation but in the address with which Buonaparte could apply a salve to the wounded vanity of his soldiers, was joined to other exulting considerations. Admitting the partial success of Wellington, the English Duke, they said, commanded but the right wing of the Prussian army, and had, in fact, shared in Blucher's defeat, as he himself virtually acknowledged, by imitating his retreat. All was glow and triumph. No one supposed the English would halt, or make head, until they reached their vessels $ no one doubted that the Belgian troops would join the emperor in a mass; it would have been disaffection to have supposed there lay any impediment in their next morning's march to Brussels; and all affected chiefly to regret the tempestuous night, as it afforded to the despairing English the means of retiring unmolested. Buonaparte himself shared, or affected to share, these sentiments; and when the slow and gloomy dawning of the morning of the 18th of June shewed him his enemies, still in possession of the heights which they occupied overnight, and apparently determined to maintain them, he Could not suppress his satisfaction, but exclaimed, while he stretched his arm towards their position with a motion as if to grasp his prey, Je les tiens done ces Anglois.

The exultation of the French was mixed, according to their custom, with many a scurvy jest at the expence of theif enemies. The death of the Duke of Brunswick was the subject of much pleasantry among such of the French officers as sought to make their court to Jerome, the ex-king of Westphalia. To please this phantom monarch, they ridiculed the fatality which always, they said, placed these unlucky Dukes of Brunswick in concurrence with the conqueror of his states, and condemned them successively to perish as it were Jby his hand. The national dress of our poor Highlanders, whose bodies were found lying in the lines which they had occupied in the field of

Quatre Bras, furnished more good jests than I care to record. But as I heard a Frenchman just now observe, “Il rit bien, qui rit le dernier”

Before entering upon such particulars as I can collect of the battle of Waterloo, let me notice your criticisms upon the affairs of the l6th. You say, first, that Buonaparte ought not to have attacked both the English and Prussian armies on the same day, and you call my attention to the argument detailed in Mareschal Ney’s letter to Fouché. And, secondly, you are of opinion, that, having defeated the Prussians at Ligny, Napoleon should have pursued the routed army of Blucher with his whole cavalry at least, and rendered it impossible for him to rally sooner than under the walls of Maestricht. Such, you say, is the opinion of all military judges in our neighbourhood, by which I know you mean all our friends with blue coats and red collars, whether halflpay captains, ex-officers of volunteers, commanders of local militia, or deputy-lieutenants. “ Never a man’s thought in the world keeps the road-way better than thine, my dear Majorbut in despite of this unanimous verdict against the ex-emperor, I will venture to move for a writ of error.

Upon the first count of the indictment, be pleased to reflect, that Buonaparte’s game was at best a difficult one, and that he could embrace no course which was not exposed to many hazards. It is not the ultimate success, or miscarriage, of his plan by which we ought to judge of its propriety, but the rational prospects which it held out before being carried into execution. Now be it remembered, that, upon the 16th, Blucher’s army was already concentrated at Ligny, while that of Lord Wellington was only moving up in detail to Quatre Bras. Mareschal Ney would scarcely have recommended to Napoleon to move straight towards Brussels by Quatre Bras and Genappe, leaving upon his right, and eventually in his rear, an army of 80,000 Prussians, expecting hourly to be joined by Bulow with 20,000 more, altogether disengaged and unoccupied. The consequence of such a movement must necessarily have been, that, menaced by the enemy’s whole force, the Duke of Wellington might have relinquished thoughts of collecting his army in a post so much in advance as Quatre Bras; but a concentration upon Waterloo would have been the obvious alternative; and if the emperor had advanced to that point and attacked the English without their receiving any assistance from the untouched army of the Prussians, we must suppose Blucher less active in behalf of his allies when at the head of an entire army, than he proved himself to be when commanding one which

had sustained a recent defeat. In a word, if left unattacked, or masked only by a force inferior to their own, the Prussians were in a situation instantly to have become the assailants; and, therefore, it seems that Buonaparte acted wisely in sending the greater part of his army against that body of his enemies which had already combined its forces, while he might reasonably hope, that the divisions under Ney's command could dispose of the British troops as they came up to the field of battle wearied and in detail. In fact, his scheme had, in its material points, complete success, for Napoleon did defeat the Prussians; and, by his success against them, compelled the English to retreat, and gained an opportunity of attacking them with his whole force in a battle, where the scale more than once inclined to his side. If, in the conjoined assault of the 16th, Ney failed in success over an enemy far inferior in numbers, it can only be accounted for by the superior talents of the English general, and the greater bravery of the soldiers whom he commanded. Something like a conscious feeling of this kind seems to lurk at the bottom of the mareschal's statement, who scarce pardons the emperor for being successful upon a day on which he was himself defeated.

The manner in which Ney complains of being deprived of the assistance of the first brigade, held hitherto in reserve, between his right and the left wing of Napoleon, and withdrawn, as he alleges, to the assistance of the latter just when, on his side, " victory was not doubtful," savours of the same peevish criticism. Napoleon sent for these troops when their aid appeared essential to carry the village of St Amand, and thereby to turn the right flank of the Prussians, and he returned them to their original position the instant he perceived a possibility of carrying his point without them. Surely more could not have been expected in the circumstances. Of the tone the mareschal assumes to his fallen master, and the reproaches which he permits himself to cast upon him, I will only say, in the words of Wolsey,

> Within these forty hours Surrey had better
> Have burned his tongue than said so.

Upon the other point of censure it is more difficult to give a satisfactory explanation. The French seem to have considered the battle of Ligny as being of a character less decisive than complete victory, and a consciousness of the unbroken force of the retiring enemy certainly checked the vivacity of the pursuit. The French carried the positions of the Prussians with great slaughter; but the precipitate retreat, and the numerous prisoners

announced in Buonaparte's bulletin, are now universally allowed to be apocryphal. Blucher, whose open and frank avowal of the defeat he sustained claims credit for the rest of his narrative, assures us, that the Prussian army was again formed within a quarter of a league from the field of battle, and presented such a front to the enemy as deterred him from attempting a pursuit. We ought there fore to conclude, (paying always the necessary deference to Buonaparte's military skill,) that although the Prussians had been driven from their positions, yet their retreat must have been conducted with such order, that no advantage would have resulted from pursuing them with a small force, while the necessity of making a movement with his main body to the left in order to repair the disaster sustained by Ney, rendered it impossible for Napoleon to press upon them with an overwhelming superiority of numbers.

These reflections, which I hazard in profound submission to your experience, close what occurs upon the important events of the 16th and 17th days of June last. Ever, my dear Major, &c.

Letter VIII

to the Same

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The field of battle at Waterloo is easily described. The forest of Soignies, a wood composed of beech-trees growing uncommonly close together, is traversed by the road from Brussels, a long broad, cause way, which, upon issuing from the wood, reaches the small village of Waterloo. Beyond this point, the wood assumes a more straggling and dispersed appearance, until about a mile farther, where, at an extended ridge, called the heights of Mount St John, from a farmhouse situated upon the Brussels road, the trees almost entirely disappear, and the country becomes quite open. Along this eminence the British forces were disposed in two lines. The second, which lay behind the brow of the hill, was, in some degree, sheltered from the enemy's fire. The first line, consisting of the elite of the infantry, occupied the crest of the ridge, and were on the left partly defended by a long hedge and ditch, which, running in a straight line from the hamlet of Mount St John towards the village of Ghain, gives name to two farm houses. The first, which is situated in advance of the hedge, and at the bottom of the declivity, is called La Haye Sainte, (the holy hedge,) the other, placed at the extremity of the fence, is called Ter la Haye. The ground at Ter la Haye becomes woody and broken, so that it afforded a strong point at which to terminate the British line upon the left A road runs from Ter la Haye to Ohain and the woody passes of St Lambert, through which the Duke of Wellington kept up a communication by his left with the Prussian army. The centre of the English army occupied the village of Mount Saint John, on the middle of the ridge, just where the great causeway from Brussels divides into two roads, one of which branches off to Nivelles, $nd the other continues the straight line to Chaiierpi. A strong advanced post of Hano verian sharpshooters occupied the house and farmyard of La Haye Sainte, situated in advance upon the Charleroi road, and just at the bottom of the hill. The right of the British army, extending along the same eminence, occupied and protected the Nivelles road as far as the inclosures of Hougoumont, and, turning rather backwards, rested its extreme right upon a a deep ravine. Advanced posts from thence occupied the village

called.Braine la Leude, on which point there was no engagement. The ground in front of the British position sloped easily down into lower ground, forming a sort of valley, not a level plain, but a declivity varied by many gentle sweeps and hollows, as if formed by the course of a river. The ground then ascends in the same manner to a ridge opposite to that of Mount Saint John, and running parallel to it at the distance of twelve or fourteen hundred yards. This was the position of the enemy. It is in some points nearer, and in others more distant from the heights, or ridge, of Mount Saint John, according as the valley between them is of greater or less breadth.

The valley between the two ridges is entirely open and uninclosed, and on that memorable day bore a tall and strong crop of corn. But in the centre of the valley, about half way betwixt the two ridges, and situated considerably to the right of the English centre, was the Chateau de Goumont, or Hougoumont. This is for rather was) a gentlemans house of the old Flemish architecture, having a tower, and, as far as I can judge from its ruins, a species of battlement. It was surrounded on one side by a large farmyard, and on the other opened to a garden divided by alleys in the Dutch taste, and fenced by a brick wall. The whole was encircled by an open grove of tall trees, covering a space of about three or four acres, without any underwood. This chateau, with the advantages afforded by its wood and gardens, formed a strong point dy appui to the British right wing. In fact, while this point was maintained, it must have been difficult for the French to have made a serious attack upon the extremity of our right wing. On the other hand, had they succeeded in carrying Hougoumont, our line must have been confined to the heights, extending towards Merke Braine, which rather recede from the field, and would have been in consequence much limited and crowded in its movements. As far as I understand the order of battle, the British line upon this right wing at the commencement of the action, rather presented the convex segment of a circle to the enemy, but as repeated repulses obliged the French to give ground, the extreme right was thereby enabled to come gradually round, and the curve being reversed, became concave, enfilading the field of battle and the high road from Brussels to Charleroi, which intersects it.

Such was the position of the British army on this memorable morning. That of the French is less capable of distinct description. Their troops had bivouacked on the field, or occupied the villages behind the ridge of La

Belle Alliance. Their general had the choice of his mode of attack upon the English position, a word which, in this case, can only be used in a general sense, as a situation for an order of battle, but not in any respect as denoting ground which was naturally strong, or easily defended.

The imperfect dawn of the 18th was attended by the same broken and tempestuous weather, by which the night had been distinguished. But the interval of rest, such as it was, had not been neglected by the British, who had gained time to clean their arms, distribute ammunition, and prepare every thing for the final shock of battle. Provisions had also been distributed to the troops, most of whom had thus the means of breakfasting with some comfort.

Early in the morning numerous bodies of French cavalry began to occupy all the ridge of La Belle Alliance, opposite to that of Mount St John, arid as our horse were held in readiness to encounter them, an engagement was expected between the cavalry of both armies, which our infantry supposed they would only view in the capacity of spectators. The de sertion of a French officer of cuirassiers, attached to the party of Lewis XVIII., conveyed other information; he assured Lord Hill, and subsequently the Duke of Wellington, that a general attack was intended, which would commence on our right by a combined force of infantry and cavalry.

In the meanwhile the communication between our army and the Prussians by our left flank had been uninterrupted. An officer of engineers, who was dispatched so early as four in the morning, accompanied Bulow's division, already on march to our assistance, struggling with the defiles of St Lambert, through roads which were rendered worse and worse by every succeeding regiment and brigade of artillery. One sentiment, this gentleman assured me, seemed unanimous among the Prussians — an eager and enthusiastic desire to press forward to obtain their share of the glories and dangers of the day, and to revenge their losses upon the 16th. The common soldiers cheered him and his companion as they passed. <c Keep your ground, brave English!" was the universal exclama tion, in German, and in such broken English or French as they found to express themselves — " Only keep your ground till we como up!" — and they used every effort accordingly to get into the field. But the movement was a lateral one, made across a country naturally deep and broken, rendered more so by the late heavy rains; and, on the whole, so unfit for the passage of a large body of troops, with their cavalry, artillery, &c% that even these officers, well

mounted as they were, and eager to make their report to the department from which they had been dispatched, did not reach the field of battle till after eleven o'clock.

The engagement had already commenced. It is said Buonaparte fired the first gun with his own hand, which is at least doubtful. But it is certain he was in full view of the field when the battle began, and remained upon it till no choice was left him but that of death or rapid flight. His first post was a high wooden observatory, which had been constructed when a trigonometrical survey of the country was made by order of the King of the Netherlands some weeks before. But he afterwards removed to the high grounds in front of La Belle Alliance, and finally to the foot of the slope upon the road to Brussels. He was attended by his staff/ and squadrons of service, destined to protect his person. Soult, Ney, and other officers of distinction, commanded under him, but he issued all orders and received all reports in person.

The clouds of cavalry, which had mustered thicker and thicker upon the skirts of the horizon in the line of La Belle Alliance, began now to advance forward. One of our best and bravest officers confessed to me a momentary sinking of the heart when he looked round him, considered how small was the part of our force properly belonging to Britain, and recollected the disadvantageous and discouraging circumstances under which even our own soldiers laboured. A slight incident reassured him. An aid-de-camp galloped up, and, after delivering his instructions, cautioned the battalion of the Guards along whom he rode to reserve their fire till the enemy were within a short distance. Never mind us," answered a veteran guardsman from the ranks, — " never mind us, sir; we know our duty " From that moment my gallant friend said, that he knew the hearts of the men were in the right trim, and that though they might leave their bodies on the spot, they would never forfeit their honour. A few minutes afterwards the unparalleled conflict began.

The first attack of the French, as had been announced by the royalist officer, was direct, ed towards our right wing, embracing the post of Hougoumont and the high road to Nivelles. A glance at any plan of this ground will show, that occupying the latter with artillery, would have enabled the French to have pushed forward to the very centre of our line, especially if Hougoumont could have been carried about the same time. On the last point they were partially successful. The fury of the attack was

such, that a body of sharpshooters of Nassau Ussingen, to whom the grove of Hougoumont had been confided, abandoned that part of the post, and the chateau itself must have been carried but for the stubborn and desperate courage of a detachment of the Guards to whom the defence was intrusted. Col. M'Donell, the brother of our Highland Chief Glengarry, was obliged to fight hand to hand among the assailants, and was indebted to personal strength no less than courage for his success in the perilous duty of shutting the gates of the courtyard against the enemy. The Spanish general, Don Miguel Alava, and his aids-de-camp, exerted themselves to rally the scattered sharpshooters of Nassau, and Don Nicholas de Mennuisir was particularly distinguished by his activity. " What would the Spaniards have done," said a prince distinguished for his own personal spirit and courage, as well as for his experience in the peninsular war, — " What would the Spaniards have done, Don Miguel, in a fire like that of Waterloo?" — " At least, sir," retorted the Castilian," they would not, like some of your father's subjects, have fled without seeing their enemy." — By the rout of these light troops, and the consequent occupation of the wood by the French, Hougoumont was, for great part of the action, completely an invested and besieged post, indebted for its security to the walls and deep and strong ditches with which the garden and orchard were surrounded, but much more to the valiant and indomitable spirits of those by whom these defences were maintained. It was currently reported, that, during the attack, the bailiff or steward of the proprietor fired more than once from the summit of the tower upon the British, by whom the court and garden were defended, and that he was at length discovered and shot. I cannot warrant the truth of this anecdote, and it seems inconsistent with the general spirit shown by the Belgians, which was certainly anti-gallican. At any rate, the place was most furiously assailed from without, and as resolutely defended, the garrison firing through the holes which they knocked out in the garden walls, and through the hedge pf the orchard; and the assailants making the most desperate attempts to carry the post, but in vain.

Still, however, Hougoumont being in some degree insulated, and its defenders no longer in communication with the rest of the British army, the French cavalry were enabled to pour round it in great strength to the attack of the British right wing. The light troops, who were in advance of the British line, were driven in by the fury of this general charge, and the foreign cavalry, who ought to have supported them, gave way on all sides.

The first forces who offered a steady resistance were the Black Brunswick infantry. They were drawn up in squares, as most of the British forces were, during this memorable action, each regiment forming a square by itself, not quite solid, but nearly so, the men being drawn up several files deep. The distance between these masses afforded space enough to draw up the battalions in line when they should be ordered to deploy, and the regiments were posted with reference to each Other much like the alternate squares upon a chess-board. It was therefore impossible for a squadron of cavalry to push between two of these squares, without finding themselves at once assailed by a fire in front from that which was to the rear, and on both flanks from those betwixt which it had moved forward.

Often and often during that day was the murderous experiment resorted to, and almost always with the same bad success.

Yet, although this order of battle possesses every efficient power of combination for defence against cavalry, its exterior is far from imposing. The men thus drawn up occupy the least possible space of ground, and a distinguished officer, who was destined to support the Brunswickers, informed me, that when he saw the furious onset of the French cavalry, with a noise and clamour that seemed to unsettle the firm earth over which they galloped, and beheld the small detached black masses which, separated from each other, stood each individually exposed to be overwhelmed by the torrent, he almost trembled for the event. But when the Brunswick troops opened their fire with coolness, readiness, and rapidity, the event seemed no longer doubtful. The artillery also, which was never in higher order, or more distinguished for excellent practice, made dreadful gaps in the squadrons of cavalry, and strewed the ground with men and horses, who were advancing to the charge. Still this was far from repressing the courage of the French, who pressed on in defiance of every obstacle, and of the continued and immense slaughter which was made among their ranks. Or if the attack of the cavalry was suspended for a space, it was but to give room for the operation of their artillery, which, within the distance of one hundred and fifty yards, played upon so obvious a mark as our solid squares afforded with the most destructive effect. “ One fire,” said a general officer, whom I have already quoted, “struck down seven men of the square with whom I was for the moment; the next was less deadly — it only killed three.” Yet under such a fire, and in full view of these clouds of cavalry, waiting like birds of prey to dash upon them where the slaughter should afford the

slightest opening, did these gallant troops close their files over the bodies of their dead and dying comrades, and resume with stern composure that close array of battle, which their discipline and experience taught them afforded the surest means of defence. After the most desperate efforts on the part of the French to push back our right wing, and particularly to establish themselves on the road to Nivelles, and after a defence on the part of the British which rendered these efforts totally unavailing, the battle slackened in some degree in this quarter, to rage with greater fury, if possible, towards the left and centre of the British line.

It was now upon the village of Mount St John, and making use of the causeway or highroad between that hamlet and La Belle Alliance, that Buonaparte precipitated his columns, both of infantry and cavalry, under a tremendous fire of artillery, that was calculated to sweep every obstacle from their course. The ridge of the hill was upon this occasion very serviceable to the British, whose second line was posted behind it, and thus protected, in some degree, from the direct fire, though not from the showers of shells which were thrown on purpose to annoy the troops, whom the enemy with reason supposed to be thus sheltered. The first line derived some advantage from a stragglinghedge, (the same which, as already mentioned, gives the name of La Haye Sainte to the farm,) extending along their centre and left, and partly masking it, though; so far from being strong enough to serve as an entrenchment or breastwork, it could be penetrated by cavalry in almost every direction. Such as it was, however, its line of defence, or rather the troops by whom it was occupied, struck awe into the assailants $ and while they hesitated to advance to charge it, they were themselves in their turn charged and overwhelmed by the British cavalry, who, dashing through the fence at the intervals which admitted of it, formed, charged, and dispersed the battalions which were advancing upon their line. The French cavalry came up to support their infantry, and where the British were in the least dispersed, which, from the impetuosity of the men and horses, was frequently unavoidable, our troops suffered severely. This was particularly experienced by some distinguished regiments, whom the military fashion of the times has converted into hussars, from that excellent old English establishment formerly called Light-Dragoons, which combined with much activity a degree of weight that cannot belong to troopers more slightly mounted. You/who’remember one or two of the picked regiments of 1795, cannot but recollect at once the sort of corps

which is now in some degree superseded by those mounted on light blood horses; It is at least certain, that after the most undaunted exertions on the part' of the officers, seconding those of the Earl of Uxbridge, our light cavalry were found to suffer cruelly in their unequal encounter with the ponderous and sword-proof cuirassiers, and even with the lancers. Many were killed, and several made prisoners', some of whom the French afterwards massacred in cold blood. Even the German Legion, so distinguished for discipline and courage during the peninsular conflicts, were unequal, on this occasion, to sus tain the shock of the French cavalry. And thus, such had been Buonaparte's dexterity in finding resources and in applying them, the French seemed to have a temporary superiority in that very description of force, with which it was supposed altogether impossible he could be adequately provided. It fcwas upon this occasion that Sir John Elley, now quartermaster-general, requested and obtained permission to bring up the heavy brigade, consisting of the Life Guards, the Oxford Blues, and Scotch Greys, and made a charge, the effect of which was tremendous. Notwithstanding the weight and armour of the cuirassiers, and the power of their horses, they proved altogether unable to withstand the shock of the heavy brigade, being literally rode down, both horse and man, while the strength of the British soldiers was no less preeminent when they mingled and fought hand to hand. Several hundreds of French were forced headlong over a sort of quarry or gravel pit, where they rolled a confused and undistinguishable mass of men and horses, exposed to a fire which, being poured closely into them, soon put a period to their struggles. Amidst the fury of the conflict some traces occurred of military indifference which merit being recorded. The Life Guards, coming up in the rear of the ninety-fifth, which distinguished regiment acted as sharpshooters in front of the line, sustaining and repelling a most formidable onset of the French, call ed out to them, as if it had been on the parade in the Park, " Bravo, ninety-fifth! do you lather them and we'll shave them — Amid the confusion presented by the fiercest and closest cavalry fight which had ever been seen, many individuals distinguished themselves by feats of personal strength and valour. Among these should not be forgotten Shaw, a corporal of the LifeGuards, well known as a pugilistic champion, and equally formidable as a swordsman. He is supposed to have slain or disabled ten Frenchmen with his own hand, before he was killed by a musquet or pistolshot. But officers, also, of rank and distinction, whom the usual habits of modern war

render rather the directors than the actual agents of slaughter, were in this desperate action seen fighting hand to hand like common soldiers. “ You are uncommonly savage to-day,” said an officer to his friend, a young man of rank, who was arming himself with a third sabre, after two had been broken in his grasp: “ What would you have me do,” answered the other, by nature one of the most gentle and humane men breathing, “we are here to kill the French, and he is the best man to-day who can kill most of them — and he again threw himself into the midst of the combat. Sir John Elley, who led the charge of the heavy brigade, was himself distinguished for personal prowess. He was at one time surrounded by several of the cuirassiers; but, being a tall and uncommonly powerful man, completely master of his sword and horse, he cut his way out, leaving several of his assailants on the ground, marked with wounds, indicating the unusual strength of the arm which inflicted them. Indeed, had not the ghastly evidences remained on the field, many of the blows dealt upon this occasion would have seemed borrowed from the annals of knight-errantry, for several of the corpses exhibited heads cloven to the chine, or severed from the shoulders. The issue of this conflict was, that the French cavalry was completely beaten off, and a great proportion of their attacking columns of infantry, amounting to about 2000 men, threw down their arms, and were sent of! to Brussels as prisoners. Their arrival there added to the terrors of that distracted city; for a vague rumour having preceded their march, announcing the arrival of a column of French, they were for a long time expected as conquerors, not as prisoners. Even when they entered as captives, the sight of the procession did not relieve the terrors of the citizens; the continued thunder of the cannon still announced that the battle was undecided, and the manner of the prisoners themselves was that of men who expected speedy freedom and vengeance. One officer of cuirassiers was particularly remarked for his fine martial appearance, and the smile of stern contempt with which he heard the shouts of tlie exulting populace. “ The emperor,” he said, “ the emperor will shortly be here and the menace of his frowning brow and clenched hand indicated the fatal consequences which would attend his arrival.

The contest was indeed so far from being decided, that it raged with the most uninterrupted fury it had paused in some degree upon the centre and left, but only to be renewed with double ferocity in the right wing.

The attack was commenced by successive columns of cavalry, rolling after each other like waves of the sea. The Belgian horse, who were

destined to oppose them, again gave way, and galloped from the field in great disorder. Our advanced line of guns was stormed by the French, the artillerymen receiving orders to leave them, and retire within the squares of the infantry. Thus, at least, thirty pieces of artillery were for the time abandoned; but, to an enemy who could not either use them or carry them off. The scene now assumed the most extraordinary and unparalleled appearance. The large bodies of French cavalry rode furiously up and down amongst our small squares of infantry, seeking with desperate courage some point where they might break in upon them, but in vain, though many in the attempt fell at the very point of the bayonets.

In the meantime a brigade of horse-artillery, commanded by the lamented Major Norman Ramsay, opened its fire upon the columns. They retreated repeatedly, but it was only to advance with new fury, and to renew attempts which it seemed impossible for human strength and courage ultimately to withstand. As frequently as the cavalry retreated, our artillerymen rushing out of the squares in which they had found shelter, began again to work their pieces, and made a destructive fire on the retiring squadrons. Two officers of artillery were particularly noticed, who, being in a square which was repeatedly charged, rushed out of it the instant the cavalry retreated, loaded one of the deserted guns which stood near, and fired it upon the horsemen. A French officer observed that this manoeuvre was repeated more than once, and cost his troop many lives. At the next retreat of his squadron, he stationed himself by the gun, waving his sword, as if defying the British officers again to approach it. He was instantly shot by a grenadier, but prevented by his self-devotion a considerable loss to his countrymen. Other French officers and men evinced the same desperate and devoted zeal in the cause which they had so rashly and unhappily espoused. One officer of rank, after leading his men as far as they would follow him towards one of the squares of infantry, found himself deserted by them, when the British fire opened, and instantly rode upon the bayonets, throwing open his arms as if to welcome the, bujlet which should bring him down. He was immediately shot, for the moment admitted of no alternative. On our part, the coolness of the soldiers was so striking as almost to appear miraculous. Amid the infernal noise, hurry, and clamour of the bloodiest action ever fought, the officers were obeyed as if on the parade; and such was the precision with which the men gave their fire, that the aid-de-camp could ride round each square with perfect safety, being sure that the

discharge would be reserved till the precise moment when it ought regularly to be made. The fire was rolling or alternate, keeping up that constant and uninterrupted blaze, upon which, 1 presume, it is impossible to force a concentrated and effective charge of cavalry. Thus, each little phalanx stood by itself, like an impregnable fortress, while their crossing fires supported each other, and dealt destruc tion among the enemy, who frequently attempted to penetrate through the intervals, and to gain the flank, and even the rear of these detached masses. The Dutch, Hanoverian, and Brunswick troops, maintained the same solid order, and the same ready, sustained, and destructive fire, as the British regiments with whom they were intermingled.

Notwithstanding this well-supported and undaunted defence, the situation of our army became critical. The Duke of Wellington had placed his best troops in the first line; they had already suffered severely, and the quality of those who were brought up to support them was in some instances found unequal to the task. He himself saw a Belgian regiment give way at the instant it crossed the ridge of the hill, in the act of advancing from the second into the first line. The Duke rode up to them in person, halted the regiment, and again formed it, intending to bring them into the fire himself. They accordingly shouted En avant! en avant! and, with much of the manner which they had acquired by serving with the French, marched up, dressing thei? ranks with great accuracy, and holding up their heads with military precision. But as soon as they crossed the ridge of the hill, and again encountered the storm of balls and shells, from which they had formerly retreated, they went to the right about once more, and fairly left the Duke to seek more resolved followers where he could find them. He accordingly brought up a Brunswick regiment, which advanced with less apparent enthusiasm than Les braves Beiges, but kept their ground with more steadiness, and behaved very well. In another part of the field, the Hanoverian hussars of Cumberland, as they were called, a corps distinguished for their handsome appearance and complete equipments, were ordered to support a charge made by the British. Their gallant commanding officer shewed no alacrity in obeying this order, and indeed observed so much ceremony, that, after having been once and again ordered to advance, an aid-de-camp of the Duke of Wellington informed him of his Grace’s command, that he should either advance or draw off his men entirely, and not remain there to show a bad example and discourage others.

The gallant officer of hussars considering this as a serious option, submitted to his own decision, was not long in making his choice, and having expressed to the aid-de-camp his sense of the Duke's kindness, and of the consideration which he had for raw troops, under a fire of such unexampled severity, he said he would embrace the alternative of drawing his men off, and posting them behind the hamlet of Saint John. This he accordingly did in spite of the reproaches of the aid-de-camp, who loaded him with every epithet that is most disgraceful to a soldier. The incident, although sufficiently mortifying in itself, and attended, as may be supposed, with no little inconvenience at such a moment, had something in it so comic, that neither the General nor any of his attendants were able to resist laughing when it was communicated by the incensed aid-de-camp. I have been told many of the officers and soldiers of this unlucky regiment left it in shame, joined themselves to other bodies of cavalry, and behaved well in the action. But the valiant commander not finding himself comfortable in the place of refuge which he had himself chosen, fled to Brussels, and alarmed the town with a report that the French were at his heels. His regiment was afterwards in a manner disbanded, or attached to the service of the commissariat.

These circumstances I communicate to you, not in the least as reflecting upon the national character, either of the Hanoverians or Belgians, both of whom had troops in the field, by whom it was gloriously sustained; but, as an answer to those who have remarked, that the armies not being greatly disproportioned in point of numbers, the contest ought to have been sooner decided in favour of the Duke of Wellington. The truth is, that the Duke's firstline alone, with occasional reinforcements from the second, sustained the whole brunt of the action; and, it would have been in the highest degree imprudent to have made any movement in advance, even to.secure advantages which were frequently gained, since implicit reliance could not be placed upon the raw troops and militia, of whom the support was chiefly composed. With 80,000 British troops, it is probable the battle'would not have lasted two hours, though it is impossible it could in that event have been so entirely decisive, since the French, less completely exhausted, would probably have been able to take better measures for covering their retreat.

Meanwhile the battle raged in every point. The centre and left were again assaulted; and, if possible, more furiously than before. The farmhouse

of La Haye Sainte, lying under the centre of the British line, was at last stormed by the French troops, who put the gallant defenders to the sword. They were Hanoverian sharpshooters, who had made good the post with the most undaunted courage, whilst they had a cartridge remaining, and afterwards maintained an unequal contest with their bayonets through the windows and embrazures. As the entrance of the farm fronted the highroad, and was in the very focus of the enemy's fire, it was impossible to send supplies of ammunition by that way; and the commanding officer unfortunately had not presence of mind to make a breach through the back part of the wall, for the purpose of introducing them. " I ought to have thought of it," said the Duke of Wellington, who seems to have considered it as his duty to superintend and direct even the most minute details of that complicated action \ " but," as he added, with a very unnecessary apology, " my mind could not embrace every thing at once." The post meanwhile, though long maintained by the enemy, was of little use to them, as our artillery on the ridge were brought to plunge into it, and the attempt to defend it as a point of support for his future attacks, cost Buonaparte more men than he had lost in carrying it. On the right, Hougoumont continued to be as fiercely assailed, but more successfully defended. The carnage in that point was dreadful; the French at length had recourse to shells, by which they set on fire, first, a large stack of hay in the farmyard, and then the chateau itself. Both continued to blaze high in the air, spreading, a thick black smoke, which ascended far over that of the cannonade, and seemed to announce that some dreadful catastrophe had befallen the little garrison. Many of the wounded had been indeed carried into the chateau for shelter, and, horrible to relate, could not be withdrawn from it when it took fire. But the Guards continued to make good the garden and the courtyard, and the enemy's utmost efforts proved unable to dispossess them. The various repulses which the French had met with in this part of the field, seemed by degrees to render their efforts less furious, and the right wing reestablished its complete Communication with this point d'appui, or key of the position, and reinforced its defenders as occasion demanded.

During this scene of tumult and carnage, the Duke of Wellington exposed his person with a freedom which, while the position of the armies, and the nature of the ground, rendered it inevitably necessary, made all around him tremble for that life on which it was obvious that the fate of the battle depended. There was scarcely a square but he visited in person,

encouraging the men by his presence, and the officers by his directions. Many of his short phrases are repeated by them, as if they were possessed of talismanic effect. While he stood on the centre of the highroad in front of Mount St John, several guns were levelled against him, distinguished as he was by his suite, and the movements of the officers who came and went with orders. The balls repeatedly grazed a tree on the righthand of the road, which tree now bears his name. " That's good practice," observed the Duke to one of his suite, " I think they fire better than in Spain." Riding up to the 95th, when in front of the line, and even then expecting a formidable charge of cavalry, he said, " Stand fast, 95th — we must not be beat — what will they say in England?" On another occasion, when many of the best and bravest men had fallen, and the event of the action seemed doubtful even to those who remained, he said, with the coolness of a spectator, who was beholding some well-contested sport — " Never mind, we'll win this battle yet." To another regiment, then closely engaged, he used a common sporting expression; " Hard pounding this, gentlemen; let's see who will pound longest." All who heard him issue orders took confidence from his quick and decisive intellect, all who saw him caught metal from his undaunted composure. His staff, who had shared so many glories and dangers by his side, fell man by man around him, yet seemed in their own agony only to regard his safety. Sir William Delancey, struck by a spent ball, fell from his horse — " Leave me to die," he said to those who came to assist him, " attend to the Duke." The lamented Sir Alexander Gordon, whose early experience and high talents had already rendered him the object of so much hope and expectation, received his mortal wound while expostulating with the General on the personal danger to which he was exposing himself. Lieutenant-Colonel Canning, and many of our lost heroes, died with the Duke's name on their expiring lips. Amid the havoc which had been made among his immediate attendants, his Grace sent off a young gentleman, acting as aid-de-camp, to a general of brigade in another part of the field, with a message of importance. In returning he was shot through the lungs, but, as if supported by the resolution to do his duty, he rode up to the Duke of Wellington, delivered the answer to his message, arid then dropped from his horse, to all appearance a dying man. In a word, if the most devoted attachment on the part of all who approached him, can add to the honours of a hero, never did a general receive so many and such affecting proofs of it; and their devotion Was repaid by his sense of its value

and sorrow for their loss. “ Believe me,” he afterwards said, “ that nothing, excepting a battle lost, can be half so melancholy as a battle won. The bravery of my troops has hitherto saved me from that greater evil; but, to win even such a battle as this of Waterloo, at the expence of the lives gf so many gallant friends, could only be termed a heavy misfortune, were it not for its results to the public benefit.”

In the meanwhile it seemed still doubtful whether these sacrifices had not been made in vain; for the French, though repulsed in every point, continued their incessant attacks with a perseverance of which they were formerly deemed incapable; and the line of chequered squares, hitherto successfully opposed to them, was gradually, from the great reduction of numbers, presenting a diminished and less formidable appearance. One general officer was under the necessity of stating, that his brigade was reduced to onethird of its numbers, that those who remained were exhausted with fatigue, and that a temporary relief, of however short duration, seemed a measure of peremptory necessity. “ Tell him,” said the Duke, “ what he proposes is impossible. He, I, and every Englishman in the field, must die oh the spot which we now occupy.” “ It is enough,” returned the general; “ I and every man under my command are determined to share his fate.” A friend of ours had the courage to ask the Duke of Wellington, whether in that conjuncture he looked often to the woods from which the Prussians were expected to issue. — ” No,” was the answer; “I looked oftenei: at my watch than at any thing else. I knew if my troops could keep their position till night, that I must be joined by Blucher before morning, and we would not have left Buonaparte an army next day. But,” continued he, “ I own I was glad as one hour of daylight slipped away after another, and our position was still maintained.” — ” And if,” continued the querist, “by misfortune the position had been carried?” — ” We had the wood behind to retreat into “ — ” And if the wood also was forced?” — ”No, no; they could never have so beaten us but we could have made good the wood against them.” — From this brief conversation it is evident that in his opinion, whose judgment is least competent to challenge, even the retreat of the English on this awful day would have afforded but temporary success to Buonaparte.

While this furious conflict lasted, the Prussian general, with the faith and intrepidity which characterises him, was pressing forward to the assistance of his allies. So early as between three and four o’clock, the

division of Butow appeared menacing the right flank of the French, chiefly with light troops and ca valry. But this movement was foreseen and provided against by Buonaparte. Besides the immense force with which he sustained the main conflict, he had kept in reserve a large body of troops, under Count Lobau, who were opposed to those of Bulow with a promptitude which appeared like magic; our officers being at a loss almost to conjecture whence the forces came, which appeared as it were to rise out of the earth to oppose this new adversary. The engagement (which consisted chiefly in sharpshooting) continued in this quarter, but with no great energy, as the Prussian general waited the coming up of the main body of Blucher's army. This was retarded by many circumstances. We have already noticed the state of the cross-roads, or rather tracks, through which a numerous army had to accomplish their passage. But besides, the effects of the battle of Ligny were still felt, and it was not only natural but proper that Blucher, before involving himself in defiles from which retreat became impossible, should take some time to ascertain whether the English were able to maintain their ground until he should come up to their assistance. For, in the event of their being routed, with the usual circumstances of defeat, before the Prussians came up, Blucher must have found himself in a most critical situation, engaged in the defiles of St Lambert, with one victorious French army in front, and another pressing upon his rear at Wavre. Such at least is the opinion of our best and most judicious officers. But the loyalty of the Prince-Marshal's character did not permit him long to hesitate upon advancing to the support of his illustrious ally.

Grouchy and Vandamme, with their combined forces, had followed the Prussian rear (commanded by Tauenzein) as far as Wavre, less, it would seem, with the purpose of actual fight, than of precipitating the retreat, which they supposed Blucher to have commenced with his whole army. At length Tauenzein halted upon the villages of Wavre and Bielge, on the river Dyle, and there prepared to defend himself. It is probable that, about this time, the appearance of Bulow's corps on Buonaparte's right flank made the French general desirous the Prussians should be attacked in a different and distant point, in such a serious manner as might effectually engage their attention, and prevent their detaching more forces to the support of Wellington. Accordingly orders were dispatched to Grouchy to make a serious attack upon that part of the Prussian army which was opposed to him. But Buonaparte was not aware, nor does Grouchy seem to have

discovered, that the forces he was thus to engage only consisted of a strong rearguard, which occupied the villages and position upon the Dyle to mask the march of the main army under the Prince Marshal himself, which was already defiling to the right through the passes of St Lambert, and in full march to unite itself with Wellington and Bulow. The resistance of Tauenzein, however, was so obstinate as to confirm Grouchy in the belief that he was engaged with a great proportion of the Prussian army. The bridge at Wavre, particularly, was repeatedly lost and gained before the French were able to make their footing good beyond it. At length a French colonel snatched the eagle of his regiment, and rushing forward, crossed the bridge and struck it into the ground on the other side. His corps followed with an unanimous shout of Vive I'Empereur! and although the gallant officer who thus led them on was himself slain on| the spot, his followers succeeded in carrying the village. That of Bielge at the same time fell into their hands, and Grouchy anxiously expected from his Emperor orders to improve his success. But no such orders arrived; the sound of the cannon in that direction slackened, and at length died away; and it was next morning before Grouchy heard the portentous news, that awaited him, announcing the fate of Napoleon and his army.

Meantime Blucher pressed the march of his forces through the defiles which separated him and Wellington, Notwithstanding the consequences of his fall upon the 16th, the veteran insisted upon leaving his carriage and being placed on horseback, that he might expedite the march by precept and example. The sun was, however, near setting before his forces appeared in strength issuing from the woods upon the flank of the contending armies. It seems to have been one of Buonaparte's leading errors to miscalculate the moral force of the Prussian character, and especially that of Blucher. Though it was now obvious that the army of the Prince-Marshal was appearing on the field, Napoleon deluded himself to the last by a belief that they were followed by Grouchy, and either retreating, or moving laterally in the same line with him. In this mistake he obstinately persisted until the consequences proved fatal to the very last chance which he had of covering his own retreat. It was for some time supposed, that he mistook the Prussians for his own forces under Grouchy. This was not the case, nor was it possible it could be so. His real error was sufficient for his destruction, without exaggerating it into one that would indicate insanity. But, as appears from Mareschal Ney's letter, Buonaparte spread among the soldiers,

by means of the unfortunate Labedoyere, his own belief that Grouchy was advancing to their support. He imagined, in short, that, at the very worst, his own general had made a lateral movement, corresponding to that of Blucher, and was as near to support as the other was to attack him. In this belief, all the slaughter and all the repulses of that bloody day did not prevent his risking a final and desperate effort.

Notwithstanding the perseverance with which Buonaparte had renewed his attacks upon the English position, and the vast number of his best cavalry and infantry who had fallen in the struggle, he had still in reserve nearly 15,000 men of his own guard, who, remaining on the ridge of La Belle Alliance, or behind it, had scarcely drawn a trigger during the action. But about seven o'clock at night their emperor determined to devote this proved and faithful reserve, as his last stake, to the chance of one of those desperate games in which he had been frequently successful. For this purpose he left the more distant point of observation, which he had for some time occupied upon the heights in the rear of the line, and descending from the hill, placed himself in the midst of the highway fronting Mount St John, and within about a quarter of a mile of the English line. The banks, which rise high on each side, protected him from such balls as did not come in a direct line. Here he caused his guards to defile before him, and acquainting them that the English cavalry and infantry were entirely destroyed, and that to carry their position they had only to sustain with bravery a heavy fire of their artillery: he concluded by pointing to the causeway, and exclaiming, " There, gentlemen, is the road to Brussels!" The prodigious shouts of Vive l'Empereur, with which the Guard answered this appeal, led our troops, and the Duke of Wellington himself, to expect an instant renewal of the attack, with Napoleon as the leader. Many an eye was eagerly bent to the quarter from whence the clamour proceeded; but the mist, as well as the clouds of smoke, rendered it impossible to see any object distinctly. None listened to the shout with more eager hope than our own great General, who probably thought, like the Avenger in Shakspeare,

> -There thou shouldst be:
> By this great clatter one of greatest note Seems bruited.

All indeed expected an attack headed by Buo naparte in person; and in failing upon this instant and final crisis to take the command of his Guards,

whom he destined to try the last cast of his fortune, he disappointed both his friends and enemies.

The Imperial Guard, however, rallying in their progress such of the broken cavalry and infantry of the line as yet maintained the combat, advanced dauntlessly. But the repeated repulses of the French had not been left unimproved by the British. The extreme right of the line, commanded by General Frederick Adam, under Lord Hill, had gradually and almost imperceptibly gained ground after each unsuccessful charge, until the space between Hougoumont and Braine la Leude being completely cleared of the enemy, the British right wing, with its artillery and sharpshooters, was brought round from a convex to a concave position, so that our guns raked the French columns as soon as they debouched upon the causeway for their final attack. Our artillery had orders during the whole action to fire only upon the infantry and cavalry of the French, and not to waste their ammunition and energy in the less decisive exchange of shot with the French guns. The service of the artillery was upon this occasion so accurate, and at the same time so destructive, that the heads of the French attacking columns were enfiladed, and in a manner annihilated, before they could advance upon the high road. Those who witnessed the fire and its effects, describe it to me as if the enemy's columns kept perpetually advancing from the hollow way without ever gaining ground on the plain, so speedily were the files annihilated as they came into the line of the fire. Enthusiasm, however, joined to the impulse of those in the rear, who forced forward the front into the scene of danger, at length carried the whole attacking force into the plain. But their courage was obviously damped. They advanced indeed against every obstacle till they attained the ridge, where the British soldiers lay on the ground to avoid the destructive fire of artillery, by which the assault was covered: but this was their final effort. " Up, Guards, and at them," cried the Duke of Wellington, who was then with a brigade of the Guards. In an instant they sprung up, and, assuming the offensive, rushed upon the attacking columns with the bayonet. This body of the Guards had been previously disposed in line, instead of the squares which they had hitherto occupied. But the line was of unusual depth, consisting of four ranks instead of two. "You have stood cavalry in this order," said the General, "and can therefore find no difficulty in charging infantry." The effect of their three fatal cheers, and of the rapid advance which-followed, was decisive. The Guards of Napoleon were within twenty yards of those of

our sovereign, but not one staid to cross bayonets with a British soldier. The consciousness that no support or reserve remained to them added confusion to their retreat. This was observed by both generals with suitable emotion. The Duke of Wellington perceived the disorder of the French retreat, and the advance of the Prussians on their right flank, where they were already driving in all that was opposed to them. He immediately commanded the British troops to form line, and assume the offensive. The whole line formed four deep, and, supported by the cavalry and artillery, rushed down the slopes and up the corresponding bank, driving before them the flying French, whose confusion became each moment more irretrievable. The tirailleurs of the Imperial Guard gallantly attempted to cover the retreat. They were charged by the British cavalry, and literally cut to pieces.

Buonaparte saw the issue of the fight with the same accuracy as the English General, but with far different feelings. He had shown the utmost coolness and indifference during the whole day, and while he praised the discipline and conduct of particular corps of the British army, whose gallantry he witnessed, he affected to lament their necessary and inevitable destruction. Even to reports which were incessantly brought to him of the increasing strength and progress of the Prussians upon his right flank, he turned an indifferent ear, bending his whole attention, and apparently resting his final hope, upon the success of the ultimate attack by the Imperial Guards. When he observed them recoil in disorder, the cavalry intermixed with the foot, and trampling them down, he said to his aid-de-camp, “Ils sont melees ensemble!” then looked down, shook his head, and became, according to the expression of his guide, pale; as a corpse. Immediately afterwards two large bodies of British cavalry appeared in rapid advance on each flank; and as the operations of the Prussians had extended along his right flank, and were rapidly gaining his rear, Buonaparte was in great danger of being made prisoner. He then pronounced the fatal words, “ It is time to save ourselves,” and left to their fate the army which that day had shed their blood for him with such profusion His immediate attendants, about ten or twelve in number, scrambled along with him out of the hollow way, and gaining the open plain, all fled as fast as their horses could carry them, or the general confusion would admit, without a single attempt, on Buonaparte’s part, to rally his army or cover their retreat. Whatever may be thought of Buonaparte’s behaviour on former occasions, it would appear, either that

prosperity had clouded his energy of mind, or that he was in some degree wanting to himself on the conclusion of this memorable day. For, after having shown, during the progress of the battle, great judgment, composure, and presence of mind, the mode of his retreat was much less than honourable to a soldier, who had risen by personal courage and conduct to the greatest pitch of power which was ever enjoyed by an individual.

Meanwhile the front attack of the English, and that of the Prussians upon the flank, met with slight opposition. Just as the English army had deployed into line for the general charge, the sun streamed out, as if to shed his setting glories upon the conquerors of that dreadful day. Fatigue and diminution of numbers, even wounds, were forgotten, when the animating command was given to assume the offensive, Headed by the Duke of Wellington himself, with his hat in his hand, the line advanced with the utmost spirit and rapidity. The fire of the enemy from one hundred and fifty pieces of artillery did not stop them for a single moment, and in a short time the French artillerymen deserted their guns, cut loose their traces, and mingled in the flight, now altogether confused and universal, the fugitives trampling down those who yet endeavoured to keep their ranks. The first line had hardly,the vestige of military order when it was flung back on the second, and both became then united in one tide of general and undistinguished flight. Baggage-waggons, artillery-carts, guns overthrown, and all the impediments of a hurried flight, cumbered the open field as well as the causeway, without mentioning the thick-strewn corpses of the slain, and the bodies of the still more miserable wounded,who in vain shrieked and implored compassion, as fliers and pursuers drove headlong over them in the agony of fear or the ecstacy of triumph. All the guns which were in line along the French position, to the number of one hundred and fifty, fell into the immediate possession of the British. The last gun fired was a howitzer, which the French had left upon the road. It was turned upon their retreat, and discharged by Captain Campbell, aid-de-camp to General Adam, with his own hand, who had thus the honour of concluding the battle of Waterloo, which, it has been said, Buonaparte himself commenced.

There remained, however, for the unhappy fugitives a flight and pursuit of no ordinary description. And here the timely junction of the Prussians was of the last consequence to the common cause of Europe. The British cavalry were completely wearied with the exertions of the day, and utterly incapable of following the chase. Even the horses fo the officers were

altogether unable to strike a trot for any length of way, so that the arrival of the Prussians, with all their cavalry fit for instant and rapid operation, and organized by so active a quarter?master-general as Greisenau, was essential to gathering in the harvest, which was already dearly won and fairly reaped.

The march and advance of the Prussians crossed the van of the British army, after they had attacked the French position, about the farmhouse of La Belle Alliance, and there, or near to that spot, the Duke of Wellington and Prince-Marshal Blucher, met to congratulate each other upon their joint success and its important consequences. The hamlet, which is said to have taken its name from a little circumstance of village scandal, came

> * A woman who resided here, after marrying two husbands in her own station of creditable yeomanry, chose to unite herself, upon her becoming a second time a widow, to her own hind or ploughman; and the name of La Belle Alliance was bestowed on her place of residence in ridicule of this match.

to bear an unexpected and extraordinary coincidence with the situation of the combined armies, which inclines many foreigners even now to give the fight the name of the Battle of La Belle Alliance. Here, too, the victorious allies of both countries exchanged military greeting, — the Prussians halting their regimental band to play " God save the King," while the British returned the compliment with three cheers to the honour of Prussia. The Prince-Marshal immediately gave orders that every man and horse in his army capable of action should press upon the rear of the fugitives, without giving them a moment's time to rally. The night was illuminated by a bright moon, so that the fliers found no refuge, and experienced as little mercy.

To the last, indeed, the French had forfeited all claim; for their cruelty towards the Prussians taken upon the 16th, and towards the British wounded and prisoners made duringthe battle of the 18th, was such as to exclude them from the benefit of the ordinary rules of warf Their lancers, in particular, rode over the field during the action, dispatching with their weapons the wounded British, with the most inveterate rancour, and many of the officers who have recovered from the wounds they received on that glorious day, sustained the greatest danger and most lasting inconvenience from such as were inflicted by those savages, when they were in no condition either to offend others or defend themselves. The Quoi! tu n'es

pas mort? of the spearman was usually accompanied with a thrust of his lance, dealt with an inveteracy which gives great countenance to the general opinion, that their orders were to give no quarter. Even the British officers who were carried before Buonaparte, although civilly treated while he spoke to them, and dismissed with assurances that they should have surgical assistance and proper attendance, were no sooner out of his presence than they were stripped, beaten, and abused. Most of the prisoners whom the French took from our light cavalry were put to death in cold blood, or owed their safety to concealment or a speedy escape. In short, it seemed as if the French army, when they commenced this desperate game, had, like Buccaneers setting forth upon a cruise, renounced the common rules of i, war, and bonds of social amity, and become ambitious of distinguishing themselves as enemies to the human species. mThis unnatural hatred, rashly announced and cruelly acted upon, was as fearfully avenged. The Prussians listened not, and they had no reason to listen, to cries for mercy from those who had thus abused their momentary advantages over themselves and their allies; and their light horse, always formidable on such occasions, made a.fearful and indiscriminate slaughter, scarce interrupted even by the temptation of plundering the baggage with which the roads were choaked, and unchecked by aji attempt at resistance. Those soldiers who had begun the morning with such.hopes, and whose conduct during the battle vindicated their having done so, were now so broken in heart and spirits, that scores: of them fled at sight of a single Prussian hussar.

Yet it is remarkable that, amid the countless number who fell, both of privates and officers, we do not notice many of those names distinguished in the bulletins of Buonaparte's former campaigns. Whether the marshals, doubting the success of their old master, hazarded themselves less frankly in his cause, or did so with better fortune than belonged to our distinguished and undaunted Picton, Ponsonby, and other officers of high rank whose loss we lament, it is not for me to conjecture. But,, except Duhesme and Friant, neither of whose names were very much distinguished, we hear of no general officers among the French list of the slain. The latter was killed by a ball close to the turncoat Ney, who commanded the imperial guards in the last attack. The death of Duhesme had something in it which was Homeric. He was overtaken in the village of Genappie by one of the Duke of Brunswick's black hussars, of whom he begged quarter. The soldier

regarded him sternly, with his sabre uplifted, and then briefly saying, “ The Duke of Brunswick died yesterday,” bestowed on him his death’s wound.

General Cambrone was said also to have fallen after refusing quarter, and announcing to the British, by whom it was offered, “ The Imperial Guard can die but never surrender.”

The speech and the devotion of the general received honourable mention in the Minutes of the Chamber of Representatives. But the passage was ordered to be erased next day, it being discovered that General Cambrone was a prisoner in Lord Wellington’s camp.

The French retreat was utter rout and confusion, the men deserting their officer the officers the men, all discipline neglected, and every thing thrown away which could for a moment impede the rapidity of their panic flight. A slight attempt was made to halt at the village of Genappe, but there and at Charleroi, and wherever else the terrified fugitives attempted to pause, a cannon-shot or two, or the mere sound of a Prussian drum or trumpet was sufficient to put them again to the rout.

The English remained on the field of battle and the villages adjacent. Be it not forgotten, that, after such attention to their wounded companions, as the moment permitted, they carried their succours to the disabled French, without deigning to remember that the defenceless and groaning wretches who encumbered the field of battle in heaps, were the same men who had displayed the most relentless cruelty on every temporary advantage which they obtained during this brief campaign. They erected huts over them to protect them from the weather, brought them water, and shared with them their refreshments, shewing in this the upright nobleness of their own dispositions, and giving the most vivid testimony of their deserving that victory with which Providence had crowned them- — a victory as unparalleled in its consequences, as the battle itself was in its length, obstinacy, and importance. Adieu! my dear Major. Excuse a long letter, which contains much which you may have heard better told, mixed with some things with which you are probably not yet acquainted. The details which I have ventured to put into writing, are most of them from the authority of officers high in command upon that memorable day, and I may therefore be allowed to hope that even repetitions will be pardoned for the sake of giving more authenticity to the facts which I have narrated. Your’s, &c.

Paul.

Letter IX

Paul to His Sister Margaret

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I should now, my dear sister, give you some description of the celebrated field of Waterloo. But although I visited it with unusual advantages, it is necessary that I should recollect how many descriptions have already appeared of this celebrated scene of the greatest event of modern times, and that I must not weary your patience with a twice-told tale. Such and so numerous have been the visits of English families and tourists, as to enrich the peasants of the vicinity by the consequences of an event which menaced them with total ruin. The good old Flemish housewife, who keeps the principal cabaret at Waterloo, even when I was there, had. learnt the value of her situation, and charged three prices for our coffee, because she could gratify us by showing the very bed in which the Grand Lord slept the night preceding the action. To what extremities she may have since proceeded in taxing English curiosity, it is difficult to conjecture. To say truth, the honest Flemings were at first altogether at a loss to comprehend the eagerness and enthusiasm by which their English visitors were influenced in their pilgrimages to this classic spot. Their country has been long the scene of military operations, in which the inhabitants themselves have seldom felt much personal interest. With them a battle fought and won is a battle forgotten, and the peasant resumes his ordinary labours after the armies have left his district, with as little interest in recollecting the conflict, as if it had been a thunderstorm which had passed away. You may conceive, therefore, the grave surprise with which these honest pococurantes viewed the number of British travellers of every possible description, who hastened to visit the field of Waterloo.

I was early in making my pilgrimage, yet there were half a dozen of parties upon the ground at the same time with that to which I belonged. Honest John Lacoste, the Flemish peasant, whom Buonaparte has made immortal by pressing into his service as a guide, was the person in most general request, and he repeated with great accuracy the same simple tale to all who desired to hear him. I questioned him long and particularly, but I cannot pretend to have extracted any information in addition to what has

been long ago very accurately published in the newspapers. For I presume you Would be little interested in knowing that, upon this memorable occasion, the ex-emperor rode a dappled horse, and wore a grey surtout with a green uniform coat; and, in memory of his party's badge, as I suppose, a violet-coloured waistcoat and pantaloons of the same. It was, however, with no little emotion that I walked with Lacoste from one place to another, making him, as nearly as possible, show me the precise stations which had been successively occupied by the fallen monarch on that eventful day. There was a deep and inexpressible feeling of awe in the reflection, that the last of these was the identical place from which he, who had so long held the highest place in Europe, beheld his hopes crushed and his power destroyed. To recollect, that within a short month, the man whose name had been the terror of Europe, stood on the very ground which I now occupied, that right opposite was placed that commander whom the event of the day hailed, Vainqueur de Vainqueurde la terre — that the land scape, now solitary and peaceful around me, presented so lately a scene of such horrid magnificence — that the very individual who was now at my side, had then stood by that of Napoleon, and witnessed every change in his countenance, from hope to anxiety, from anxiety to fear and to despair, — to recollect all this, oppressed me with sensations which I find it impossible to describe. The scene seemed to have shifted so rapidly, that even while I stood on the very stage where it was exhibited, I felt an inclination to doubt the reality of what had passed.

Lacoste himself seems a sensible, shrewd peasant. He complained that the curiosity of the visitors who came to hear his little tale, interfered a good deal with his ordinary and necessary occupations: I advised him to make each party, who insisted upon seeing and questioning him, a regular charge of five francs, and assured him that if he did so, he would find that Buonaparte had kept his promise of making his fortune, though in a way he neither wished nor intended. Pere Lacoste said he was obliged to me for the hint, and I dare say has not failed to profit by it.

The field of battle plainly told the history of the fight, as soon as the positions of the hostile armies were pointed out. The extent was so limited, and the interval between them so easily seen and commanded, that the various manoeuvres could be traced with the eye upon the field itself as upon a military plan of a foot square. All ghastly remains of the carnage had been either burned or buried, and the reliques of the fray which yet

remained were not in themselves of a very imposing kind. Bones of horses, quantities of old hats, rags of clothes, scraps of leather," and fragments of books and papers strewed the ground in great profusion, especially where the action had been most bloody. Among the last, those of most frequent occurrence were the military Uvrets, or memorandum-books of the French soldiers. I picked up one of these, which shows, by its order and arrangement, the strict discipline which at one time was maintained in the French army, when the soldier was obliged to enter in such an accompt-book, not only the state of his payand equipments, but the occasions on which he served and distinguished himself, and the punishments, if any, which he had incurred. At the conclusion is a list of the duties of the private soldier, amongst which is that of knowing how to dress his victuals, and particularly to make good soup. The livret in my possession appears to have belonged to the Sieur Mallet, of the 2d battalion of the 8th regiment of the line: he had been in the service since the year 1791, until the 18th of June, 1815, which day probably closed his account, and with it all his earthly hopes and prospects. The fragments of German prayerbooks were so numerous, that I have little doubt a large edition had been pressed into the military service of one or other party, to be used as Cartridge-paper. Letters, and other papers, memorandums of business, or pledges of friendship and affection, lay scattered about on the. field — few of them were now legible. Quack advertisements were also to be found where English soldiers had fallen. Among the universal remedies announced by these empirics, there was none against the dangers of such a field.

Besides these fragments, the surface of the field shewed evident marks of the battle. The tall crops of maize and rye were trampled into a thick black paste, under the feet of men and horses, the ground was torn in many places by the explosion of shells, and in others strangely broken up and rutted by the wheels of the artillery. Such signs of violent and rapid motion recorded, that

> Rank rush'd on rank, with squadron squadron closed,
> The thunder ceased not, nor the fire reposed.

Yet, abstracting from our actual knowledge of the dreadful cause of such appearances, they reminded me not a little of those which are seen upon a common a few days after a great fair has been held there. These transitory memorials were in a rapid course of disappearing, for the plough was

already at work in several parts of the field. There is, perhaps, more feeling than wisdom in the wish, yet I own I should have been better pleased, if, for one season at least, the field where, in imagination, the ploughshare was coming in frequent contact with the corpses of the gallant dead, had been suffered to remain fallow. But the corn which must soon wave there will be itself a temporary protection to their humble graves, while it will speedily remove from the face of nature the melancholy traces of the strife of man.

The houses and hamlets which were exposed to the line of fire have of course suffered very much, being perforated by cannonballs in every direction. This was particularly the case at La Haye Sainte. The inhabitants of these peaceful cottages might then exclaim, in the words of our admired friend,

> "Around them, in them, the loud battle clangs;
> Within our very walls fierce spearmen push,
> And armed warriors cross their clashing blades.-
> Ah, woe is me! our warm and cheerful hearths,
> And rushed floors, on which our children play'd,
> Must be the bloody lair of dying men."

There was not indeed a cottage in the vicinity but what, ere the eve of the fight, was crowded with the wounded, many of whom had only strength to creep to the next place of cover, that they might lay them down to die.

The village of Saint John, and others within the English position, had escaped with the demolition of the windows, and the breaches of the walls from without. The hamlets lying on the opposite heights, within the French line of bivouack, having been plundered to the bare walls, had sustained internal as well as external damage. Among other claims upon English generosity, and which may serve to illustrate the idea which foreigners have formed of its illimitable extent, one was made by a proprietor of this district for a considerable sum, stated to be the damage which his property had sustained in and through the battle of Waterloo. He was asked, why he thought a claim so unprecedented in the usual course of warfare would be listened to. He said, he understood the British had made compensation in Spain to sufferers under similar circumstances. It was next pointed out to him that no English soldier had or could have been accessary to the damage which he had sustained, since the hamlets and houses plundered lay within Buonaparte's position. The Fleming, without having studied at Leyden,

understood the doctrine of consequential damages. He could not see that the circumstance alleged made much difference, since, he argued, if the English had not obstinately placed themselves in the way, the French would have marched quietly on to Brussels, without doing him any material damage; and it was not until he was positively informed that his demand would not be granted that he remained silenced, but not satisfied.

Hougoumont (a name bestowed, I believe, by a mistake of our great commander, but which will certainly supersede the more proper one of Chateau-Goumont,) is the only place of consideration which was totally destroyed. The shattered and blackened ruins of this little chateau remain among the wreck of its garden, while the fruit-trees, half torn down, half fastened to the walls, give some idea of the Dutch neatness with which it had been kept ere the storm of war approached it. Most visitors bought peaches, and gathered hazel-nuts and filberds in the garden with the pious purpose of planting, when they returned to England, treesy which might remind them and their posterity of this remarkable spot. The grove of trees around Hougoumont was shattered by grapeshot and musquetry in a most extraordinary manner. I counted one which had been struck in twenty different places, and I think there was scarce any which had totally escaped. I understand the gentleman to whom this ravaged domain belongs is to receive full compensation from the government of the Netherlands.

I must not omit to mention, that notwithstanding the care which had been bestowed in burying or burning the dead, the stench in several places of the field, and particularly at La Haye Sainte and Hougoumont, was such as to indicate that the former operation had been but hastily and imperfectly performed.

It was impossible, of course, to attempt to ascertain the numbers of the slain; but, including those who fell on both sides before the retreat commenced, the sum of forty thousand will probably be found considerably within the mark, and I have seen officers of experience who compute it much higher. When it is considered, therefore, that so many human corpses, besides those of many thousand horses, were piled upon a field scarcely two miles long, and not above half a mile in breadth, it is wonderful that a pestilential disease has not broken out, to sum up the horrors of the campaign.

If the peasants in the neighbourhood of Waterloo suffered great alarm and considerable damage in the course of this tremendous conflict, it must

be acknowledged they have had peculiar and ample means of indemnification. They had, in the first place, the greatest share of the spoils of the field of battle, for our soldiers were too much exhausted to anticipate them in this particular. Many country people were at once enriched by the plunder of the French baggage, and not a few by that of the British, which, having been ordered to retreat during the action, became embarrassed on the narrow causeway leading through the great forest of Soignies,and was there fairly sacked and pillaged by the runaway Belgians and the peasantry; a disgraceful scene,, which nothing but the brilliancy of the great victory, and the consequent enthusiasm of joy, could have allowed to be passed over without strict enquiry. Many of our officers, and some but ill able to afford such a loss, were in this manner deprived of all their clothes and baggage, at the moment of their advance into the territories of France.

A more innocent source of profit has opened to many of the poor people about Waterloo, by the sale of such trinkets and arms as they collect daily from the field of battle; things of no intrinsic value, but upon which curiosity sets a daily increasing estimate. These memorials, like the books of the Sybils, rise in value as they decrease in number. Almost every hamlet opens a mart of them as soon as English visitors appear. Men, women, and children rushed out upon us, holding up swords, pistols, carabines, and holsters, all of which were sold when I was there a prix juste, at least to those who knew how to drive a bargain. I saw a tolerably good carabine bought for five francs; to be sure there went many words to the bargain, for the old woman to whom it belonged had the conscience at first to ask a gold Napoleon for it, being about the value it would have borne in Birmingham. Crosses of the Legion of Honour were in great request, and already stood high in the market. I bought one of the ordinary sort for forty francs. The eagles which the French soldiers wore in front of their caps, especially the more solid ornament of that description which belonged to the Imperial Guards, were sought after, but might be had for a few sous. But the great object of ambition was to possess the armour of a cuirassier, which at first might have been bought in great quantity, almost all the wearers having fallen in that bloody battle. The victors had indeed carried off some of these cuirasses to serve as culinary utensils, and I myself have seen the Highlanders frying their rations of beef or mutton upon the breastplates and back-pieces of their discomfited adversaries. But enough remained to make the fortunes of the people of St John, Waterloo, Planchenoit, &c. When I

was at La Belle Alliance I bought the cuirass of a common soldier for about six francs; but a very handsome inlaid one, once the property of a French officer of distinction, which was for sale in Brussels, cost me four times the sum. As for the casques, or head pieces, which by the way are remarkably handsome, they are almost introuvable, for the peasants immediately sold them to be beat out for old copper, and the purchasers, needlessly afraid of their being reclaimed, destroyed them as fast as possible.

The eagerness with which we entered into these negociations, and still more the zeal with which we picked up every trifle we could find upon the field, rather scandalized one of the heroes of the day, who did me the favour to guide me over the field of battle, and who considered the interest I took in things which he was accustomed to see scattered as mere trumpery upon many a field of victory, with a feeling that I believe made him for the moment heartily ashamed of his company. I was obliged to remind him that as he had himself gathered laurels on the same spot, he should have sympathy, or patience at least, with our more humble harvest of peach-stones, filberds, and trinkets. Fortunately the enthusiasm of a visitor, who went a bowshot beyond us, by carrying off a brick from the house of La Belle Alliance, with that of a more wholesale amateur, who actually purchased the door of the said mansion for two gold Napoleons, a little mitigated my military friend's censure of our folly, by showing it was possible to exceed it. I own I was myself somewhat curious respecting the use which could be made of the door of La Belle Alliance, unless upon a speculation of cutting it up into trinkets, like Shakspeare's mulberry-tree.

A relique of greater moral interest was given me by a lady, whose father had found it upon the field of battle. It is a manuscript collection of French songs, bearing stains of clay and blood, which probably indicate the fate of the proprietor. One or two of these romances I thought pretty, and have since had an opportunity of having them translated into English, by meeting at Paris with one of our Scottish men of rhyme.

Romance of Dunois

It was Dunois, the young and brave, was bound for Palestine,
But first he made his orisons before Saint Mary's shrine:
"And grant, immortal Queen of Heaven," was still the soldier's prayer,
"That I may prove the bravest knight, and love the fairest fair."

His oath of honour on the shrine he graved it with his sword,
And follow’d to the Holy Land the banner of his Lord;
Where, faithful to his noble vow, his war-cry fill’d the air, —
“Be honour’d aye the bravest knight, beloved the fairest fair.”
They owed the conquest to his arm, and then his liege-lord said,
“The heart that has for honour beat by bliss must be repaid, —
My daughter Isabel and thou shall be a wedded pair,
For thou art bravest of the brave, she fairest of the fair.”
And then they bound the holy knot before Saint Mary’s shrine,
That makes a paradise on earth if hearts and hands combine;
And every lord and lady bright that were in chapel there,
Cried,” Honour’d be the bravest knight, beloved the fairest fair!”

The Troubadour

Glowing with love, on fire for fame,
A Troubadour that hated sorrow,
Beneath his Lady's window came,
And thus he sung his last good-morrow:
"My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my true love's bower;
Gaily for love and fame to fight
Befits the gallant Troubadour."
And while he march'd with helm on head
And harp in hand, the descant rung,
As faithful to his favourite maid,
The minstrel-burthen still he sung: "
My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
Resolved for love and fame to fight,
I come, a gallant Troubadour."
Even when the battle-roar was deep,
With dauntless heart he hewed his way,
Mid splintering lance and falchion-sweep,
And still was heard his warrior-lay; "
My life it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
For love to die, for fame to fight,
Becomes the valiant Troubadour.,,
Alas! upon the bloody field
He fell beneath the foeman's glaive,
But still, reclining on his shield,
Expiring sung the exulting stave:
"My life it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower;
For love and fame to fall in fight
Becomes the valiant Troubadour."

The tone of these two romances chimes in not unhappily with the circumstances in which the manuscript was found, although I do not

pretend to have discovered the real effusions of a military bard, since the first of them, to my certain knowledge, and I have no doubt the other also, is a common and popular song in France. The following Anacreontic is somewhat of a different kind, and less connected with the tone of feeling excited by the recollcction, that the manuscript in which it occurs was the relique of a field of battle: —

It chanced that Cupid on a season,
By Fancy urged, resolved to wed,
But could not settle whether Reason
Or Folly should partake his bed.
What does he then? —
Upon my life,
'Twas bad example far a deityHe takes me Reason for his wife,
And Folly for his hours of gaiety.
Though thus he dealt in petty treason,
He loved them both in equal measure;
Fidelity was born of Reason,
And Folly brought to bed of Pleasure.

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There is another verse of this last song, but so much defaced by stains, and disfigured by indifferent orthography, as to be unintelligible. The little collection contains several other ditties, but rather partaking too much of the freedom of the corps de garde, to be worthy the trouble of transcription or translation.

I have taken more pains respecting these poems than their intrinsic poetical merit can be supposed to deserve, either in the original or the English version; but I cannot divide them from the interest which they have acquired by the place and manner in which they were obtained, and therefore account them more precious than any of the other remains of Waterloo which have fallen into my possession.

Had these reliques of minstrelsy, or any thing corresponding to them in tone and spirit, been preserved as actual trophies of the fields of Cressy and Agincourt, how many gay visions of knights and squires and troubadours, and sirventes and lais, and courts of Love and usages of antique chivalry, would the perusal have excited! Now, and brought close to our own times,

they can only be considered as the stock in trade of the master of a regimental band; or at best, we may suppose the compilation to have been the pastime of some young and gay French officer, who, little caring about the real merits of the quarrel in which he was engaged, considered the war by which the fate of Europe was to be decided only as a natural and animating exchange for the pleasures of Paris. Still the gallantry and levity of the poetry compels us to contrast its destined purpose, to cheer hours of mirth or of leisure, with the place in which the manuscript was found, trampled down in the blood of the writer, and flung away by the hands of the spoilers, who had stripped him on the field of battle. I will not, however, trouble you with any further translations at present; only to do justice to my gallant Troubadour, I will subjoin the original French in the postscript to this letter. It is a task of some difficulty; for accurate orthography was not a quality of the original writer, and I am myself far from possessing a critical knowledge of the French language, though I have endeavoured to correct his most obvious errors. I am, dear sister, affectionately yours,

Paul,

Postscript.

Chanson.

Partant pour la Syrie le jeune et beau Dunoisf,
Alia prier Marie de b£nir ses exploits,
“Faites, O Reine immortelle,1” lui dit-il en partant,
Que j’aime la plus belle, et sois le plus vacant.”
II grave sur la pierre le serment de Thonneur,
Et va suivre en guerre le Comte et son seigneur;
Au noble vceu fidele il crie en combattant,
“Amour a la plus belle, gloire au plus vaillant.”
Ou lui doit la victoire — ” Dunois” dit son Seigneur, “
Puisque tu fais ma gloire je ferai ton bonheur,
De ma fille Isabelle, sois 1* epoux a l’ instant,
Car elle est la plus belle, et toi le plus vaillant.”
A l’ autel de Marie ils contractent tous les deux,
Cette union ch6rie qui seule les rend heureux;
Chaeune Dame a la Chapelle s’ eerie en les voyant,
Amour a la plus belle, honneur au plus vaillant!”
ROMANCE DE TROUBADOUR.
Brulant d’amour, en partant pour la guerre,
Le Troubadour, ennemi de chagrin,
Pensoit ainsi a sa jeune bergere,
Tous les matins en chantant ce refrain;
“Mon bras a ma patrie,
Mon cceur pour mon amie,
Mourir gaiment pour la Gloire et l’ Amour,
C’est le devoir d’ un vaillant Troubadour.”
Dans le bivouac le Troubadour fidele,
La casque au front, la guittarre a la main,
Dans sa del ire, a sa jeune bergere,
Chantoit ainsi le joyeux refrain; “ Mon bras a ma patrie,
Mon coeur pour mon amie,
Mourir gaiment pour la Gloire et P Amour,
C’est le devoir d’ un vaillant Troubadour.”

Dans les combats deployant son courage,
La courage au cceur, la glaive a la main,
Etoit le meme au milieu de carnage,
Chaque matin, en chantant le refrain;
“Mon bras a ma patrie,
Mon coeur a mon amie,
Mourir gaiment, pour l’honneur et l’amour,
C’est le devoir d’un vrai Troubadour.”
Cet brave, helas! deployant son courage,
Auz ennemis en bravant le destin,
Il respiroit sur la fin son amie,
Nommant sa belle, et chantant le refrain;
“Mon bras a ma patrie,
Mon cceur a mon amie,
Mourir gaiment pour l’honneur et P amour,
C’est le devoir d’un vrai Troubadour.”

Chanson De La Folie.

De prendre femme un jour, dit-on,
L Amour conduit la Fantasie,
On lui proposa la Raison,
On lui proposa la Folie. —
Quel choix feroit le Dieu fripon,
Chacune d’ eux est fort jolie —
Il prit pour femme la Raison,
Et pour maitresse la Folie.
Il les aimoit toutes les deux,
Avec une constance egale,
Mais l’epoux vivant au mieux,
Avec la charmante rivale,
Naquit un double rejeton,
De la double galanterie,
L’ amant naquit de la Raison,
Et le Plaisir de la Folie.

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Letter X

Paul To, Esq. Of

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The obligation which I contracted to write to you, my dear friend, upon subjects in some degree connected with your statistical pursuits, hangs round the neck of my conscience, and encumbers me more than any of the others which I have rashly entered into. But you will forgive the deficiencies of one who, though for fifteen years doomed to be a farmer, has hitherto looked upon his sheep and cows rather as picturesque objects in the pasture, than subjects of profit in the market, and who, by some unaccountable obtuseness of intellect, never could interest himself about his turnips or potatoes, unless they were placed upon the dinner table. Could I have got an intelligent Flemish farmer to assist me, I have little doubt that I might have sent you some interesting information from that land of Goshen, where the hand of the labourer is never for an instant folded in inactivity upon his bosom, and where the rich soil repays with ready gratitude the pains bestowed in cultivation. Promptitude and regularity, the soul of all agricultural operations, are here in such active exertion, that before the corn is driven out of the field in which it has been reaped, the plough is at work upon the stubble, leaving only the ridges occupied by the shocks. The fertility of the soil is something unequalled, even in our best carse lands, being generally a deep and inexhaustible mould, as favourable for forest-trees as for cultivation. Cheapness isthe natural companion of plenty; and I should suppose that Brussels, considered as a capital, where every luxury can be commanded, is at present one of the economical places of residence in Europe. I began a brief computation, from which it appeared, that I might support myself with those comforts or luxuries which habit has rendered necessary to me, maintaining at the same time decent hospitality, and a respectable appearance, for about the sum of direct taxes which I pay to the public in Scotland. But ere I had time to grumble at my lot, came the comfortable recollection; that my humble home in the north is belted in by the broad sea, and divided from all the convulsions that have threatened the continent, that no contending armies have decided the fate of the world within ten miles of my dwelling, and that the sound of cannon never broke

my rest, unless as an early feit-deyoie. These, with the various circumstances of safety and freedom connected with them, and arising out of them, are reasons more than sufficient for determining my preference in favour of my own homely home. But for such as have better reasons than mere economy for chusing a short residence abroad, Brussels possesses great attractions. The English society there, so far as I saw it, is of the very first order, and I understand that of the principal families of the Netherlands is accessible and pleasant. This, however, is wandering from the promised topics — revenons d nos moutons.

The farmhouses and cottages in the Netherlands have, an air of ease and comfort corresponding with the healthy and contented air of their inhabitants. That active industry, which eradicates every weed, prevents the appearance of waste and disorder, and turns every little patch of garden or orchard-ground to active profit, is no where seen to more advantage than in the Netherlands; and the Flemish painters copied from nature when they represented the groups of trees and thickets in which their cottages are usually embosomed. These thickets, and the woods of a larger scale, which are numerous and extensive, supply the inhabitants with fuel, though there are also coal-mines wrought to considerable extent near Charleroi. The woods are chiefly of beech, but varied with birches, oaks, and other trees. The oaks, in particular, seem to find this a favourite soil, and are to be seen sprouting freely in situations where the surface appears a light and loose sand. In the lower strata, no doubt, they find a clay soil better adapted to their nourishment.

The forests of Flanders were formerly of a more valuable description than at present, for the trees fit for ship-timber have been in a great measure cut down by Buonaparte's orders, in his eager desire to create a navy at Antwerp. Nothing could better mark the immensity of his projects, and the extensive means which he had combined for their execution, than the magnificent dockyards which he created in that city. The huge blocks of hewn stone, of the most beautiful grey colour and closest grain, each weighing from two to four tons, which were employed in facing the large and deep basins which he constructed, were brought by water from the quarries of Charleroi, at the distance of sixty miles and upwards. The fortifications also, which Buonaparte added to those of the city, were of the most formidable description. Nevertheless the British thunders reached his vessels even in their well-defended dockyards, as was testified by several of

them having been sunk during the bombardment by Sir Thomas Graham, of which the masts yet remain visible above water. The people of Antwerp did not speak with much respect of the talents of Carnot, (their governor during the siege,) considered as an engineer, although we have often heard them mentioned with applause in England. They pointed out the remains of a small fascine-battery, which was said to be misplaced, and never to have done any execution, as the only offensive preparation made by order of this celebrated mathematician. In other respects the citizens were agreeably deceived in Carnot, whose appointment to the government of the city was regarded with the greatest apprehensions by the inhabitants, who remembered that he had been the minister and instrument of Robespierre. He gave them, however, no reason to complain of him, and the necessary measures which he adopted of destroying such parts of the suburbs as interfered with the fire of the batteries, and the defence of the place, were carried into execution with as much gentleness and moderation as the inhabitants could have expected. The town itself, being studiously spared by the clemency of the besieging general, suffered but little from the British fire, though some houses were ruined by the bombs, and particularly the Dottane, or French customhouse, whose occupants had so long vexed the Flemings by their extortion, that its destruction was regarded by them with great joy.

Belgium, or Flanders, has of late acquired a new political existence, as a principal part of the kingdom of the Netherlands. I am no friend, in general, to the modern political legerdemain, which transfers cities and districts from one state to another, substituting the “ natural boundaries” (a phrase invented by the French to justify their own usurpations,) by assuming a river, or a chain of mountains, or some other geographical line of demarcation, instead of the moral limits which have been drawn, by habits of faith and loyalty to a particular sovereign or form of government, by agreement in political and religious opinions, and by resemblance of language and manners j limits traced at first perhaps by the influence of chance, but which have been rendered sacred and indelible by long course of time and the habits which it has gradually fostered. Arrondissements, therefore, Indemnities, and all the other terms of modern date, under sanction of which cities and districts, and even kingdoms, have been passed from one government to another, as the property of lands and stock is transferred by a bargain between private parties, have been generally found

to fail iii their principal object. Either a general indifference to the form of government and its purposes, have been engendered in those whom superior force has thus rendered the sport of circumstances; or where the minds of the population are bf a higher and more vigorous order, the forced transference has only served to increase their affection to the country from which they have been torn, and their hatred against that to which they are subjected. The alienation of the Tyrol from Austria may be quoted as an example bf the latter effect; and it is certain, that this iniquitous habit of transferring allegiance in the gross from one state to another, without consulting either the wishes or the prejudices of those from whom it is claimed, has had the former consequences of promoting a declension of public spirit among the smaller districts of Germany. Upon the map, indeed, the new acquisitions are traced with the same colour which distinguishes the original dominions of the state to which they are attached, and in the accompanying gazetteer, we read that such a city, with its liberties, containing so many thousand souls, forms now a part of the population of such a kingdom: But can this be seriously supposed (at least until the lapse of centuries) to convey to the subjects, thus transferred, that love and affection to their new dynasty of rulers, that reverence for the institutions in church and state, those wholesome and honest prejudices in favour of the political society to which we belong, which go so far in forming the love of our native country? " Care I for the limbs,.the thewes, the sinews of a man — Give me the spirit!" — an.d when the stipulations,of a treaty, or the.decrees of a conqueror, can transfer with the Muds and houses;the love, faith, and attachment of the inhabitants, I will believe that such arrondissements make a whole some and useful part of the state to which they are assigned. Until then the attempt seems much like that of a charlatan who should essay to ingraft, as an useful and serviceable limb, upon the person of one patient, the arm or leg which he has just amputated from another.

But though it seems in general sound and good doctrine, to beware of removing ancient landmarks, and although the great misfortunes of Europe may be perhaps traced to the partition of Poland, in which this attempt was first made upon the footing of open violence, yet the union between the Low Countries and the States of Holland must be admitted to form a grand exception to the general rule. It is, indeed, rather a restoration of the natural union which subsisted before the time of Philip the Second, than a

newmodelled arrangement of territory; the unsettled situation of Flanders, in particular, having long been such as to make it the common and ordinary stage, upon which all the prizefighters of Europe decided their quar rels. To a people too often abandoned to the subaltern oppression of governors sent from their foreign masters, it is no small boon to be placed under a mild and mitigated monarchy, and united with a nation whose customs, habits, and language, are so similar to their own. Still, however, such is the influence of the separate feelings and opinions acquired during the lapse of two centuries, that many prejudices remain to be smoothed away, and much jealousy to be allayed, and soothed, before the good influence of the union can be completely felt.

The first and most irritating cause of apprehension is the difference of religion. The Flemings are very zealous, and very ignorant catholics, over whom their clergy have a proportional power. The king's declared purpose of toleration has greatly alarmed this powerful body, and the nerve which has thus been touched has not failed to vibrate through the whole body politic. The Archbishop of Liege, formerly a great adherent and ally of Buonaparte, has found his conscience alarmingly twinged by so ominous a declaration on the part of a Calvinistic monarch, and has already made his remonstrance against this part of the proposed constitution in a pastoral letter, which is couched in very determined language. But the present royal family are too surely seated, and the times, it may be hoped too liberal, for such fulminations to interfere with the progress of toleration. Meanwhile the king neglects nothing that fairly can be done to conciliate his new catholic subjects. He has recently pledged himself to use his utmost exertioiis to recover from the possession of the French the pictures which they carried off from various churches in the Netherlands, and particularly from Brussels and Antwerp. Among the last, was the chef-d'oeuvre of Rubens, the Descent from the Cross, which, with two corresponding pictures relative to the same subject, once hung above the high altar in the magnificent cathedral at Antwerp, where the copartmerits, which they once filled, remain still vacant to remind the citizens of their loss. All the other ornaments of that superb cathedral shared the fate of this masterpiece, excepting only a painting which Rubens executed to decorate the chapel in which he himself lies buried; and which an unusual feeling of respect and propriety prevented the spoilers from tearing away from his tomb. The composition of the picture has something curious j for under the

representation of a Holy Family, and various characters of the New Testament, the artist has painted his grandfather, his father, his three wives, and his mistress, the last in the character of the Virgin Mary, to whom the others are rendering homage. He has also introduced his own portrait, a noble martial figure, dressed in armour, and in the act of unfurling a banner. Whatever may be thought of the deconim of such a picture painted for such a place, the beauty of the execution cannot be sufficiently admired. While the English traveller is called upon for once to acknowledge the moderation of the French, who have left at least one monument of art in the place to which it was most appropriate, he will probably wish they had carried off with them the trash of wax figures, which, to the disgrace of good taste and common sense, are still the objects of popular adoration. Abstracted from all polemics, one can easily conceive that the sight of an interesting painting, representing to our material organs the portrait of a saint, or an affecting scene of Scripture, may not only be an appropriate ornament in the temple of worship, but, like church-music, may have its effect in fixing the attention, and aiding the devotion of the congregation. It may be also easily understood, and readily forgiven, that when kneeling before the very altar to which our ancestors in trouble resorted for comfort, we may be gradually led to annex a superstitious reverence to the place itself: But when, in the midst of such a cathedral as that of Antwerp, one of the grandest pieces of Gothic architecture which Europe can show, — when among the long-drawn aisles and lofty arches, which seem almost the work of demigods, so much does the art and toil bestowed surpass what modern times can present, — when, in the midst of such a scene, we find a wax figure of the Virgin, painted, patched, frizzled, and powdered; with a tarnished satin gown (the skirt held up by two cherubs,) paste earrings and necklace, differing in no respect, but in size, from the most paltry doll that ever was sold in a toy-shop; and observe this incongruous and ridiculous swamy the object of fervid and zealous adoration from the votaries who are kneeling before it, we see the idolatry of the Romish church in a point of view disgusting and humiliating as that of ancient Egypt, and cease to wonder at the obstinacy of the prelate of Liege and his brethren, who fear the light which universal toleration would doubtless throw upon the benighted worship of their great Diana. In the meanwhile the promise of the king to procure restoration of the pictures, is received by most of the Flemings as a pledge that the religion, which he himself professes, will not prevent his interesting himself

in that of the catholics; and I think there can be little doubt that, under the gradual influence of time and example, the grosser points of superstition will be tacitly abandoned here, as in other catholic countries.

The Dutch have a more worldly subject of jealousy in the state of their commerce, which cannot but be materially affected by the opening of the Scheldt, whenever that desirable event shall have taken place, and also by the principal residence of the government being changed from the Hague to Brussels. But they are a reflecting people, and are already aware that the operation of both these changes will be slow and gradual; for commerce is not at once transferred from the channels in which it has long flowed; and for some time, at least, family recollections and attachments will make the royal family frequent residents in Holland, notwithstanding the charms of the palace of Lacken. In the meanwhile the Dutch gain the inestimable advantage of having the battle turned from their gates, and of enjoying the protection of a strong barrier placed at a distance from their own frontier, — blessings of themselves sufficient to compensate the inconvenience which they may for a time sustain, until they transfer their capital and industry to the new channels offered for them by the union.

Nothing could have happened so fortunate for the popularity of the house of Orange as the active and energetic character of the hereditary prince. His whole behaviour during the actions of Quatre Bras and Waterloo, and the wound which (it may almost be said fortunately) he received upon the latter occasion, have already formed the strongest bond of union between his family and their new subjects, long unaccustomed to have sovereigns who could lead them to battle, and shed their blood in the national defence. The military force, which he is at this moment perpetually increasing, is of a respectable description; for, though some of the Belgian troops behaved ill during the late brief campaign, there were other corps, and particularly infantry and artillery, both Dutch and Flemings, whose firmness and discipline equalled those of any regiments in the field. The brave Beiges are naturally proud of the military glory they have acquired, as well as of the prince who led them on. In every corner of Brussels there were ballad-singers bellowing out songs in praise of the prince and his followers. I, who am a collector of popular effusions, did not fail to purchase specimens of the Flemish min strelsy, in which, by the way, there is no more mention of the Duke of Wellington, or of John Bull, than if John

Bull and his illustrious general had had nothing to do with the battle of Waterloo.

This little omission of the Flemish bards proceeds, however, from no disinclination to the Duke or to England. On the contrary, our wounded received during their illness, and are yet experiencing, during their convalescence, the most affecting marks of kindness and attention from the inhabitants of Brussels. These acts of friendship towards their allies were not suspended (as will sometimes happen in this world) until the chance of war had decided in favour of the English. Even on the 17th, when the defeat of Blucher, and the retreat of the Duke of Wellington, authorised them to entertain the most gloomy apprehensions for their own safety, as well as to fear the vengeance of the French for any partiality they might show towards their enemies, the kind citizens of Brussels were not deterred from the exercise of kindness and hospitality. They were seen meeting the wounded with refreshments; some seeking for those soldiers who had been quartered in their houses, others bestowing their care on the first disabled sufferer they met with, carrying him to their home, and nursing him like a child of the family, at all the cost, trouble, and risk, with which their hospitality might be attended. The people of Antwerp, to which city were transferred upon the 17th and 18th most of those who had been wounded at Quatre Bras, were equally zealous in the task of the good Samaritan. Many of our poor fellows told me, that they must have perished but for the attention of these kind Flemings, whose "Entire affection scorned nicer hands,"

since many of the highest and most respectable classes threw pride and delicacy aside to minister to the wants of the sufferers. On their part, the Flemings were often compelled to admire the endurance and hardihood of their patients. "Your countrymen," said a lady to me, who spoke our language well, we are made of iron, and not of flesh and blood. I saw a wounded Highlander stagger along the street, supporting himself by the rails, and said to him, I am afraid you are severely hurt. 61 was born iri Lochaber,' answered the poor fellow, (and I do not care for a wound but ere I could complete my offer of shelter and assistance, he sunk down at my feet a dying man." In one house in Brussels, occupied by a respectable manufacturer and his two sisters, thirty wounded soldiers were received, nursed, fed, and watched, the only labour of the medical attendants being to prevent their hosts from giving the patients more wine and nourishing food than suited their situation. We may hope the reciprocal benefits,of defence

and of hospitality will be long remembered, forming a kindly connection between England and a country which, of all others, may be most properly termed her natural ally.

I have again wandered from agriculture into politics and military affairs, but I have little to add which properly belongs to your department, since I have no doubt that you have already sate in judgment upon the Flemish plough, rake, and hayfork, presented to the Highland Society by one of its most active members. The most remarkable implement of agriculture which fell under my observation was a sort of hooked stick, which the reaper holds in his left hand, and uses to collect and lay the corn as he cuts it with a short scythe. The operation is very speedy, for one person engaged in it can keep two or three constantly employed in binding the sheafs. But I suppose it would only answer where the ground is level and free from stones.

The furniture of the Flemings, and, generally speaking, their implements of labour, &c. have a curious correspondence with what we have been accustomed to consider as their national character; being strong and solid, but clumsy and inelegant, and having a great deal more substance employed in constructing them than seems at all necessary. Thus the lever of an ordinary draw-well is generally one long tree; and their waggons and barges are as huge and heavy as the horses which draw them. The same cumbrous solidity which distinguishes the female figures of Rubens, may be traced in the domestic implements and contrivances of his countrymen. None would have entertained you more than the apparatus provided for securing a horse while in the act of being shod, a case in which our Vulcans trust to an ordinary halter and their own address. But a Flemish horse is immured within a wooden erection of about his own size, having a solid roof, supported by four massive posts, such as a British carpenter would use to erect a harbour-crane. The animal's head is fastened between two of these huge columns with as many chains and cords as might have served to bind Baron Trenck; and the foot which is to be shod is secured in a pair of stocks, which extend between two of the upright beams. This is hardly worth writing, though ridiculous to look at; but there is something, as Anstey says, " so clumsy and clunch" in the massive strength of the apparatus, in the very unnecessary extent of the precaution, and in the waste of time, labour, and materials, that it may be selected as an indication of a

national character, displaying itself in the most ordinary and trifling particulars.

Adieu, my dear friend; I am sorry I can send you no more curious information upon your favourite subject. But it would be unnecessary to one wTho is skilled in all the modern arts of burning without fire, and feeding without pasture; and who requires no receipts from Holland to teach him how to lay on so much fat upon a bullock or a pig as will make the flesh totally unfit for eating. Yours affectionately,

Paul.

Letter XI

to the Same

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I have now, my dear friend, reached Paris, after traversing the road from Brussels to this conquered capital through sights and sounds of war, and yet more terrible marks of its recent ravages. The time was interesting, for although our route presented no real danger, yet it was not, upon some occasions, without such an appearance of it as naturally to impress a civilian with a corresponding degree of alarm. All was indeed new to me, and the scenes which I beheld were such as press most deeply on the feelings.

We were following the route of the victorious English army, to which succours of every sort, and reinforcements of troops recently landed in Flanders, were pressing eagerly for ward, so that the towns and roads were filled with British and foreign troops. For the war, although ended to all useful and essential purposes, could not in some places be said to be actually finished. Conde had surrendered but a few days before, and Valenciennes still held out, and, as report informed us, was to undergo a renewal of the bombardment. Another and contrary rumour assured us that an armistice had taken place, and that, as non« combatants, the garrison would permit a party even as alarming as our own to pass through the town without interruption. I felt certainly a degree of curiosity to see the most formidable operation of modern war, but as I was far from wishing the city of Valenciennes to have been burned for my amusement, we were happy to find that the latter report was accurate.. Accordingly we passed the works and batteries of the besiegers unquestioned by the Dutch and Prussian videttes, who were stalking to and fro upon their posts, and proceeded to the gate of the place, where we underwent a brief examination from the non-commissioned officer on duty, who looked at our passports, requested to know if we were military men,-and being answered in the negative, permits ted us to enter a dark, ill-built, and dirty town. “ And these are the men/’ I thought, as I eyed the illdressed and ragged soldiers upon duty at the gates of Valenciennes, “these are the men who have turned the world upside down, and whose name has been the nightmare of Europe since most of this

generation have written man!" They looked ugly and dirty and savage enough certainly, but seemed to have little superiority in strength or appearance to the Dutch or Belgians. There was, however, in the air and eye of the soldiers of Buonaparte, (for such these military men still called themselves,) something of pride and self-elation, that indicated undaunted confidence in their own skill and valour. They appeared, however, disunited and disorganized. Some wore the white cockade, others still displayed the tri-colour, and one prudent fellow had, for his own amusement and that of his comrades, stuck both in his hat at once, so as to make a cocarde de convenances which might suit either party that should get uppermost.

We were not permitted to go upon the ramparts, and I did not think it necessary to walk about a town in possession of a hostile soldiery left to the freedom of their own will. The inhabitants looked dejected and unhappy, and our landlady, far from displaying the liveliness of a Frenchwoman, was weeping-ripe, and seemed ready to burst into tears at every question which we put to her. Their apprehensions had been considerably relieved by General Rey having himself assumed the white cockade; but as he still refused to admit any of the allied troops within the city, there remained a great doubt whether the allies would content themselves with the blockade, to which they had hitherto restricted their operations against Valenciennes. The inhabitants were partial, the landlady said, to the English, with whom they were well acquainted, as Valenciennes had been a principal depot for the prisoners of war; but they deprecated their town being occupied by the Prussians or Belgians, in whose lenity they seemed to place but little reliance.

On the road next day we met with very undesirable company, being the disbanded garrison of Cond6, whom the allies had dismissed after occupying that town. There is, you may have remarked, something sinister in the appearance of a common soldier of any country when he is divested of his uniform. The martial gait, look, and manner, and the remaining articles of military dress which he has retained, being no longer combined with that neatness which argues that the individual makes part of a civilized army, seem menacing and ominous when that assurance is wanting. If this is the case even with the familiar faces of our own soldiery, the wild and swarthy features, moustaches, and singular dresses of foreigners, added much, as may well be supposed, of the look of banditti to the garrison of Conde. They were indeed a true sample of the desperate school to which

they belonged, for it was not many days since they had arrested and put to death a French loyalist officer named Gordon, solely for summoning them to surrender the town to the king. For this crime the brother of the murdered individual is now invoking vengeance, but as yet fruitlessly, at the court of the Thuilleries. These desperadoes, strolling in bands of eight or ten or twenty, as happened, occupied the road for two or three miles, and sullen resentment and discontent might easily be traced in their looks. They offered us no rudeness, however, but contented themselves with staring hard at us, as a truculent looking-fellow would now and then call out Vive le Roi! and subjoin an epithet,or two to show that it was uttered in no mood of loyal respect. At every cross-road two or three dropped off from the main body, after going, with becoming grace, through the ceremony of embracing and kissing their greasy companions. The thought involuntarily pressed itself upon our mind, what will become of these men, and what of the thousands who, in similar circumstances, are now restored to civil life, with all the wild habits and ungoverned passions which war and license have so long fostered? Will the lion lie down with the kid, or the trained freebooter return to the peaceable and laborious pursuits of civil industry? Or are they not more likely to beg, borrow, starye, and steal, until some unhappy opportunity shall again give them a standard and a chieftain?

We were glad when we got free of our military fellow-travellers, with whom I should not have chosen to meet by night, or in solitude, being exactly of their appearance who would willingly say “ Stand” to a true man. But we had no depredations to complain of, excepting the licensed extortions of the innkeepers, a matter of which you are the less entitled to complain, because every prudent traveller makes his bargain for his refreshments and lodging before he suffers the baggage to be taken from his carriage. Each reckoning is therefore a formal treaty between you and mine host or hostess, in which you have your own negligence or indifference to blame, if you are very much overreached. It is scarce necessary to add, that the worst and poorest inns are the most expensive in proportion. But I ought not to omit informing you, that notwithstanding a mode of conducting their ordinary business, so much savouring of imposition, there is no just room to charge the French with more direct habits of dishonesty. Your baggage and money is always safe from theft or depredation, and when I happened to forget a small writings box, in which there was actually some money, and which had the appearance of being intended for securing valuable articles,

an ostler upon horseback overtook our carriage with it before I had discovered my mistake. Yet it would have cost these people only a lie to say they knew nothing of it, especially as their house was full of soldiers of different nations, whose presence certainly afforded a sufficient apology for the disappearance of such an article. This incident gave me a favourable opinion of this class of society in France, as possessed at least of that sort of limited honesty which admits of no peculation excepting in the regular way of business.

The road from Brussels to Paris is, in its ordinary state, destitute of objects to interest the traveller. The highways, planned by Sully, and completed by his followers in office, have a magnificence elsewhere unknown. Their great breadth argues the little value of ground at the time they were laid out, but the perfect state in which the central causeway is maintained, renders the passage excellent even in the worst weather, while the large track of ground on each side gives an ample facility to use a softer road during the more favourable season. They are usually shadowed by triple rows of elms, and frequently of fruit-trees, which have a rich and pleasant effect. But much of the picturesque delights of travelling are lost in France, owing to the very circumstances which have rendered the roads so excellent. For as they were all made by the authority of a government, which possessed and exercised the power of going as directly from one point to another as the face of the country admitted, they preserve commonly that long and inflexible straight line, of all others least promising to the traveller, who longs for the gradual openingsof landscape afforded by aroad which, in sweet and varied modulation," winds round the cornfield and the hill of vines," being turned as it were from its forward and straight direction by respect for ancient property and possession, some feeling for the domestic privacy and convenience, some sympathy even for the prejudices and partialities of a proprietor. I love not the stoical virtue of a Brutus, even in laying out a turnpike-road, and should augur more happily of a country (were there nothing else to judge by) where the public appears to have given occasionally a little way to spare private property and domestic seclusion, than of one where the high road goes right to its marK without respect to either. In the latter case it only proves the authority of those who administer the government, in the former it indicates respect for private rights, for the protection of which government itself is instituted.

But the traveller in France, upon my late route, has less occasion than elsewhere to regret the rectilinear direction of the road on which he journeys, for the country offers no picturesque beauty. The rivers are sluggish, and have flat uninteresting banks. In the towns there sometimes occurs a church worthy of visiting, but no other remarkable building of any kind, and the sameness of the architecture of the 15th century, to which period most of them may be referred, is apt to weary the attention when you have visited four, or five churches in the course of two days. The fortifications of the towns are of the modern kind, and consequently more formidable than picturesque. Of those feudal castles which add such a venerable grace to the landscape in many places of England and Scotland., I have not seen one either ruinous or entire. It would seem that the policy of Louis XI., to call up his nobility from their estates to the court, and to render them as far as possible dependent upon the crown, — a policy indirectly seconded by the destruction of the noble families which took place in the civil wars of the League, and more systematically by the arts observed during the reign of Louis XIV.,- — had succeeded so entirely as to root out almost all traces of the country having ever been possessed by a noblesse campagnarde, who found their importance, their power, and their respectability, dependent on the attachment of the peasants among whom they lived, and over whom their interest extended. There are no ruins of their ancient and defensible habitations, and the few, the very few country houses which the traveller sees, resemble those built in our own country about the reign of Queen Anne, while the grounds about them seem in general neglected, the fences broken, and the whole displaying that appearance of waste which deforms a; property after the absence of a proprietor for some years.

The furious patriots of the Revolution denounced war against castles and proclaimed peace to the cottage. Of the former they found comparatively few to destroy, and of the latter, in the English sense of the word, there were as few to be protected. The cultivator of the fields in France, whether farmer or peasant, does not usually live in a detached farmhouse or cottage, but in one of the villages with which the country abounds. This circumstance, which is not altogether indifferent, so far as it concerns rural economics blemishes greatly the beauty of the landscape. The solitary farmhouse, with its little dependencies of cottages, is in itself a beautiful object, while it seldom fails to excite in the mind, the idea of the

natural and systematic dependence of a few virtuous cottagers upon an opulent and industrious farmer, who exercises over them a sort of natural and patriarchal authority, which has not the less influence because the subjection of the hinds, and their submission to their superior, is in some degree voluntary. A large village, composed of many farmers and small proprietors, and who hire their labourers at large, and without distinction, from amongst the poorer class of the same town, is more open to the feuds and disputes which disturb human society, always least virtuous and orderly when banded in crowds together, and when uninfluenced by the restraints of example, and of authority approaching, as closely as may be, to their own station in society.

Another uncomfortable appearance in French landscape, is the total want of inclosure. The ground is sedulously and industri ously cultivated, and apparently no portion of it is left without a crop. But the want of hedges and hedgerow trees gives to an eye accustomed to the richness of England, a strange appearance of waste and neglect, even where you are convinced, on a closer examination, that there exists in reality neither the one nor the other. Besides there is necessarily an absence of all those domestic animals which add so much in reality, as well as in painting and descriptive poetry, to the beauty of a country. Where there are no inclosures, and where at the same time the land is under crop, it is plain that the painter must look in vain for his groups of cattle, sheep, and horses, as the poet must miss his lowing herd and bleating flock. The cattle of France are accordingly fed in the large straw-yards which belong to each Metairic,or large farmhouse, and the sheep are chiefly grazed in distant tracts of open pasture. The former practice, as a mode of keeping not only the stall-fed bullock, but the cows destined for the dairy, has been hailed with acclamation in our own country by many great agriculturists, and you among others. But until I shall be quite assured that the rustic economics profit by this edict of perpetual imprisonment against the milky mothers of the herd, in proportion to the discomfort of the peaceful and useful animal thus sequestered from its natural habits, and to the loss of natural beauty in the rural laindscape, thus deprived of its most pleasing objects, I would willingly move for a writ of Habeas Corpus in favour of poor Crummie, made a bond-slave in a free country. At any rate, the total absence of cattle from the fields, gives a dull and unanimated air to a French landscape.

In travelling also through such parts of France as I have seen, the eye more particularly longs for that succession of country-seats, with their accompaniments of parks, gardens, and paddocks, which not only furnish the highest ornaments of an English landscape, but afford the best and most pleasing signs of the existence of a mild and be-« neficent aristocracy of landholders, giving a tone to the opinions of those around them, not by the despotism of feudal authority and direct power, but, as we have already said of the farmer, by the gradual and imperceptible influence which property, joined with education, naturally acquires over the more humble cultivator of the soil. It is the least evil consequence of the absence of the proprietor, that with him vanishes those improvements upon the soil, and upon the face of nature, which are produced by opulence under the guidance of taste. The eye in this country seldom dwells with delight upon trees growing, single or in groupes, at large and unconfined, for the sole purpose of ornament, and contrasting their unrestrained vegetation and profusion of shade with such as, being trained solely for the axe, have experienced constant restraint from the closeness of the masses in which they are planted, and from the knife of the pruner. The French forests themselves, when considered in their general effect, though necessarily both numerous and extensive, as furnishing the principal fuel used by the inhabitants, are not generally so disposed as to make an interesting part of the scenery. The trees are seldom scattered into broken groupes, and never arranged in hedgerows, unless by the sides of the highways. Large woods, or rather masses of plantations, cannot and do not supply the variety of landscape afforded by detached groves, or the rich and clothed appearance formed by a variety of intersecting lines composed of single trees.

The absence of in closures gives also, at least to our eyes, an unimproved and neglected air to this country. But upon close inspection the traveller is satisfied that the impression is inaccurate. The soil is rich, generally speaking, and every part of the land is carefully cropped and cultivated. Although, therefore, the ground being undivided, except by the colour of the various crops by which it is occupied, has, at first sight, that waste and impoverished appearance to which the inhabitant of an inclosed country is particularly sensible, yet the returns which it makes to the cultivator amply contradict the false impression. It is truly a rich and fertile land, affording in profusion all that can render subsistence easy, and abounding with corn, wine, and oil. When we consider France in this light,

it is impossible to suppress our feelings of resentment at the irregular ambition, which carried the inhabitants of so rich a country to lay yet more waste the barren sands of Prussia, and encumber with their corpses the pathless wildernesses of Moscow and Kalouga.

But the hour of retaliation is now come, and with whatever feelings of resentment we regard the provocation, it is impossible to view the distress of the country without deep emotions of compassion. From one hill to another our eye desccried the road before us occupied by armed bands of every description, horse, foot, artillery, and baggage, with their guards and attendants. Here was seen a long file of cavalry moving on at a slow pace, and collecting their forage as they advanced. There a park of artillery was formed in a cornfield, of which the crop was trampled down and destroyed. In one place we passed a regiment of soldiers, pressing forwards to occupy some Village for their night-quarters, Where the peasant must lay his account with finding his military guests whatever accommodation they are pleased to demand from him; in another we might see, what was still more ominous to the country through which the march was made, small parties of infantry or of cavalry, detached upon duty, or straggling for the purpose of plunder. The harvest stood ripened upon the fields, but it was only in a few places that the farmer, amid the confusion of the country, had ventured upon the operation of reaping it, unless where he was compelled by the constraint of a military requisition, or the commands of a commissary. It would have been a new sort of home for you, and your faithful Grieve, to have seen the labour of leading in the crop performed by an armed force, and your sheaves moving to headquarters instead of the farmyard, under the escort of an armed and whiskered Prussian, smoking his pipe with great composure on the top of each cart. Sometimes odd enough rencounters took place during this operation. A Prussian commissary, with his waggons, met some French peasants driving their carts, which occasioned a temporary stop to both parties. While some of the Frenchmen seemed zealously engaged in clearing way for the military men, others approached the waggons, and having previously contrived to ascertain that none of the Prussians understood French, they loaded them with all the abusive epithets which that language affords; taking care, however, amid the vivacity of their vituperation, to preserve such an exterior of respect in their manner and gestures, as induced the honest Prussians to suppose the Frenchmen were making apologies for the temporary obstruction which they had given to

their betters. Thus the one party were showering coquin, and voleurs, and brigand upon the other, who ever and anon with great gravity withdrew their pipes from their mouths to answer these douceurs with Das ist gut — sehr wohly and similar expressions of acquiescence. It would have been cruel to have deprived the poor Frenchmen of this ingenious mode of expectorating their resentment, but I could not help giving them a hint, that the commissary who was coming up understood their language, which had the instant effect of sending the whole party to their horses' heads.

The inhabitants hastened to propitiate the invaders, as far as possible, by assuming the badges of loyalty to the house of Bourbon. Nothing marked to my mind more strongly the distracted state of the country, than the apparent necessity which every, even the humblest individual, thought himself under of wearing a white cockade, and displaying from the thatch of his cottage a white rag,to represent the pavilpn blanc. There was a degreee of suspicion, arising from this very unanimity, concerning the motives for which these emblems were assumed; and I dare say the poor inhabitants might many of them have expressed their feelings in the words of Fletcher, —

> "Who is he here that did not wish thee chosen,
> Now thou art chosen? Ask them — all will say so,
> Nay swear't — 'tis for the king; but let that pass."

With equal zeal the inhabitants of the towns were laying aside each symbol that had refer ence to Buonaparte, and emulously substituting a loyal equivalent. The sign-painter was cleverest at his profession who could best convert the word Imperiale into Roy ale; but there were many bunglers, whose attempts produced only a complicated union of the two contradictory adjectives. Some prudent housekeepers, tired apparently of the late repeated changes, left a blank for the epithet, to be inserted when the government should show some permanency.

These numerous testimonies of acquiescence in the purpose of their march, were in some measure lost upon the allied troops. The British indeed preserved the strictest good order and discipline, in obedience to the orders issued and enforced by the commander in chief. But as the army was necessarily to be maintained at the expence of the country through which they passed, heavy requisitions were issued by the commissaries, which the French authorities themselves were under the necessity of enforcing. Still as

pillage and freebooting, under pretext of free quarters and maintenance, was strictly prohibited?

and punished, the presence of the English troops was ardently desired, as a protection against those of other nations.

Our allies the Prussians, as they had greater wrongs to revenge, were far less scrupulous in their treatment of the invaded country. When Our road lay along their line of march we found as many deserted villages as would have jointured all Sultan Mahoud's owls. In some places the inhabitants had fled to the woods, and only a few miserable old creatures, rendered fearless by age and poverty, came around us, begging, or offering fruit for sale. As the peasants had left their cottages locked up, the soldiers as regularly broke them open, by discharging a musket through the keyhole and shattering all the wards at once by the explosion. He who obtains admission by such violent preliminaries is not likely to be a peaceful or orderly guest; and accordingly furniture broken and destroyed, windows dashed in, doors torn down, and now and then a burned cottage, joined with the state of the hamlets, deserted by such of the terrified inhabitants as were able to fly, and tenanted only by the aged and disabled, reminded me of the beautiful lines describing the march of a conqueror, —

> "Amazement in his van with Flight combined,
> And Sorrow's faded form and Solitude behind."

A friend of mine met with an interesting adventure at one of these deserted villages. He had entered the garden of a cottage of somewhat a superior appearance, but which had shared the fate of the rest of the hamlet. As he looked around him he perceived that he was watched from behind the bushes by two or three children, who ran away as soon as they perceived themselves observed. He called after them, but to no purpose. The sound of the English accent, however, emboldened the mother of the family to show herself from a neighbouring thicket, and at length she took courage to approach him. My friend found to his surprise that she understood English well, owing to some accident of her life or education, which I have forgotten. She told him her family were just venturing back from their refuge in the woods, where they had remained two days without shelter, and almost without food, to see what havock the spoilers had made in their cottage, when they were again alarmed by the appearance of troops. Being assured that they were English soldiers, she readily agreed to remain, under

the confidence which the national character inspired; and having accepted what assistance her visitor had to offer her, as the only acknowledgment in her power, she sent one of the children to pull and present to her guest the only rose which her now ruined garden afforded. “ It was the last,” she said, “ she had, and she was happy to bestow it on an Englishman.” It is upon occasions such as these that the French women, even of the lowest class, display a sort of sentimental delicacy unknown to those of other countries.

Equal distress, but of a very different kind, I witnessed in the perturbation of a Flemish peasant, whose team of horses had been put in requisition to transport the baggage of an English officer of distinction. As they had not been returned to the owner, whose livelihood and that of his family depended on their, safety, he had set out in quest of them, in an agony of doubt and apprehension that actually had the appearance of insanity. Our attention was called to him from his having seated himself behind our carriage, and an expostulation on our part produced his explanation. I never saw such a sudden transition from despair to hope, as in the poor fellow’s rugged features when he saw, in the descent between two hills, a party of English dragoons with led horses. He made no doubt they could only be his own, and I hoped to see such a meeting as that of Sancho with Dapple, after their doleful separation. But we were both disappointed; the led horses proved to be those of my friend General A, who probably would not have been much flattered by their being mistaken, at whatever distance, for Flemish beasts of burthen. I believe, however, my ruined peasant obtained some clew for recovering his lost property, for he suddenly went off in a direction different from that which we had hitherto afforded him the means of pursuing. It is only by selecting such individual instances that I can make you comprehend the state of the country between Mons and Paris.

The Prussians having used this military license, the march of such-of our troops as pursued the same route became proportionally uncomfortable. A good bluff quartermaster of dragoons complained to me of the discomforts which they experienced from the condition to which the country had been reduced, but in a tone and manner which led me to conjecture, that my honest friend did not sympathize with the peasant, who had been plundered of his wine and brandy, so much as he censured the Prussians for leaving none for their faithful allies:

"O noble thirst! — yet greedy te drink all."

In the meanwhile it is no great derogation from the discipline of the English army to remark, that some old schoolboy practices were not forgotten; and that, where there occurred a halt, and fruit-trees chanced to be in the vicinity, they instantly were loaded like the emblematic tree in the frontispiece of Lily's grammar, only with soldiers instead of scholars; and surrounded by,,their wives, who held their aprons to receive the fruit, instead of satchels, as in the emblem chosen by that learned grammarian. There were no signs of license of a graver character.

In the midst of these scenes of war and invasion, the regulations of the post establishment, which, as is well known, is in France entirely in the charge of the government and their commissaries or lessees, were supported and respected. A proclamation in four different languages, French, German, English, and Prussian, and signed by four generals of the different countries, was stuck up in every posthouse. This polyglot forbade all officers and soldiers, whether belonging to the King of France, or to the allies, from pressing the horses, or otherwise interfering with the usual communication of Paris with the provinces. The posthouses were accordingly inhabited and protected amid the general desolation of the country, and we experienced no interruption on our journey.

While the villages and hamlets exhibited such scenes as I have described, the towns appeared to have suffered less upon this awful crisis, because the soldiers were there under the eye of their officers, and in each garrison-town a military commandant had been named for the maintenance of discipline. Some were indeed reeking from recent storm, or showed half-burnt ruins, which had been made by bombardment within a week or two preceding our arrival. Cambray had been carried by escalade by a bold coup-de-main, of which we saw the vestiges. The citizens, who were chiefly royalists, favoured the attack and a part of the storming party entered by means of a staircase contained in an old turret, which terminated in a sallyport opening to the ditch, and above in a wicket communicating with the rampart. This pass was pointed out to them by the townspeople. The defenders were a part of the National Guard, whom Buonaparte had removed from the district to which they belonged and stationed as a garrison in Cambray. The garriSon of Peronne, formerly called Peronne la Pucelle, or the Virgin Fortress, because it had never been taken, were

military of the same amphibious description with those of Cambray. The town is strongly situated in the Somme, surrounded by flat ground and marshes, and presents a formidable exterior. But this, as well as the other fortresses on the iron-bound frontier of Flanders, was indifferently provided with means of resistance. Buonaparte in this particular, as in others, had shown a determination to venture his fortunes upon a single chance of war, since he had made no adequate provision for a protracted defence of the country when invaded. It was one instance of the inexperience of the garrison of Peronne, that they omitted to blindfold the British officer who came to summon them to surrender. An officer of engineers, of high rank and experience, had been employed in this mission, and doubtless did not leave unemployed the eyes which the besieged, contrary to custom in such cases, left at liberty. Upon his return he reported the possibility of carrying a hornwork which covers a suburb on the left side of the river. The attempt was instantly made, and being in all respects successful, was followed by the surrender of the garrison, upon the easy conditions of laying down their arms, and returning to the ordinary civil occupations from which Buonaparte's mandate had withdrawn them. So easy had been these achievements that the officers concerned in them would hardly be prevailed upon to condescend to explain such trifling particulars. Yet to me, who looked upon ramparts a little injured indeed by time, but still strong, upon ditches containing twelve feet deep of water and a high glacis surmounting them, upon palisades constructed out of the trees which had been felled to clear the esplanade around the fortifications, the task of storming such works, even though not defended at all, seemed a grave and serious undertaking. In all these towns, so far as I could discover, the feeling of the people was decidedly in favour of the legitimate monarch; and I cannot doubt that this impression is correct, because elsewhere, and in similar circumstances, those who favoured Buonaparte were at no pains to suppress their inclinations. In one or two towns they were preparing little fetes to celebrate the king's restoration. The accompaniments did not appear to us very splendid; but when a town has been so lately taken by storm, and is still garrisoned by foreign troops and subjected to military requisitions, we could not expect that the rejoicings of its inhabitants should be attended with any superfluity of splendour.

Meanwhile we advanced through this new and bewildering scene of wrar and waste/ with the comfortable consciousness that we belonged to the

stronger party. The British drums and bugle-horns sung us to bed every night, and played our reveille in the morning; for in all the fortified towns which we passed there were British troops and a British commandant, from more than one of whom we experienced attention and civility.

When we reached Pont de St Maxence, which had been recently the scene of an engagement between the Prussians and French, we found more marked signs of hostile devastation than in any place through which we had yet travelled. It is a good large market-town, with a very fine bridge over the Oise, an arch of which had been recently destroyed, and repaired in a temporary manner. The purpose had probably been to defend the passage; and as the river is deep, and the opposite bank is high and covered with wood, besides having several buildings approaching to the bridge, I presume it might have been made a very strong position. It had been forced, however, by the Prussians, in what manner we found no one to tell us. Several houses in this town had been burnt, and most of them seemed to have been pillaged. The cause was evident from the number of embrasures and loopholes for musketry which were struck out in the houses and garden walls. The attempt to make a village into a place of defence is almost always fatal to the household gods, since it is likely to be burnt by one or other of the parties, and certain to be plundered by both. Military gentlemen look upon this with a very different eye; for I have been diverted to hear some of them, who have given me the honour of their company in my little excursions from Paris, censure a gentleman or farmer with great gravity for having built his house and stationed his court of offices in a hollow, where they were overlooked and commanded; whereas, by placing the buildings a little higher on the ridge or more towards right or left, they might, in case of need, have acquired the dignity of being the key of a strong position, and, in all probability, have paid for their importance by sharing the fate of Hougoumont.

We were informed at St Maxence that the hand of war had been laid yet more heavily upon the neighbouring town of S6nlis, through which lay our direct route to Paris, and near which an action had taken place betwixt a part of Bluchers army and that of Grouchy and Vandamme, which, falling back to cover the French capital after the battle of Waterloo, had accomplished a retreat that placed those who commanded it very high in public estimation. We felt no curiosity to see any more of the woes of war, and readily complied with a proposal of our postillions to exchange the

route of Senlis for that of Chantilly, to which they undertook to carry us by a cross road through the forest. Le beaii chemin par terre, or fine greensward road, which they had urged as so superior to the public causeway, had unfortunately not possessed the same power of resisting the tear and wear of cavalry, artillery, and baggage-waggons. It was reduced to a sort of continued wet ditch, varying in depth in a most irregular manner, and through which the four stallions that drew us kicked, plunged, snorted, and screamed, in full concert with the eternal smack of the whips, as well as shrieks, whoops, and oaths of the jackbooted postillions, lugging about our little barouche in a manner that threatened its demolition at every instant. The French postillions, however, who, with the most miserable appliances and means, usually drive very well, contrived, by dint of quartering and tugging, to drag us safe through roads where a Yorkshire post-boy would have been reduced to despair, even though his horses had not been harnessed with ropes, fastened together by running nooses.

The forest of Chantilly was probably magnificent when it was the chase of the princely family of Conde; but all the valuable timber trees have been felled, and those which now remain appear, generally speaking, to be about twenty years old only, and consist chiefly of birch, and other inferior timber used for firewood. Those who acquired the domains of the emigrants after the Revolution were generally speculating adventurers, who were eager to secure what they could make of the subject in the way of ready; money, by cutting timber and selling materials of houses, partly in order to secure the means of paying the price, and partly because prudence exacted that they should lose no time in drawing profit from a bargain, of which the security seemed rather precarious.

The town and palace of Chantilly, rendered classical by the name of the great Prince of Cond6, afforded us ample room for interesting reflection. The town itself is pleasant, and has some good houses agreeably situated. But in the present state of internal convulsion, almost all the windows of the houses of the better class were closed, and secured by outer shutters. We were told this was to protect them against the Prussians, with whom the town was crowded. These soldiers were very young lads, chiefly landwehr, or militia, and seemed all frolicksome, and no doubt mischievous youths. But, so far as I could see, there was no ill nature, much less atrocity, in their behaviour, which was rather that of riotous schoolboys of the higher form. They possessed themselves of the jackboots of our postillions, and seemed

to find great entertainment in stumping up and down the innyard in these formidable accoutrements, the size and solidity of which have been in no degree diminished since the days of Yorick and La Fleur. But our Prussian hussars were seen to still greater advantage in the superb stables of Chantilly, which have escaped the fury that levelled its palace. The huge and stately vault, which pride, rather than an attention to utility, had constructed for the stud of the Prince of Conde, is forty feet high, two hundred yards in length, and upwards of thirty-six feet in width. This magnificent apartment, the enormity of whose proportions seemed better calculated for the steeds of the King of Brobdignag than, for Houyhnhnms of the ordinary size, had once been divided into suitable ranges of stalls, but these have been long demolished. In the centre arises a magnificent dome, sixty feet in diameter and ninety feet in height; and in a sort of recess beneath the dome, and fronting the principal entrance, is a superb fountain, falling into a huge shell, and dashing over its sides into a large reservoir, highly ornamented with architectural decorations. This fountain, which might grace the court of a palace, was designed for the ordinary supply of the stable. The scale of imposing magnificence upon which this building was calculated, although at war with common sense and the fitness of things, must, in its original state of exact order and repair, have impressed the mind with high ideas of the power and consequence of the prince by whom it was planned and executed, and whose name (Louis Henry de Bourbon, seventh Prince of Cond6) stands yet recorded in an inscription, which, supported by two mutilated genii, is displayed above the fountain. But what would have been the mortification of that founder could he have witnessed, as we did, the spacious range with all its ornaments broken down and defaced, as if in studied insult; while its high and echoing vault rung to the shouts, screams, and gambols of a hundred or two of the dirtiest hussars and lancers that ever came off a march, while the shrill cries of their half-starved and miserable horses added a wild but appropriate accompaniment. Yet whatever his feelings might have been to witness such pollution, they would have been inferior to those with which his ancestor, the Great Conde, would have heard that the Sarijiatian partizans who occupied Chantilly formed part of an invading army, which had marched, almost without opposition, from the frontiers to the capital, and now held in their disposal the fates of the house of Bourbon and of the kingdom of France.

The old domestic of the family who guided me through these remains of decayed magnificence, cast many a grieved and mortified glance upon the irreverent and mischievous soldiers as they aimed the buts of their lances at the remaining pieces of sculpture, or amused themselves by mimicking his own formal address and manner. “ Ah les barbares I les barbarea /” — I could not refuse assent to this epithet, which he confided to my ear in a cautious whisper, accompanied with a suitable shrug of the shoulders; but I endeavoured to qualify it with another train of reflections: — ” Et pour t ant, mon ami, si ce neetoitpas ces gens-Id!” — ” Ah out. Monsieur, sans eux nous n au« rions peut et re jamais revu notre bon Due — Assurement vest un r even ant bon — mais aussi, il jaut avouer qu’il est revenu en assez mauvaise compagniey At some distance from these magnificent stables, of which (as frequently happens) the exterior does more honour to the architect’s taste than the inside to his judgment, are the melancholy remains of the palace of the Prince of Conde, where the spectator can no longer obey the exhortation of the poet,

> ec Dans sa pompe elegante, admirez Chantilly,
> De heros en heros, d’age en age embelli”

The splendid chateau once corresponded in magnificence with the superb offices which we had visited, but now its vestiges alone remain, a mass of neglected ruins amid the broad lake and canals which had been constructed for its ornament and defence. This beautiful palace was destroyed by the revolutionary mob of Paris early in the civil commotions. The materials, with the lead, iron, carpenter work, &c. were piled up, by those who appropriated them, in what was called Le petit Chateau, a smaller edifice annexed to the principal palace, and communicating with it by a causeway. Thus the small chateau was saved from demolition, though not from pillage. Chantilly and its demesnes were sold as national property, but the purchasers having failed to pay the price, it reverted to the public, so that the king, upon his restoration, had no difficulty in reinstating the Duke of Bourbon. The lesser chateau has been lately refitted in a hasty and simple style, for the reception of the legitimate proprietor; but the style of the repairs makes an unavoidable and mortifying contrast with the splendour of the original decorations. Rich embossed ceilings and carved wainscot are coarsely daubed over with whitewash and size-paint, with which the remains of the original • gilding and sculpture form a melancholy

association. The frames alone remained of those numerous and huge mirrors,

> — “ in which he of Gath,
> Goliah, might have seen his giant bulk
> Whole without stooping, towering crest and all.”

But the French artizans, with that lack of all feeling of convenance, or propriety, which has well been described as a principal defied ency in their national character, have endeavoured to make fine things out of the frames themselves, by occupying the room of the the superb plates of glass with paltry sheets of blue paper, patched over with gilded fleursde-lis, an expedient the pitiful effect of which may be easily conceived. If I understood my guide rightly, however, this work ought not to be severely criticised, being the freewill offering of the inhabitants of Chantilly, who had struggled, in the best manner their funds and taste would admit, to restore the chateau to something like an habitable condition when it was again to be possessed by its legitimate owner. This is the more likely, as the furniture of the duke’s own apartment is plain, simple, and in good taste. He seems popular among the inhabitants, who, the day preceding our arrival, had, under all the unfavourable circumstances of their situation, made a little fete to congratulate him upon his restoration, and to hail the white flag, which now once more floated from the dome of the offices, announcing the second restoration of the Bourbons.

Beside the little chateau are the vestiges of what was once the principal palace, and which, as such, might well have accommodated the proudest monarch in the world. It was situated on a rock, and surrounded by profound and broad ditches of the purest water, built in a style of the richest Gothic architecture, and containing within its precincts every accommodation which pomp or luxury could desire. The demolition has been so complete that little remains excepting the vaults from which the castle arose, and a ruinous flight of double steps, by which visitors formerly gained the principal entrance. The extent, number, and intricacy of the subterranean vaults were such as to afford a re treat for robbers and banditti, for which reason the entrances have been built up by order of the police. The chateau,, when in its splendour, communicated with a magnificent theatre, with an orangery and greenhouse of the first order, and was surrounded by a number of separate parterres, or islands, decorated with

statuary, with jets d'eau, with columns, and with vases, forming a perspective of the richest architectural magnificence. All is now destroyed, and the stranger only learns, from the sorrowful tale of his guide, that the wasted and desolate patches of ground intersected by the canals, once bore, and deserved, the names of the Gallery of Vases, the Parterre of the Orangerie, and the Island of Love. Such and so sudden is the downfall of the proudest efforts of human magnificence. Let us console ourselves, my dear friend, while we look from the bartizan of the old mansion upon the lake, and its corresponding barrier of mountains, that the beauties with which Nature herself has graced our country are more imperishable than those with which the wealth and power of the house of Bourbon once decorated the abode of Chantilly.

I may add, that the neighbourhood of Chantilly exhibits more picturesque beauty than I had yet remarked in France.

Paul.

Letter XII

Paul to His Sister

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Your question, my dear sister, What do I think of Paris? corresponds in comprehensive extent with your desire that I would send you a full and perfect description of that celebrated capital; but were I to reside here all my life, instead of a few weeks, I am uncertain whether I could distinctly comply with either request. There is so much in Paris to admire, and so much to dislike, such a mixture of real taste and genius, with so much frippery and affectation, the sublime is so oddly mingled with the ridiculous, and the pleasing with the fantastic and whimsical, that I shall probably leave the capital of France without being able to determine which train of ideas it has most frequently excited in my mind. One point is, however, certain; — that, of all capitals, that of France affords most numerous objects of curiosity, accessible in the easiest manner; and it may be therefore safely pronounced one of the most entertaining places of residence which can be chosen by an idle man. As for attempting a description of it, that, you know, is far beyond the limits of our compact, which you must have quite forgotten when you hinted at such a proposal. The following sketch may not, however, be uninteresting.

If we confine our observation to one quarter of Paris only, that, namely, which is adjacent to the Royal Palace, I presume there is no capital which can show so many and such magnificent public edifices within the same space of ground. The Tuilleries, whose immense extent makes amends for the deficiencies of the architecture, communicate with the royal gardens, which are used as public walks, and these again open into the Place de Louis Quinze, a large octagon, guarded by a handsome balustrade, richly ornamented at the angles, having, on the one hand, the royal gardens with the range of the palace, on the other the Champs Elysees, a large space of ground, planted and laid out in regular walks like those of Hyde-Park. Behind is the extensive colonnade of a palace, called by Buonaparte the Temple of Victory, and since the Restoration the Temple of Concord. Another large and half-finished temple was rising in the front by the command of Buonaparte, which was dedicated to the honour of soldiers

who had died in battle. The building was to have been consolidated solely by the weight of the massive stones made use of, and neither wood, iron, or lime, was to be employed in its construction; but schemes of ambition as ill-cemented interrupted its progress. A line of buildings extend on either hand, forming a magnificent street, called La Rue Rivoli, which runs parallel with the iron palisade of the garden of the Tuilleries.

It was on the second night after my arrival in Paris, that, finding myself rather too early for an evening party to which I was invited, I strolled out, enjoying the pure and delicious air of a summer night in France, until I found myself in the centre of the Place de Louis Quinze, surrounded, as I have described it, by objects so noble in themselves, and so powerfully associated with deep historic and moral interest. " And here I am at length in Paris," was the natural reflection, " and under circumstances how different from what I dared to have anticipated 1 That is the palace of Louis le Grand, but how long have his descendants been banished from its halls, and under what auspices do they now again possess them! This superb esplanade takes its name from his luxurious and feeble descendant; and here, upon the very spot where I now stand, the most virtuous of the Bourbon race expiated, by a violent death inflicted by his own subjects, and in view of his own palace, the ambition and follies of his predecessors. There is an awful solemnity in the reflection, how few of those who contributed to this deed of injustice and atrocity now look upon the light, and behold the progress of retribution. The glimmering lights that shine among the alleys and parterres of the Champs Elysees, indicate none of the usual vigils common in a metrppolis. They are the watchfires of a camp, of an English camp, and in the. capital of France, where an English drum has not been heard since 1436, when the troops of Henry the Sixth were expelled from Paris. During that space, of nearly four centuries, there has scarce occurred a single crisis which rendered it probable for a moment that Paris should be again entered by the English as conquerors; but least of all could such a consummation have been expected at the conclusion of a war, in which France so long predominated as arbitress of the continent, and which had periods when Britain seemed to continue the conflict only in honourable despair."

There were other subjects of deep interest around me. The lights which proceeded from the windows and from the gardens of the large hotel occupied by the Duke of Wellington, at the corner of the Rue des Champs

Elysees, and which chanced that evening to be illuminated in honour of a visit from the allied sovereigns, mingled with the twinkle of the camp-fires, and the glimmer of the tents; and the music, which played a variety of English and Scottish airs, harmonized with the distant roll of the drums, and the notes of that beautiful poir\t of war which is performed by our bugles at the setting of the watch. In these sounds there was pride and victory and honour, some portion of which descended (in imagination at least) to each, the most retired and humblest fellow-subject of the hero who led, and the soldiers who obeyed, in the achievements which had borne the colours pf Britain into the capital of France. But there was enough around me to temper the natural feelings of elation, which, as a Briton, I could not but experience. Monuments rose on every side, designed to commemorate mighty actions, which may well claim the highest praise that military achievement alone, abstracted from the cause in which it was accomplished, could be entitled to. From the centre of the Place Vendome, and above the houses of the Rue Rivoli, arose the summit of the celebrated column which Buonaparte had constructed upon the plan of that of Trajan; the cannon taken at Ulm and Austerlitz affording the materials of its exterior, and which is embossed with a detailed representation of the calamities and subjection of Austria. At no great distance lay the Bridge of Jena, an epithet which recalls the almost total annihilation of the kingdom of Prussia. In the front of the Tuilleiries are placed, oil a triumphal arch, the Venetian Horses, the trophies of the subjugation of Italy, and in the neighbouring Louvre are deposited the precious spoils of victories gained and abused in eveby country of Eurtipfy forming the most resistless evidence that the hand which placed them there had once at its arbitrary disposal the fortunes of the civilized world. No building among the splendid monuments of Paris but is marked with the name or device, or insignia cff an emperor whose power seemed as deeply founded as it was widely extended. Yet the gourd of the prophet, which came up in a night and perished in a night, has proved the type of authority so absolute, and of fame so diffused; and the possessor of this mighty power is now the inhabitant of a distant and sequestered islet, with hardly so much freewill as entitles him to claim from his warders an hour of solitude, even in the most solitary spot in the civilized world. The moral question presses on every bosom, Was it worth while for him to have climbed so high to render his fall the deeper, or would the meanest of us purchase the feverish feelings of gratified ambition, at the expence of his

reflections, who appeared to hold Fortune chained to his footstool? Could the fable of the Seven Sleepers have been realized in Paris, what a scene of astonishment would have been prepared for those who, falling asleep in 1813, awakened from their torpor at the present moment! He who had seen the pope place the crown upon the head of Napoleon, and the proud house of Austria compelled to embrace his alliance, Prussia bent to the dust beneath his footstool, England excluded from each continental connection of commerce or alliance, Russia overawed and submissive, while Italy, Germany, and the greater part of Spain, were divided as appanages among his brothers and allies, — what would have been the surprise of the wa king moment which should have shown him the Prussian cannon turned upon the bridges of Paris, and the sovereigns of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, with the representatives of almost, all the other nations of Europe, feasting in the capital of France with the general and minister of England, supported by a force which made resistance equally frantic and hopeless! The revolution, of ages must have appeared to him to have been accomplished within the space of little more than twentyfour months.

From this slight sketch, you may have some general idea of the magnificence of that quarter of Paris which adjoins to the Tuilleries, crowded as it is with palaces, public monuments,and public buildings, and comprehending in its circuit ornamented gardens and extended walks, open to the inhabitants for exercise or pleasure. I ought also to describe to you the front of the palace itself, a magnificent range of buildings, corresponding with the Louvre, another immense royal mansion, from which the Tuilleries is only divided by the superb square, called La Place du Carousel.

The only screen betwixt this square and the court of the Tuilleries, is a magnificent railing of wrought iron, which gives freedom to the eye, not only to survey the extended front of the chateau, but to penetrate through the central vestibule of the palace into the gardens beyond, and as far as the Champs Elyseees. In the centre of this screen the public have admittance to the courtyard of the palace, beneath a triumphal arch which Buonaparte erected in imitation of that of Septimius Severus. The effect of this monument seems diminutive when compared to the buildings around; the columns, made of a mixed red and white marble, are rather gaudy, and the four celebrated Venetian horses, formed of Corinthian brass, which occupy the top of the arch have been injudiciously harnessed with gilded trappings

to a gilded car, driven by a gilded Victory. It is said Buow naparte intended to have placed his own figure in the car; but it came to his ears (for he was self-tormentor enough to enquire after such matters) that the disaffected had hailed it, as likely to aiford a good opportunity for calling him mountebank with impunity, since, while they should point to the chariot, the epithet Le Charlatan might easily be substituted for Le Char le tlent. Thus a threatened pun saved Napoleon's image one descent at least by preventing its temporary elevation; and it also saved the French taste the disgrace of adding another incongruity to the gilded car, harness, and driver. This monument is now undergoing considerable alterations. The Austrians are busy in exchanging for plain slabs of marble, the tablatures placed around the arch: The sculptures almost all relate to the humiliation of the Emperor of Austria, there represented cap in hand before Buonaparte, who appears covered and in an authoritative posture. The French rebelled against the mutilation of this monument at its commencement, and attempted something like a riot, but were instantly called to order by a strong Prussian guard. The work now goes on quietly, and not without some respect to the feelings of the Parisians; for there are blinds of wood put up before the scaffolding, to save their eyes the mortification of seeing its pro gress. It is not doubted that the horses themselves will be removed in due time.*

* This removal has since taken place.

In the meanwhile the statue of Buonaparte, which was last year taken down from the pillar in the Place Vendome, is said to have experienced an odd transition. It had been exchanged for a certain number of busts and small figures of Louis XVIII., just as a large piece of coin of one reign is given for an equivalent in the small money of another. The figure of the abdicated emperor for some time found refuge in the yard of an artist, by whom it has since been sold to an Englishman. The purchase is believed to be made in behalf of the Duke of Wellington, in which case the statue will be a striking ornament to the palace destined by national gratitude as an acknowledgment at least of the debt, which even the wealth and generosity of Britain cannot pay in full.

To return to the works of Buonaparte. It cannot be denied that he showed great ability and dexterity in availing himself of that taste for national display, which is a,leading feature of the French character. Yet this was, at least, as much evinced in the address with which he adopted and

carried through the half-accomplished plans of Louis XIV. and his successors, as in any work of original genius which can be decidedly traced to his own design. The triumphal arch, and the pillar in the Place Vendome, are literal, almost servile, imitations of the column of Trajan and the arch of Severus. But the splendid extension of the Louvre, by the combination of that striking pile with the Tuilleries, upon the side which had been left unfinished, although the work of Buonaparte, and bearing his name, is, in fact, only a completion of the original design of Louis XIV. One original plan Napoleon may indeed claim as his own — the project, namely, of erecting a stupendous bronze figure of an elephant upon the scite of the Bastile. The sort of castle, or Howdar, with which this monstrous statue was to have been accoutred, was designed for a. reservoir, the water of which, being dis charged through the trunk into a large cistern, or fountain, surrounding the pedestal on which the animal was placed, was to supply with water all that quarter of Paris; The model of this gigantic grotesque is exhibited in stucco near the place Which it was designed to have occupied, and such is the deference of the present government for the feelings of la gloire rationale that they have not yet ventured to a Vow that, in a time of national poverty and distress they mean to dispense with erecting a ihonument, which, after being accomplished at irnmense experice, must appear bizarre and fithciful, rather thdn grand attd impressive. In the meanwhile they are, in justice to the ancestors of the preseht king, reclaiming for the Bourbons those public buildings, which, by inscriptions and emblems Napoleon had consecrated to his own dynasty. N's are every where disappearing, or Undergoing a cotiversioft into H.'s and B/s, all operation in which the royal stone-cutters are as much called tlpon to exert their dexterity as the poor sign painters in Roye, Peronne and Cambbray, They have, indeed, the same benefit of experience, having, not very long ago, accomplished the counterpart of the metamorphosis. Such are the minute and ridiculous consequences which indicate a change of government, as much as the motion of straws, twigs, and withered leaves upon the surface, indicates the progress and subsiding of a torrent.

On the whole, it must be acknowledged, that Buonaparte, though unscrupulous in appropriating the merit of his predecessors, bent an earnest and active attention to perfecting whatever grand or magnificent plans they had left uncompleted, thus establishing his own reputation as heir of the monarchy, as well as of the revolution. His ambition to distinguish himself

sometimes soared beyond popular prejudice, and hurried him into extravagancies of expence, which the Parisians seem in general to deem unnecessary. Such is the plan of his Rue de V Empereur, now Rue de la Paix a fine street, running from the Place Vendome to the Boulevards des Capucines, which not only boasts a breadth corresponding to the magnificence of the buildings, but is actually accommodated with two gutters, one on each side, instead of that single kennel in the centre, where the filth floats or stagnates in ail the other streets of Paris. But even the Emperor Napoleon, in the height of his dignity, dared not introduce the farther novelty of a pavement on each side. This would be, indeed, to have destroyed that equality between horse and foot, walkers drivers, and driven, which appears to give such delight to a Parisian, that, if you extol to him the safe pavements and footpaths of an English street, or road, he will answer with polite composure — ” C’cst tres bien pour Messieurs les Anglois — pour moi, J’aime la totalits de la rue.” Good phrases, saith Justice Shallow, are and ever must be commended; and this, of la totalite de la rue, reconciles a Parisian walker to all the inconveniences of being ridden down or driven over. But the privilege of totality by no means reconciles the aged, the timid, the infirm, not to mention females and children, to the accidents to which they are exposed. At present these are multiplied by the numerous accession of strangers, all of whom drive in their own way, and give their owrn mode of warning, which the pedestrian must construe rightly upon his own peril. Here he hears the Hey! hey / of a member of the English Four-in-hand Club; there he is called to attention by the Gare! Gave! of a Parisian petit maitre, or a German Freyherr; and having escaped all these hairbreadth risks, he may be ridden down at the next turning by a drosky, the driver of which, a venerable Russian charioteer, with a long beard flowing down to his girdle, pushes right on to his destined course with the most unperturbed apathy, without giving passengers warning of any kind to shift for themselves.

The risk, however, to pedestrians, does not form my only objection to the French metropolis, abstracted always from those splendid streets which belong to the quarter of the Tuilleries. The rest of Paris, excepting the Boulevards, a peculiar sort of open suburb by which it is surrounded, is traversed by nar row streets, which, divide buildings dark, high, and gloomy, the lower windows grated with projecting iron rails of the most massive description, and the houses belonging to persons of importance

opening by what is called a port coclieer, or carriage-entrance, into courts which intervene between them and the street. By thus sequestering their mansions, the great do indeed deprive the shopkeeper, or roturier, who lives opposite, of the powers of looking upon the windows of his neighbour the duke, count, or marquis, Nevertheless, mansions constructed upon this unsocial and aristocratic plan, by which the splendour of the habitations of the noble and wealthy is reserved and veiled, as too dazzling and precis ous to form a part of the public street,, cannot contribute to the general beauty of the city in which they are placed. I do not, however, mean to say that the other quarters of Paris, though gloomy, dark, and traversed chiefly by these narrow and perilous passes, are devoid of a strong and peculiar interest. On the contrary, the constant appearance of public edifices, distinguished in history, of Gothic churches and halls, of squares and places, surrounded by stately buildings perpetually, even in. the most disagreeable quarters of Paris, reminds us that we are in a capital early distinguished for arts and arms, and where even the rudeness and inconvenience of many streets, joined to the solid,massive, andantique structures to which they give access, argue at once early importance and ancient dignity.

It appears a remarkable peculiarity to a British eye, when Paris is viewed from a distance, that over buildings so closely piled together, there arises not that thick and dense cloud of smoke which sometimes graces and dignifies, but more frequently deforms, a view of London, or any other large town in our island. This is owing to the Parisians using wood for fuel, and that frequently in the shape of charcoal, but always sparingly, and in stoves, instead of our seacoal burnt in open chimnies. Seen from the heights of Montmartre, or the dome of St Genevieve, Paris exhibits a distinct mass of houses, steeples, and towers, unclouded, but also unsofteni ed, by the dusky canopy which hangs over: a British city. My Parisian friends laughed heartily, and, on the whole, deservedly, at my regretting the absence of this dusky accompaniment, which, laying aside associations, does nevertheless add a shadowy importance, and even a softness, to the landscape; or, admitting associations, and pleading on those to which we are accustomed, gives an assurance of business and life to what, without such an indication of living bustle, seems not unlike the appearance of the town in the Arabian tale, whose inhabitants had been all petrified. I own this is a prejudiced feeling, and do not contest the right which a Frenchman has to associate

with the cloud which overhangs our, metropolis, all that is disgusting, and perhaps unhealthy, in the gross evaporation of our coarser fuel.

The Seine is usually appealed to by the Parisians as the principal beauty of their city, and it is at least one of its greatest conveniences. But Lord Chesterfield furnished an answer to the proud question, whether England could show the like — ” Yes — and we call it Fleet-ditch.” This gasconade is like that of the French veteran lecturing upon invasion, who spits upon the ground, and saysjto his audience, “ Voila la Tamise — a hyperbole which may be excused, from ignorance, as no French soldier has happened to see the Thames for many a century, excepting as a guest or a prisoner in England. But, laying jests aside, the Seine far from having the majestic appearance of the. Thames, being diminutive both in depth and breadth, and strait-waistcoated by a range of ungraceful quays, a greater deformity than those of London, because rendered conspicuous by the narrowness of the stream. The river being divided also at two intervals by small islands, completely occupied by buildings, we are induced to entertain a contemptuous opinion of the Seine, as completely subjugated and tyrannized over by the despotic authority of human art. Several of the walks along its side are nevertheless’most interesting, particularly the Quai de Voltaire, from which the passenger views the superb and long extent of colonnade be longing to the Louvre, while farther down the river are seen the gardens of the Tuilleries and the trees of Les Champs Elysees. The finest views of Paris are to be seen from the heights of Montmartre, which rise as close behind the city as the Calton-hill in respect to Edinburgh, and from some of the steeples, particularly that of St Genevieve, a magnificent new church of Grecian architecture, originally dedicated to the titular saint of Paris; next polluted by the appellation of the Temple of Reason; then solemnly entitled the Pantheon, because it was to be the place for depositing the bodies of departed sages and patriots} and lastly restored by Buonaparte to the character of a Christian church, without taking away its destination as a general mausoleum for departed worth. The honours, however, of those who received this distinction were not alwraysupermanent. There was “ no snug lying in the abbey.” Several of those revolutionary chiefs whose remains the faction of the day had installed in this sanctuary, were torn from thence shortly afterwards, and thrown, like the corpse of Sejanus, into the common-sewer of the city. The bodies of other heroes of the day have been withdrawn in secret, lest they should suffer the same fate. In some instances

the temporary tenant of the tomb was dispossessed, and made to give way to a popular character of more recent celebrity. Thus the corpse of Mirabeau was removed from the Pantheon to make room for that of Marat; on which occasion one of the family of the former returned thanks to heaven for an expulsion, which, as he expressed himself, " reestablished the honour of his house." The corpse of the villain Marat, after having had at least the honour of one bloody sacrifice, in the trial and execution of a man who had offered an insult to his temporary monument, was soon after, 28th July, 1793, dragged from the church, and thrown into the common-sewer of the Rue de Montmartre. At length, weary or ashamed of their own versatility, the National Convention, in the year 1795, decreed that no citizen should receive the honours of the Pantheon until ten years after his death; a decree which amounted almost to an universal sentence of exclusion in a country where the present occupies solely the attention of the public. Of all those to whom the various legislative bodies of France decreed this post; humous distinction, there have only remained in the Pantheon the tombs of two authors, Voltaire and Rousseau. The remains of these distinguished literary characters were deposited here, during the early fervour of the Revolution, with shouts, and with hymns, and with tears, and with transports of that universal philanthropy, which shortly afterwards made its real character evident to the world. A painted wooden sarcophagus, much like a deal packing-box in form and materials, is laid above the grave of each, with a mouldering inscription expressive of what the Legislative Assembly intended to do for the honour of the philosophers whose talents illumined the 18th century. But the rotten board on which their decrees are registered, frail as it is, has proved a record more permanent than, the power that placed it there. The monuments of despotism are more durable than those of anarchy j and accordingly some of Buonajparte's generals and senators are buried in the Pantheon, and, though men of inferior note, have been suffered to enjoy in quiet that repose which even the tomb could not secure for the republican demagogues.

In visiting this chiirch, or temple, I was entertained by the dry answer of an Englishman, who had followed us up to the dome without the observation of the sexton. Our guide seemed a little hurt at the stranger's presumption, and from time to time addressed to him a few words of reprehension, stating the risk he run of being bewildered in the vaults and perhaps shut up there. As I perceived my countryman did not understand in

what he had given offence, I explained to him the sexton's remonstrance. " Tell him," answered the stranger, with great gravity, " that if the misfortune he threatens had really befallen me, I would have had only to call out Sixpence, and all Paris would have come to my rescue." With deference, however, to this honest specimen of John Bull, the access of the public to what is worthy of notice in Paris is much less impeded by a functionary stretching forth his hand for a fee than is the case in London; and when we recollect the mode in which the various departments of St Paul's and Westminster Abbey are secured by a dozen of petty turnpikes and tax-gatherers, we may judge more fairly of the sexton of St Genevieve.

The liberality of the French nation, in affording every possible means to the public of enjoying the collections of curiosities, or of scientific objects, made for their behalf, instead of rendering them sources of profit to some obscure pensioner, pervades all their establishments; and strangers, for whose ease and convenience even greater facilities are afforded than are given to the natives, are called upon to acknowledge it with gratitude. If there be in this open display of the treasures which they possess some traces of national pride, it is in this case an honest and fair pride, and those who derive so much benefit from its effects ought to be the last to question its motive. One or two of these objects of curiosity I shall briefly notice in my next letter, not with the purpose of giving a regular description of them, but to mark, if I can, by a few characteristic strokes, the peculiarities which attracted my own attention.

Adieu; I rest ever your affectionate.

Paul.

Letter XIIL

the Same to the Same

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I have already said, my dear sister, that of all capitals in the world, Paris must afford the most delightful residence to a mere literary lounger; and if we add, that,his fortune is limited (as is usually the case with such a character,) it will suit him, after a little experience, as well in point of economy as of taste. The Jardin des Plantes, the National library, the Collection of French Monuments, the National Institute, above all the Grand Museum in the Louvre, are gratuitously opened to his inspection and use, while theatres, and public amusements of various kinds, in the evening, may be frequented for little expence.

I know that nothing in Paris would delight you more than the Jardin des Plantes. This grand botanical garden, of several acres extent, richly stocked with the most varied and curious productions of thej vegetable world, is equally interesting to the scientific student, and to the idler, who seeks only for shaded walks and interesting and beautiful points of view. The variety of the ground, the disposition of the trees, and the neighbourhood of the Seine, afford the last in considerable variety; while the shade, so grateful in this warm climate, is secured by many a long alley and avenue. The establishment is maintained entirely at the expence of the public. The learned in physics may there have the advantage of a chemical laboratory, of lectures upon botany and natural history by men of approved science, of an anatomical collection, and a valuable library, composed of works relative to natural history. There is also a menagerie upon a great scale of splendour, as-well as of comfort to the animals with which it is tenanted. Those which are of a dangerous description are properly secured, but still with due attention to their habits and convenience. The bears, for example, inhabit subterranean residences, each of which opens into a sunk area, of depth enough to prevent escape, but where Bruin may repose himself, or take exercise, at his pleasure. I seldom pass this place without seeing some of the Prussian or Russian soldiers engaged in talking to and feeding the bears, whom, in this southern clime, they probably regard as a kind of countrymen. The elephant, a most magnificent animal of the kind, has, as

befits his good sense and civilized behaviour, a small paddock around his cabin, secured from the public by a strong palisade. He had a mate some years ago, but is now a widower; very good humoured, however, and familiar with the passengers. Gentler animals, such as the varieties of the deer species, are allowed space in proportion to their size; and it is only the fiercer tribes of Africa and Asia, lions, tigers, and leopards, which are committed to strict confinement. These also are kept clean, and made as comfortable as circumstances will permit; and on the whole, it is impossible to conceive an institution of the kind managed with more respect to the feelings and convenience of the creatures contained in it. If a.

stranger is curious to know the names of the various animals, there is always some Frenchman near, who, either merely to do the honours to Monsieur l'Etranger, or at most for quelque chose pour boire, walks with you through the collection, and displays at once his eloquence, and that sort of information which is frequently found among the Parisians, even of the lower orders. To me, who am no naturalist, such a guide seems often as interesting a specimen as any in the collection. The contrast of his meagre looks and tattered dress, with the air of patronage which he assumes towards the stranger under his charge; his pompous encomiums on the objects he exhibits; his grave injunctions not to approach too near the grates of the more dangerous quadrupeds; the importance with which he gives the scientific appellation of each animal, condescendingly adding that which is in more vulgar use j and the polite gratitude of his " Monsieur est tres homiete," when he pockets his little gratuity, and puts an the schakos, which he has hitherto held in his hand for the sake of aiding his eloquence, — all these points brought together give a character of the lower rank not to be met with out of France, and rarely out of Paris.. '.

The antiquary who visits Paris must be deeply interested by a visit to the Museum des Monumens Fraais, assembled by Mons, Le Noir in the church, convent, and gardens of Les petits Augustins. This collection proved a sort of asylum for such monuments of art as could be saved from popular fury during the first revolutionary fever, comprehending the tombs of princes, legislators, and heroes. When the churches were sacked and pillaged, and the property of the clergy was confiscated to the use of the nation,'Mons.Le Noir had the courage to attempt to save from impending ruin objects invaluable for the history of the arts and for that of the nation, and he had the address to devise a probable mode of succeeding in a. plan, which, in

these furious days, might have been represented as savouring of aristocracy and inckisme. He obtained from the National Assembly a recommendation to their Committee of Alienation, to watch over and protect the monuments of art in the churches and domains which they had confiscated to national use. This was followed by a warrant, authorising a committee of Seavans, of whom LeNoir was most active, to select and transport to Paris these reliques of antiquity, and there to arrange them in one general collection, so as to afford a view of the progress of the arts during the several periods of French history. Much exertion accordingly has been made, and upon the whole with considerable success, to dispose this various and miscellaneous collection according to centuries, and at the same time to place the productions of each.aera in the best and fittest order. You accompany therefore at once the progress of the arts and.that of history, as you wander from hall to hall, and compare the rude images of Clovis and Pharamond with what the Italian chisel produced to commemorate departed greatness, in that; happy epoch which the French artists call Le Siecle de la Renaisame. Several monuments, the size of which rendered them unfit for a cloister, are erected in the gardens; and particularly the tomb of Abelard and Helo'ise, with those of Des Cartes, Moliere, La Fontaine, Boileau, and others dear to French literature.

Yet such is the caprice of the human mind, that even from this rich mental feast we return with some degree of dissatisfaction. The inspection of the Museum inspired me at least with a feeling greater in degree, but similar in origin, to that with which I have regarded a collection of English portraits. —

> "Torn from their destined page — unworthy meed
> Of knightly counsel or heroic deed," —

and compiled to illustrate a Grainger, at the expence of many a volume defaced and rendered imperfect. Far deeper is that sensation rooted, when we consider that the stones accumulated around us have been torn from the graves which they were designed to mark out and to protect, and divided from all those associations arising from the neighbourhood of the mighty dead. It is also impossible, with the utmost care and ingenuity, that the monuments should be all displayed to advantage; and even the number of striking objects, huddled together, diminishes the effect which each, separately, is calculated to produce upon the mind. These wayward

reflections will arise, and can only be checked by the recollection, that without prosecution of the plan wisely adopted and boldly prosecuted, the reliques around us would have ceased to exist, and |:hat the ingenious collector, far from being the plunderer of a wreck, has saved and protected its scattered fragments, which must have otherwise perished for ever.

If, in the Museum of Monumens Fran$ais, we contrast with advantage the principle and mode by which the collection is formed, with the effect produced by the present arrangement, and pardon, for the sake of the former, the necessary imperfections attached to the latter, no such favourable result can be drawn by the reflecting traveller who visits the inimitable collection of paintings and statues in the Louvre, called the Central Museum of the Arts. It is indeed, abstractedly, a subject of just] pride to a nation, that she can exhibit to strangers this surpassingly magnificent display of the works of human genius when in its most powerful and active mood, awakened as it were from the sleep of.ages, and at once bringing to the service of art such varied talent as never was nor will be equalled. But if, with these exulting considerations, it were possible for the French to weigh the sum of evil which they have suffered and inflicted to obtain this grand object pf national vanity, they might well view the most magnificent saloon in Europe as a charnel-vault, and the works of Raphael, Titian, and Salvator, as no better than the sable and tattered scutcheons which cover its mouldering walls. Each picture, indeed, has its own separate history of murder, rapine, and sacrilege. It was perhaps the worst point in Buonaparte's character, that, with a firm and unremitting attention to his own plans and his own interest,he proceeded from battle to pluntier, less like a soldier than a brigand or common highwayman, whose immediate object is to rifle the passenger whom he has subdued by violence or intimidation. But Napoleon knew well the people over whom he was called to rule, and was aware that his power was secure, despite of annihilated commerce and exhausted finances, despite of his waste of the lives of Frenchmen and treasure of France, despite of the general execration of the human race echoed from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, providing he could prove to the Parisians that he was still the Emperor of the World, and Paris its capital. Savans, therefore, amateurs, and artists, whose skill and taste might supply the deficiency of his own, regularly attended upon his military expeditions; and when a city had surrendered, or had otherwise fallen into his power, whatever it possessed in public or private property

evincing excellence in the arts, was destined to augment the Central Museum, and furnish a topic of consolation to those Parisians whose sons perhaps had fallen in battle under its walls. For this purpose every town in Italy was ransacked, and compelled by open violence, or a still more odious influence exercised under pretext of treaties, to surrender those specimens of sculpture and painting whose very names had become associated with the classical situations, from which a true admirer-of the arts would have deemed it sacrilege to have torn them. The Low Countries were compelled to yield up those masterpieces of the Flemish school, which are prized by amateurs as almost equal to those of Italy. Dresden, long famous for its collection of paintings, which Frederick the Great contented himself with admiring, was plundered to the bare wails. Berlin and Potzdam underwent a similar fate; and while Buonaparte affected to restore to the subdued monarch of Prussia his crown and kingdom, he actually pillaged his palaces of their most precious and domestic ornaments. Vienna was severely ransacked, with every inferior town in the emperor's dominions, and that even at the period of an alliance cemented by Buonaparte's union with a daughter of the house of Austria. The ancient capital of the czars was destined to consign its old magnifi cence to the same accumulated heap of spoil. But there the robber s arm was shortened, and the plunder of the Kremlin was retaken ere it had crossed the Beresina. The very ornaments of the apartments were acquired by the same iniquitous means which had filled them with paintings and statues. The twelve granite pillars which supported the Hall of Sculpture were plundered from Aix la Chapelle, and the beautifully-wrought bronze folding doors at the upper end of the Grand Saloon were the spoils of a church at Rome. Omnis Thais haida olet. The collection in all its parts, magnificent and unmatched as it is, savours of the cruelty, perfidy, and rapine by which it was accumulated.

Many have therefore been tempted to think that there was less wisdom or justice than magnanimity in the conduct of the allies during the preceding year, who, to save the feelings of the French, which in this case had no title to a moment's consideration, sacrificed the justice due to their own despoiled countries, and let pass the opportunity of giving a great moral lesson, without inflicting on France a single hardship excepting what might flow from her wounded vanity. But Prussia, it seems, was satisfied with a promise (ill kept by the restored family) that, her property should be redelivered when affairs were settled in France; and for the other nations no

stipulation seems to have been made. If the allies on this occasion neglected to reclaim by force their own property when in their power, it would nevertheless have been just, and perhaps prudent, in the Bourbon family, to have of their own accord relinquished spoils which could only remind them of their own misfortunes. But they were too anxious to establish themselves in the opinion of their new subjects as good Frenchmen, to recollect that justice, open and even-handed, is the first duty of a monarch. They were afraid to face the clamour which would have stigmatized an act of honest restitution as the concession of cowardice. As Buonaparte had been the heir of the Revolution, they were willing to be the heirs of Buonaparte, and appear to have been as little disposed to the doctrine of restitution as the worthy corregidor of Leon, who succeed£d to the treasures of Captain Rolando's subterranean mansion. At least they were not unwilling, like the sons of a usurer, to possess treasures of such value, without sharing the guilt of the original acquisition. They did not reflect that every token which carried back the Frenchman's recollection to the emperor, must excite comparisons, among the thoughtless and unprincipled, highly unfavourable to the legitimate possessor of the crown.

The day of reckoning is at length arrived. The Museum, when I first arrived in Paris, was still entire. But Blucher, who was not, it seems, to be foiled a second time, has since made several visits, attended by a German artist, for the purpose of ascertaining and removing the pictures which belong to Prussia, or to the German states now united with her. The French guardians of the Museum also attended, no longer to decide upon the point of view in which the spoils of nations should be disposed, but to plead, occasionally and timidly, that sueh a picture formed no part of the cabinet of Potzdam, but had been stolen from some other collection. These demurrers were generally silenced by a " Tais to?" or " Halt maul" from the veteran of Laon and Waterloo, who is no friend to prolonged discussions. If you ask, whether Prussia has recovered all the pictures which had been carried off at different times, I fancy I may return the same emphatic answer given by an old Scotch servingman, when his master asked him if he had been careful to pack up all his wardrobe at leaving a friend's house, — ., " At least, your honour." Not that I suppose the Prince-Marshal has got a single article to which the French had any just title, but the late enlargement of the dominions of Prussia has greatly extended her claims of restitution in right of states and cities newly annexed to her dominions. Still, however,

though nearly a hundred pictures have in this manner gradually disappeared, I have not missed one of those masterpieces to which the attention of the visitor is earliest directed and longest riveted. It is when the claims of Italy and the “Hold your tongue.”

Netherlands shall be enforced that the principal disgorging of spoil will take place; and when that day comes, I believe it will drive some of the French amateurs to actual distraction. Their attachment to these paintings and statues, or rather to the national glory which they conceive them to illustrate, is as excessive as if the Apollo and Venus were still objects of actual adoration; and on the day of their departure I anticipate them exclaiming with Micah, “ Ye have taken away my gods and go your ways, and what have I more? — How then say ye unto me, what aileth me?”

It is, however, understood to be definitively settled by the allied sovereigns, that the French must undergo this mortification; as is evident by the generals, at the capitulation of Paris, having refused to sanction an article of the treaty proposed by the French, for securing the possession of these monuments. It is a severe mortification doubtless; but, independent of the undeniable justice of the measure, it is wholesome that the French should have in future no trophies to appeal to as memo rials, that they had exercised a power over other states, which their victors never had courage to retaliate; as ensigns of past conquest, and as the incentive to new wars. The contents of the Museum have been found by bitter experience to perpetuate recollections, which, for the peace of France and of Europe, ought to be effaced as speedily and absolutely as possible. Such associations render the removal of the objects which excite them as necessary a precaution, as the burning of Don Quixote’s library to prevent the recurrence of his phrenzy.

With respect to the arts, you know I pretend to no skill in the province of the amateur; but the best judges seem to allow that the dispersion of this immense collection is by no means unfavourable to their progress and improvement. We readily admit, and each spectator has felt, that nothing can be more magnificent, more august, more deeply impressive, taken as a whole, than that noble’ gallery, prolonged to an extent which the eye can hardly distinctly trace, and crowded on every side with the noblest productions of the most inspired artists. Fourteen hundred paintings, each claiming rank as a masterpiece, disposed upon walls which extend for more than twelve hundred feet in length, form, united, a collection unparalleled in

extent and splendour. But a part of this charm vanishes when we have become familiar with the coup d'ceuil; and the emotions of surprise and pleasure which the transient visitor receives, are gained in some degree at the expence of the student, or studious amateur. In a saloon of such length and height, lighted too from both sides, it is impossible that all the pictures can be seen to advantage; and, in truth, many cannot be seen at all. In a selection where all is excellent, and worthy of studious and heedful attention, this is a disadvantage of no common kind. But it is not the only one. Each of these paintings, almost without exception, have in them something excellent; but, independent of the loss which they sustain in common, by being so much crowded together, and by making part rather of one grand and brilliant whole, than subjects important enough for detached and separate consideration, the merit of some of these chefs d'oeuvre so far exceeds that of others, as altogether to divert the attention from objects of inferior, though still of exquisite merit. Few, possessing even the most eager love for the art, though they have consumed hours, days, weeks, and months, in the Museum, have been able to escape that fascination which draws them to the Transformation of Raphael, the Communion by Domenichino, the Martyrdom of the Inquisitor, and some other masterpieces. About fifty pictures at most therefore are copied, studied, examined, and worshipped, while more than twenty times that number are neglected and unseen, and, with all their admitted excellence, draw as little attention as the Nymphs and Graces in the suite of Venus. This shews that the appetite of taste, as well as of epicurism, may be satiated and rendered capricious by the exhibition of too rich and sumptuous a banquet, and that, our capacity of enjoyment being limited, there is no wisdom in an injudicious accumulation of means for its gratification. To the young student in particular, the feelings of satiety are peculiarly hazardous; for either he becomes accustomed to indulge a capricious and presumptuous contempt of works which he has slightly studied, or he is deterred from boldly and vigorously venturing upon a laborious and difficult art, when he sees that excellence of a pitch to which he dare not aspire, may, in company with the ultimate efforts of genius, be insufficient to secure respect and attention.

It might be added, that there are particular points, in which even those distinguished and selected patterns of supereminence which throw every inferior degree of merit into shadow, lose, in some degree, the full

impression of their own merit, by being disjoined from the local associations with a view to which they were painted. This is especially the case with the religious subjects executed for altar-pieces, and for the ornaments of chapels, where the artist had laboured to suit not only his size of figures and disposition of light to the place which the painting was to occupy, but had also given them a tone of colouring and a general cha racter, harmonizing with the solemnity, not only of the subject, but of the scene around. To many a thorough-paced and hackneyed connoisseur, who considers the finest painting merely as a subject for his technical criticism, the divesting it of these exterior accompaniments will seem of little consequence. But those who love the art for the noble and enthusiastic feelings by the excitement of which it is best applauded, will feel some difference in considering a scripture-piece over the altar of a Gothic church, and in viewing the same painting where it forms part of an incongruous assemblage of landscapes and flower-pieces, with a group of drinking boors placed on the one side, and an amour of Jupiter upon the other.

These observations apply only to the ostentatious assemblage of so many and such various specimens of the art in one extensive gallery. But had this objection not existed — had these paintings been so disposed in various apartments as to give each its appropriate situation, and secure for each that portion of attention which it merits, still objections would remain to the whole system. There is no wisdom in venturing as it were the: fortunes of the world of art in one single collection, exposed to total and irredeemable loss either from accidental fire, or the havoc of war, or popular phrenzy. Had the Museum existed during the first years of the Revolution, its danger must have been most imminent, and twice during the space of a very few months has it narrowly escaped the risks which must have attended it had Paris been stormed.

Independent even of these considerations, and admitting this general accumulation of the treasures of art to be as desirable as it is certainly august and impressive, I should still hesitate to say that Paris is the city where they ought to be reposited. The French school, though it has produced many good artists, has been as remarkable for wanting, as the Italians for possessing, that dignity and simplicity of feeling which leads to the sublime. Poussin alone excepted, there is a flutter and affectation, a constraint of attitude to create point, and a studied contrast of co lour and light to bring out effect, which marks the national taste; and from the

charms of such Dalilahs, as Dryden calls similar flourishes in poetry, they never have weaned themselves, nor ever will. Their want of real taste and feeling may be estimated by the unawed audacity with which they have in several notorious instances undertaken to repair, and even to alter, the masterpieces which conquest and rapine had put within their power. The same deficiency of real taste is evinced by the rash comparisons which they make between their schools of music and painting and those of Italy, in which Gay's lines still describe the present Parisian as well as him of his own day:

> Mention the force of learned Corelli's notes,
> Some squeaking fiddler of their ball he quotes;
> Talk of the spirit Raphael's pencil gives,
> Yet warm with life, whose speaking picture lives,
> 'Yes, sir,' sajs. he, ' in colour and design,
> Rigaut and Raphael are extremely fine.'

Where the taste of those with whom he must naturally associate is systematically deficient, the young artist may lose as much through the influence of a French preceptor, as he could gain by studying in the Museum. I might also hint how little a capital like Paris; containing so many temptations to idleness and dissipation, is a safe abode for the young artist. But enough has been said to justify the sacrifice now exacted from France, however it may lower her pride and mortify her vanity. First, it is a demand of justice, and therefore must be enforced; and next, the artist, though he must in future extend his travels, and visit various cities in search of those excellencies which are now to be seen collected in the Louvre, will have greater benefit from the experience which has cost him some toil; and if he must traverse Switzerland and Italy, to view the sculptures of ancient Greece, and the paintings of modern Rome, he will have the double advantage of taking lessons on his route from Nature herself, in the solitary grandeur of the one and the profuse luxuriance of the other.

The taste of the French seems to be turned more towards the Hall of Sculptures than the Gallery of Paintings, and I think I can trace something of a corresponding partiality in the works of David, their greatest living artist, whose figures, though often nobly conceived and disposed, have a hardness of outline resembling statuary. My own taste (formed probably on habit, for we see few good statues in Britain,) would have inclined

otherwise, and I grieve to say I was rather disappointed with some of those statues of antiquity from which I expected most pleasure. One monument can disappoint no one — I mean the Apollo Belvidere, the sublime simplicity of whose attitude, and the celestial expression of his countenance, seem really more than mortal. It is said there is a chance of his visiting England: while I looked upon so exquisite a specimen of ancient art, I could not muster virtue enough to wish the report false; but writing in my solitary closet, and in mature consideration, I do hope sincerely that neither by purchase, nor gift, or otherwise, however fairly, will Britain possess herself of that or any other the least part of those spoils, since the French would eagerly grasp at such a pretext for alleging that we sought the gratification of our own selfish ends, while we affected to render justice to others. Indeed, unless I am much mistaken, the personage whose taste might be most gratified by such an acquisition would not enter into a transaction calculated to throw the slightest shade of. suspicion on the pure faith of Britain, to acquire all that Phidias ever carved, or Raphael painted. This fine statue, and the other specimens of art, seem to rise in value with the French as the,hour of parting with them approaches. They talk to them, weep to them, kneel to them, and bid adieu to them, as if they were indeed restored to the rank of idols But Baal boweth down, Nebo stoopeth — the hammer and wedge have given, awful note of preparation; the Venus, the Dying Gladiator, and many other statues, have been loosened from their pedestals, and stand prompt for returning to their native and appropriate places of abode. r Many a lowering eye and frowning brow marks the progress of these preparations; and such is the grotesque distress in the countenance of others.

that, as Poins says of Falstaff, if it were not for laughing I could pity them.

After all, however, they are not objects of compassion, even in the despoiled state, as they express themselves, to which they are likely to be reduced. France possesses, as public property, besides the paintings of her own school, a noble collection formed by the Bourbon race, and the Borghes£ pictures, honestly bought and paid for by Buonaparte. She has also to boast the gallery of the Luxembourg palace, containing that splendid series of historical pictures by Rubens, commemorating the principal actions in the life of Mary de Medicis, to the brilliancy of which there can only be objected the incongruous mixture of mythological and allegorical

personages, with characters of historical reality. But this mixture of truth and fiction, and men and genii, and heathen gods and Christian emblems, seems to me so inconsistent, that, could I entertain the ambitious hope of possessing a picture of Rubens, I would prefer one of his boar-hunts, or groupes of peasants going to market, to the most splendid picture in the Luxembourg gallery.

At Malmaison there are also some fine paintings, besides a number of good copies from the pictures of the Museum. This.was the abode of Josephine, of whom all speak with regret and affection. I was particularly struck with the figure of a dancing Nymph, in marble, which, to my poor judgment, might have been placed beside any of the Grecian monuments in the Halls of Sculpture, without suffering much disparagement. It was cut by Canova, that eminent artist, who, as he remonstrated formerly against the transference of the works of art from Italy, has now the satisfaction of superintending their restoration to that classical land.

This ample subject has exhausted my paper. I remain, dear sister, affectionately yours,

Paul.

Letter XIV

Paul, to the Major

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Your appetite for military details, my dear Major, is worthy of one who assisted at the defence of Bergen-op-Zoom in the year 1747, since it cannot be sated with the ample feast which I sent you from Waterloo. Here indeed I see little around me but military of all nations; but how to describe the gay, glittering, and at the same time formidable scene, a scene too so new to all my habits, is a point of no little difficulty. Paris is one great camp, consisting of soldiers of almost all nations, and is under the military authority of the Prussian Baron Muffling, as commandant for the allies. You are not ignorant of the proceedings which led to this extraordinary crisis, but I shall briefly recall them to your memory.

The only division of the French army which remained entire after the rout of Waterloo, was that of Grouchy and Vandamme, which, by a retreat that did these generals the highest honour, was not only conducted unbroken under the walls of Paris, but gained some accession of strength from the wrecks of the main army. Upon their arrival they found matters in a most singular state of crisis. Buonaparte had anticipated the tidings of the field of Waterloo, and brought, like a certain general renowned in song, the news of his own defeat to the good city of Paris. It would seem that he expected the Liberalises would now, in this last and critical danger, have made common cause with him, strengthened his hands with all the power that unanimity could bestow upon a dictator, called upon the nation to rally around his standard, and tried yet one desperate chance for conquest. But he had measured his importance according to former, not according to existing circumstances: The rump of the old Conventionalists Saw no more to overawe them in Buonaparte defeated, than their predecessors of the Long Parliament had seen in Richard Cromwell. They instantly made known to him, and with no friendly voice, that the times demanded his resignation; they called his ministers before them authoritatively, and intimated by every movement their intention to take the reins of government into their own hands. Napoleon had no alternative left him but that of defiance or of abdication. In the former case, he might indeed have dissolved the re?

fractory chambers, for the troops, and the lower class of the Parisian populace, who were armed under the name of Feders, were resor lute in his behalf But he was not resolute in his own determination. It was in vain that his brother Lucien, who, having resumed the thorny path of politics, was disposed to tread it with his former audacity, urged him to march a body of troops to the chambers, disr solve them at once, and take the full power into his own hands. Success over the chambers was indeed certain, but its consequences would have called upon Napoleon to live or die with the troops who should achieve it: of the first he had little hope, and for the last slender inclination.. He therefore attempted by a compromise to transfer his crown, now entwined with thorns, to the head of his infant son. The proposition was for some time evaded by the Assembly, and Buonaparte's adherents could only procure an indirect and dubious assent to this condition. Lucien pleaded and Labedoyere bullied in vain; and the chambers having possessed themselves of this brief and precarious authority, began such a course of debate as Swift ascribes to his Legion Club, —

> "While they sit and pick their straws,
> Let them dream of making laws."

Instead of active preparations to oppose or avert the progress of foreign invaders, the Parisians saw with astonishment their senators engaged in discussions of abstract theory, or frivolous points of form. A matter-of-fact man, who wished to know the distance betwixt Saint Quentin (then Lord Wellington's headquarters) and Paris, was called to order, as going into matter irrelevant to the subject of debate. The question, however, was not mal-apropos. Grouchy's army arrived, and the allies were not long behind him. The chambers, who had by this time assumed all the old-fashioned mummery and jargon of the Convention, sent forth a deputation of its members, decorated with threecoloured scarfs, to harangue the soldiers and the federes; and they were conjured by the member who proposed the deputation to apprise the soldiers, that the representatives were ready to mix with them in their ranks, since, to those who fell, the day of their death would be that of their resurrection. It was supposed that *Mons.* Garnier, not much accustomed to such terms, had meant to say immortality, but this impropriety of expression greatly maimed the energy of his eloquence.

The representatives went forth with their fine scarfs. They harangued the soldiers and the armed banditti called feders upon the original principles of liberty and the unprescriptible rights of man, and recommended to them, as a rallying word, Vive la Nationy Five la Liberti! But the charm was as ineffectual as that used by the Abbess of Andouillets, The soldiers and federes only answered with shouts of.Five VEmpereur. The representatives affected to consider these acclamations as referring to Napoleon II., and having, like the Duke of Buckingham, thanked their loving friends and countrymen for sentiments which they had never expressed, they returned to make their' report to the chambers. There was, in truth, only one point of union between these assemblies soi-disant legislators and the French troops, which was, an obstinate determination, founded upon a combined sense of crime and fear of punishment, to resist to the uttermost the restoration of the legitimate sovereign, although every, wise man in France had long seen it was the sole measure which promised to avert the impending ruin of the country. Upon this topic the most furious speeches were made, the most violent resolutions entered into; and the Lower Chamber, in particular, showed that it wanted only time and power to renew the anarchy, as it had adopted the language, of the early Revolution. But there were cold fits to allay this fever, and the perturbation of mind by which individuals began to find themselves agitated broke out amid their bullying ridiculously enough. Merlin of Douai (an old hack'd engine of Philip Egalite, and Robespierre, under the last of whom he promulgated the bloody edict against suspected persons,) announced to the Chamber of Representatives his having received an untimely visit of two persons in a fiacre, demanding to speak to him on the part of the president of the provisional government; that the hour being one in the morning, he had refused them admittance- — happily so refused themr-since, in the unanimous opinion of Merlin himself, of his wife, and honest Regnault de St Jean d'Angely, these untimely visitors could mean nothing good to his person. On this annunciation, vigorous measures were proposed for the protection of Monsieur Merlin, when Boulay de la Meurthe stopped further proceeding, by informing the assembly that the supposed emissaries of royalty were in fact what they called themselves, messengers from the president upon a matter of emergency, which they had communicated to himself upon being refused access to Merlin. One member's ter rors were excited by seeing in the street a wounded officer, those of another broke out upon spying — not a peer, as used to be the

cause of alarm in St Stephen's — but sight more appalling, a royal Garde de Corps in full uniform under the gallery. These alarms were faithfully reported to the chambers, and though the wiser representatives suppressed their own fears, there were many indications that they did not less deeply entertain them.

The anxiety of the government and of the chambers was singularly contrasted by the extreme indifference of him who had been the origin of all the turmoil and bloodshed, and who continued for some time to travel from the palace of Bourbon Elysees to Malmaison and back again, to give fetes there, and to prepare for a journey no one could say whither, with as much composure as if the general distraction concerned him as little, or less, than any other temporary sojourner in France. To complete this scene of characteristic affectation, he sent a message to the chambers to request copies of two books which he desired might be placed at his disposal. But the near approach of the allies at length accelerated his departure, and on the 29th June, when they were within three leagues of the city, he finally left the capital, which he had lately called his own, to make the best defence, or capitulation they could. At first the chambers resolved upon defence. But the means were very imperfect.

When Buonaparte, before leaving Paris for Avesnes, consulted Carnot on the means necessary for the defence of the metropolis, the latter is said to have estimated them at two hundred millions, and the labour of three years. " And when that sum of treasure and, labour has been expended, sixty thousand good troops,"continued the ex-director, "and a sustained assault of twentyfour hours, may render it all in vain," Nevertheless Buonaparte undertook preparations for this gigantic and hopeless task. The heights of Montmartre were fortified with extreme care, and amply supplied with artillery. The village of Saint Denis was also strongly garrisoned, and a partial inundation being accomplished by means of stopping two brooks, the water was introduced into the half-completed canal De l'Ourcq, the bank of which being formed into a parapet, completed a formidable line of defence on the northern side of the city, resting both flanks upon the Seine. The populace of Paris had laboured at these lines with an enthusiasm not surpassed in the most exalted phrensy of the Revolution; nor were their spirits or courage at all lowered by the approach of the conquering armies of England and Prussia, in the act of being supported, if need were, by the whole force of Russia and Austria. They confided in what had repeatedly

and carefully been impressed upon their minds, — that Paris could only fall by treachery; and boasted that they had now Massena, and Soult, and Davoust, (as much celebrated for military talent as for the atrocity which he displayed in the defence of Hamburgh,) to direct the defence of the capital, instead of Marmont, by whom, in the preceding year, they were taught to believe it had been basely betrayed.

But although the line of defence to the north was such as to justify temporary confidence, the city on the opposite side was entirely open, excepting the occupation of the villages of Issy, and the heights of St Cloud and Meudon These two points, if they could have been maintained, would have protected for a time that large and level plain which extends on the south side of Paris, and which now presented no advantages for defence, excepting an imperfect attempt at a trench, and a few houses and garden-walls accommodated with loopholes for the use of musquetry. On this defenceless side, therefore, the allied generals resolved to make the attack, and the Prince-Marshal on the 30th June crossed the Seine at St Germains, and, occupying Versailles, threatened the French position at Meudon, Issy, and the heights of St Cloud, while the Duke of Wellington, holding Gonesse, opened a communication with the Prussians by a bridge at Argenteuil. The French, though their situation was desperate, did not lose courage, and one gleam of success shone on their arms. General Excelmans, by a well-conducted assault, surprised the Prussians who occupied Versailles, and made prisoners some cavalry. But the French were assaulted in their turn, driven from the heights of St Cloud, from Issy, and from Meudon, and forced close under the city itself. This happened on the 2nd July, and Blucher had already sent to the British general to request the assistance of a battery of Congreve's rockets, — a most ominous preparation for the assault which he meditated. Meanwhile the wealthy and respectable Parisians were equally apprehensive of danger from their defenders and from the assailants. The temper of the French soldiers had risen to phrenzy, and the mob of the Fauxbourgs, animated by the same feelings of rage, vomited threats and execrations both against the allies and against the citizens of Paris who favoured the cause of peace and legitimacy. Such was the temper of this motley garrison, as formidable to the capital as the presence of an incensed enemy, when upon the 3rd July the terms of capitulation between the allies and Massena, who acted as commander in chief of the French, were arranged and signed, Paris once

more subjected to the mercy of Europe, and the Queen of Provinces a second time made a bondswoman.

A brief but fearful period of anarchy passed ere the French army, now men without a cause and without a leader, evacuated Paris and its vicinity, and ere their yet more savage associates, the federes, could be prevailed upon to lay down the arms with which they still threatened death and devastation to each royalist, or rather to property and all its possessors. The firmness of the National Guards is universally acknowledged to have saved Paris in that awful moment, when, in all human probability, the first example of plunder would have been followed both by the populace and by the foreigners, and a scene of universal blood, rapine, and conflagration, must have become the necessary consequence.

There are indeed fervent politicians, whom now and then of an evening we have heard breathe an ardent wish that Paris had been burnt to the ground. These are words soon spoken in the energy of patriotic hatred, or a desire of vengeance for outraged morality; but if we can picture to ourselves without shrinking those horrid scenes which ensue,.

> "Where the flesh'd soldier, rough and hard of heart,
> In liberty of bloody hand shall range,
> With conscience wide as hell,"

we ought yet to remember upon how many thousands such dreadful vengeance must have fallen, who can only be justly considered as common sufferers by the very acts of aggression of which Europe has such just reason to complain, and how many thousands more age and incapacity exempted even from the possibility of having been sharers in the offence. It is impossible to look around upon this splendid capital without remembering the affecting plea which the Deity himself condescended to use with his vindictive prophet: " Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and also much cattle?" Least of all ought we to wish that any part of the British forces had been partakers in the horrid license that must have followed on such a catastrophe, during which the restraints of discipline and the precepts of religion are alike forgotten in the headlong course of privileged fury. It was observed of the veteran army of Tilly, that the sack of Magdeburg gave a deathblow to their discipline, and we know how the troops of France herself were ruined by that of Moscow.

In every point of view, therefore, as well with regard to the agents as the sufferers, the averting the destruction of Paris, when it appeared almost inevitable, has added to the glories which the Duke of Wellington has acquired in this immortal campaign. For it is not to be denied, that to his wise and powerful interference was chiefly owing the timely arrangement of the articles of capitulation, in consequence of which the King of France again obtained possession of his capital, and the allied armies became the peaceful garrison of Paris.

By the time I reached the capital the political convulsions had entirely subsided, and the royal government, to all external appearance, was in as quiet an exercise of authority as if Louis XVIII. had never been dispossess ed of the throne. Bat the public mind was not as yet accustomed to consider the change as permanent, being influenced and agitated by a thousand gloomy reports of plots and conspiracies, as the sea after the storm has subsided continues still to heave and swell with the impulse it has received. It was said, in particular, that Labedoyere, who had been found concealed in Paris, and there arrested, was agent of a conspiracy, in which the federes of the fauxbourgs, with the disbanded soldiers of the army of the north, were to be enlisted. One party of the conspirators was to wear the dress and arms of the Parisian National Guard, and so accoutered were to assault simultaneously the hotels of the Emperors of Austria and. of Russia, of the King of Prussia, of Lord Castlereagh, of the Duke of Wellington, and of Blucher; while other bands, disguised in the uniforms of the allied troops, should storm the posts of the National Guard, and particularly those maintained at the palace of the Tuilleries. That a project so wild and impracticable should have been seriously attempted, I can hardly credit; but that so many reckless and desperate men as were now in Paris were meditating something of peril and violence, is extremely probable, for at this very time all the guards maintained on the illustrious personages I have mentioned were on a sudden strongly reinforced, and unusual strictness was exercised by the centinels in challenging those who approached their posts. Indeed, the great and combined military force would have rendered any such conspiracy an effort of fruitless, though perhaps not bloodless, phrenzy.

The internal, duty of Paris is chiefly performed by the National Guard, who, in dress and appearance, remind me very much of the original or blue regiment of Edinburgh Volunteers. They furnish picquets for the various

guards upon public places, and around the Tuilleries; a severe duty for the respectable class of citizens of whom these regiments are composed, since I suppose at least live hundred men are required for the daily discharge of it. But the corps is very numerous, and a consciousness that the peace of the city and security of property depend upOn its being regularly and punctually performed, reconciles these citizen-soldiers to their task.

The guards upon the king's person and palace are entrusted to the Gardes de Corps, or household troops, fine-looking men, very handsomely, though not gaudily, dressed. They are said, with few exceptions, to have behaved with great loyalty in the late trying crisis; but as they are an expensive corps, holding the rank of gentlemen, and being paid accordingly, it is supposed their numbers will be much limited in future. They are very civil in their deportment, and in the discharge of their duty, particularly to English strangers. My infirmities perhaps claimed a little compassion, and it is no discredit to them that I have seen Messrs. les Gardes de Corps feel the claim, and make a little way, by the influence of voice and authority, for one who was not so able to make it for himself. And indeed there was a kind of chivalrous feeling in most of these gentlemen, a modesty of demeanour, a gentleness of con duct towards the crowd, and a deference to the claims of hospitality, a sense, in short, that he who has the momentary power should use it with tenderness and forbearance, which might be mere urbanity, but which a professed aristocrat is apt to consider as mixed with a higher feeling. This corps, I have been informed, suffered much in attending the king to the frontiers; a few, who had been selected from Buonaparte's followers in a spirit of conciliation, returned to their first vocation; but the rest followed their master as far as they were permitted, and experienced much hardship and distress in consequence, besides the actual slaughter of many of their companions. A stranger is an indifferent judge of such matters, but I am so old-fashioned as to think that a body of real men-at-arms, chosen from the younger sons of the nobility and gentry, is not only a graceful institution as a defence and ornament to the throne, but may in France be the means of retrieving the real military character, so dishonoured and disgraced of late years.

There is another armed force, of a very different description, frequently seen in Paris, — the patroles of the modern gens d'armes, or military policemen picked out for the office, and who, in files of two or four, upon foot or horseback, constantly parade every part not only of Paris, but of

France. Their dress and arms are those of heavy dragoons, and therefore they may be at first thought less adapted for discharging their peculiar duty, which is that of police-officers. But there is a very perfect system, of which these are the agents, and when, as in the case of the late effort of Buonaparte, the police seems to have proved ineffectual, it is not the fault of the inferior and operative agents, but of those superintend ants from whom they receive their signals. These gens d'armes were the agents so dreaded under the imperial government, whose appearance made every knee tremble, and every cheek grow pale. If they are less formidable under a legitimate government, it is because even the enemies of the constitution may shelter their crimes beneath the laws instituted for the protection of innocence. Through all France, however, the ubiquity of the police is something striking and singular. In the most retired scene which you can choose, if you see a solitary horseman, or still more, if you see two riding together, it is five to one that they belong to the gens d' armerie. At this moment they have full employment for their address and omnipresence; and I believe it is exercised in no common degree, unless we should believe the scandal of the royalistts purs, who pretend that Fouché under the Bourbons is a much more tractable person than Fouché under the Republic and under Buonaparte.

The National Guards, Gardes de Corps, or household troops, and the Gens d' Armes, compose the only French military force to be at present seen in Paris. Mareschal M'Donald, Duke of Tarentum, is intrusted with the difficult task of disbanding and reorganizing the army beyond the Loire, the remnants, namely, of the old imperial army. M'Donald is equally remarkable for military skill and loyalty; his march from the extremity of Italy to unite himself with Moreau, previous to the battle of Novi, and the successful retreat which he made even after losing that dreadful and well-fouglit action., against the redoubted Suwarrow, prove his military talent, as his behaviour during Buonaparte's last invasion has established his military faith. Your question is ready, I know, my dear Major, Which of the McDonalds is he? for of true blood you unquestionably have already deemed him. To satisfy a wish so laudable, I can inform you, from the best authority, that the Mareschal is descended of that tribe or family of the M'Donalds of Clanronald who are called MacEachan, or Sons of Hector, as claiming their descent from a cadet of the house of Clanronald, so named. The father of the Duke of Tarentum was engaged in our affair (I love a

delicate expression) of 1745, and was very useful to Prince Charles Edward during his rash enterprize. He was a Highlander, bred to the church, and educated in France. He spoke, therefore, Gaelic, English, French, and Latin, and was, besides, intelligent, bold, and faithful. He was one of the seven who embarked with the unfortunate Chevalier when his expedition of knight-errantry had utterly failed. On his return to France, MacEachan took the more general name of his tribe, and appears to have preferred the military service to resuming his studies for the church. His son is now one of the most respectable characters whom the French army list presents to us. I had letters to him from his friends in Sky, but had not the good fortune to meet him at Paris. He was more usefully engaged; and, by all accounts, the king could not have reposed confidence in a more loyal and gallant character. How should it be otherwise? Is he not a Scotchman, and a M'Donald? — eh, Major?

Of foreign troops, all included, there are generally said to be in France to the number of a million; but I am informed, from the best authority, that they do certainly amount to eight hundred thousand men, an assembly of troops scarce paralleled save in the annals of romance. Of these the British, Prussians, and Russians, are nearest to Paris, so stationed as to have an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men within a day's march of the city.

The Austrians are chiefly in the South of France. The French complain more of the severity of the usage which the inhabitants receive from them, than of the rest of the allies. Those whom we see here are part of the Emperor's Hungarian guards, selected men, of fine and tall figure, which is set off by their white dress. They are unquestionably, in point of exterior appearance, the handsomest of the allied troops; but such bulky men want the hardy and athletic look of the British, Russians, or Prussians. Tell the ladies also that this same white uniform looks better upon a line of troops in the field, than on an individual officer in a ballroom, whose appearance involuntarily, and rather unfairly, reminds me of the master of a regimental band. The hussar uniforms of Austria are very handsome, particularly those of the Hungarians, to whose country the dress properly belongs.

The Russians are in the neighbourhood in very considerable force. I was present at a splendid review which was made of these northern warriors by the Allied Sovereigns, the Duke of Wellington, &c. The principal avenue of the Champs Ely sees was crowded with troops of all sorts; and the

reflection of the sun upon their arms appeared almost intolerably bright. The monarchs, generals, and their suite occupied the centre of the Place Louis Quinze, almost the very spot in which Louis XVI. was beheaded, and for more than two hours the troops defiled before them without a pause, in a close column, whose front occupied the whole space afforded by the breadth of the avenue. The infantry were fine, firm, steady-looking men, clean, handsome, but by no means remarkable for stature. From the green uniform, and the short and sturdy make of the Russians, the French nicknamed them Cornichons, as if they resembled the green cucumbers, so called when pickled. They had a formidable train of artillery, in the highest possible order, and were attended by several regiments both of dragoons and cuirassiers. The cuirassiers of the guard had burnished steel breastplates, which glanced to the sun, and made a noble display. The cuirasses of the other regiments seemed to be of hammered iron. The cavaliers were remarkably fine men; the horses, excepting those of the officers, seemed to be of an inferior description, and rather weak for that sort of servicc; but the general effect was indescribably grand. The troops swept on, wave rolling as it were after wave, to the number of at least twenty thousand men, the sound of one band of martial music advancing as the other died away, and the column moving on as if the procession would stretch out to the crack of doom. During this grand display of the powers of the North, the ground was kept by the regular Cossacks of the Russian guard, very fine men, and under good discipline. The irregular Cossacks, and light troops of a similar description, are only occasionally sepn in Paris; but their Hettman, Prince Platow, is a constant resident in the capital, and to him these children of the desert are occasionally summoned. The appearance of the proper Cossack is prepossessing. He has high features, keeps his long blue coat strictly clean, and displays some taste for splendour in his arms and accoutrements, which are often richly decorated with silver. But the Tartar tribes, whom the French unite under the same appellation, have frequently a most uncouth and savage appearance. Cloaks of sheepskin, bows, arrows, shields made of dried hides, and other appointments savouring of the earliest state of socicty, were seen among them; from which the French, whom even invasion, with all its ills, cannot deprive of their jest, call them Les Cupidons de Nord. I saw one man who had come with his tribe from near to the Great Wall of China, to fight against the French under the walls of Paris! The poor fellow was in the

hospital from a very natural cause, the injury which his feet had sustained in so long a march. But these wilder light troops were judiciously kept at a distance from Paris, where the splendour and wealth of the shops formed rather too strong temptations for Tartar morality.

The Prussian troops have gradually assumed a more respectable exterior, as the new clothing, at the expence of France, has been completed and delivered. They are a handsome fair-haired race of men; their uniforms almost exclusively blue and red. Both they and the Russians seem to think, that the beauty of the male form consists in resembling as much as possible a triangle, or rather a lady in an old-fashioned pair of high stays. So they draw their waists tight by means of a broad belt, or some similar contrivance, and stuff out and pad the breast and shoulders till the desired figure is attained. Almost all of them are young men summoned, to arms by the situation of Europe, and their own country in particular, — a call which was obeyed with such ardent enthusiasm, that I suppose no civilized kingdom ever had under arms, as a disposable force, so large a proportion of its population. Many regiments are composed of landwehr, or militia, and some of, volunteers. It necessarily follows, from this intermixture of various descriptions of force, that they cannot be all under the same degree of strict military discipline; and to this must be attributed the irregularities they committed upon their march, and which were sometimes imputed to them in their quarters. They have never been accused, however, of gross violence, of assailing life or honour, or of wantonly injuring the churches or public buildings, crimes which were objected to the French armies in Prussia. Their resentment, indeed, was stirred at the name of the bridge of Jena, and they had made preparations for the destruction of that useful and beautiful edifice. But the intercession of the Duke of Wellington procured a delay, until the King of Prussia upon his arrival repealed this hasty and vindictive order.

I saw a large body of these troops quartered in the celebrated Chateau de Montmorency. The owner of this fine seat, and the beautiful domain annexed, was attached to Buonaparte, had fled upon Napoleon’s first exile, and had returned to share his triumph. The brief interval before the battle of Waterloo, which compelled him to a second retreat, had been employed in refitting the chateau with painting, paunelling, and sculpture, in the most expensive style. The Prus sians were now busily undoing all that he had commenced, and the contrast between recent repair and the work of instant

destruction was very striking. The rich furniture was stripped by the female followers of the camp, and the soldiers were boiling their camp-kettles with the gilded frames of pictures, the plate-glass windows were smashed to pieces, and the breaches repaired by old jackets and pantaloons. One of my friends, who had been long in the Spanish war, observed with composure, that the chateau was in a way of being handsomely rumped, a technical word for what was going ony which you may insert at my peril in your collection of military phrases. When quartered upon inhabited houses, the French chiefly complained of the extent of the Prussians' appetite, as a craving gulf, which they found it very difficult to satisfy. They were not otherwise cruel or ill-natured; but, like the devouring cannibal in the voyages of Aboulfouaris, their hunger could not be lulled to sleep longer than three hours at a time. Much of this was undoubtedly greatly exaggerated.

It is certain, however, that means have been put into the power of the Prussian officers to indulge themselves in the pleasures of Paris to an extent which their pay and allowances, if limited to those drawn in their own country, could not possibly have afforded. They are the principal customers to the expensive restaurateurs, the principal frequenters of coffeehouses, of theatres, and of the Palais Royale, at regular and irregular hours, — all indications of an expence not within the ordinary reach of subaltern officers. It is said, that some of our German subsidiary troops made application to the Duke of Wellington to be put upon the same footing with the Prussians in these extra advantages. His Grace, we are assured, expressed to them (with the fullest acknowledgment of their meriting every indulgence which could be wisely bestowed) his decided opinion, that all expedients which tended to place the soldier upon a different footing of expence and luxury in France, than he held in his native country, were injurious to discipline, detrimental to the character of the army, and to the interest of the sovereign. His practice expresses the same doctrine. The British troops receive regularly the allowances and rations to which they would be entitled in England, and which are here raised at the expence of France; but neither directly nor indirectly do they obtain further indulgence. The strong sense and firmness for which the Duke is as much distinguished as for skill in arms and bravery in the field of battle, easily saw that the high and paramount part which Britain now holds in Europe, that preeminence, which, in so many instances, has made her and her delegates the chosen

mediators when disputes occurred amongst the allied powers, depends entirely on our maintaining pure and sacred the national character for good faith and disinterested honour. The slightest complaint, therefore, of want of discipline or oppression, perpetrated by a British officer or soldier, has instantly met with reprehension and punishment, and the result has been the reducing the French to the cruel situation of hating us without having any complaint to justify themselves for doing so, even in their own eyes. Our officers of rank have in many instances, declined the quarters appointed them in private houses; and, where they were accepted, have arranged themselves in the. mode least likely to derange the family, and declined uniformly the offers to accommodate them with wine, or provisions, which were made as a matter of course. They receive the reward of this moderation in the public respect, which, however the French may dislike us as a nation, they are compelled to pay to individual merit and courtesy.

On the other hand, strange and alarming whispers are thrown abroad respecting the situation of the Prussian army. It is hinted, that they are somewhat out of controul, and look up less to the king than to their generals as their paramount superiors. Blucher holds the first rank ostensibly; but it is pretended, that General Gneisenau, so celebrated for his talents as a quartermaster-general, possesses most real influence. Much of this is supposed to be exerted by means of secret societies, particularly that called The Order of Faith and Honour. This association, which derived its first institution from the laudable and patriotic desire of associating against French tyranny, has retained the secret character with which it was necessarily invested, when the foreign enemy possessed the fortresses of Prussia, but which now seems useless at least, if not capable of being rendered hazardous. Almost all the officers of this army belong to this order, which is a sort of institution that has peculiar charms for Germans; and it is said to be an object of jealousy to the government, though it cannot be supposed dangerous while headed by the loyal Blucher.

Our forces, in general, are admired for their appearance under arms, although, like their countrymen under Henry V.,

> They are but warriors for the working day,
> Their gayness and their gilt is all besmirch’d
> With rainy marching on the painful field.

The serviceable state of the men, horses, and equipments, fully compensates, to the experienced eye, every deficiency in mere show.

The singular dress of our Highlanders makes them particular objects of attention to the French. In what class of society they rank them, may be judged from part of a speech which I heard a French lady make to her companion, after she had passed two of these mountaineers: “Aus si fai vu les sauvages Americains “ It was very entertaining to see our Highlanders making their bargains upon the Boulevards, the soldier holding his piece of six sols between his finger and thumb, with the gripe of a smith’s vice, and pointing out the quantity of the commodity which he expected for it, while the Frenchman, with many shrugs and much chattering, diminished the equivalent as more than he could afford. Then Donald began to shrug and jabber in his turn, and to scrape back again what the other had subtracted; and so they would stand for half an hour discussing the point, though neither understood a word which the other said, until they could agree upon le prix juste.

The soldiers, without exception, both British and foreigners, conduct themselves in public with civility, are very rarely to be seen intoxicated, though the means are so much within reach; and, considering all the irritating circumstances that exist, few quarrels occur betwixt them and the populace. Very strong precautions are, however, taken in case of any accidental or premeditated commotion. A powerful guard of Prussians always attends at the Pont Neuf and Pont Royale, with two pieces of artillery turned upon each bridge, loaded with cannister-shot, horses saddled, matches burning, and all ready to act on the shortest warning. The other day an unpleasant accident took place. Some of the Parisian populace, while the Prussian officer of the day was visiting a post, quarrelled with the orderly soldier who held his horse; the animal took fright, and escaped the man’s hold; the officer came out, and was hustled and insulted by the mob. In the meanwhile, the orderly-man galloped off, and returned -with about thirty of his companions, who charged with their lances couched, as if they threatened death and destruction; but, with much dexterity, tilted up the point of the spear when near a Frenchman’s body, and reversing the weapon, only struck with the butt. They made five or six of the most tumultuous prisoners, who were carried before Baron Muffling, reclaiming loudly the safeguard of the police, and demanding to be carried before a French judge. But, in the present situation of this capital, the commandant

preferred subjecting them to military chastisement; and a truss of straw being laid down for each culprit, they were stretched out, and received a drubbing a la militaire with the reins and girths of the hussars' horses. The appearance of the sufferers acted as a sedative upon the temper of the mob, none of whom chose to seek further personal specimens of the Prussian discipline. It seemed a strong measure to the English spectators; but the question is, Whether a good many lives were not saved at the expence of the shoulders of those sufferers; for where combustibles are so plenty, the least spark of fire must be trodden out with as much haste as may be. In other frays, it has happened that Prussian soldiers have been killed; in which case, the district where the accident happened is subjected to severe contributions, unless they can arrest the perpetrator. The Palais Royale, where such scenes are chiefly to be apprehended, is trebly guarded every night by a company of the National Guard, one of British, and one of Prussians.

As a matter of courtesy between the allied powers, the duty of mounting guard upon the person of the monarchs is performed by the troops of each nation in succession. So that our guardsmen mount guard on the Emperor of Russia, the Russians on the Emperor of Austria, and the Highlanders, perhaps, on the King of Prussia, in rotation a judicious arrangement, which tends to show both the French and the allied troops the close and intimate union of the sovereigns in the common cause of Europe. The important post of Montmartre, which, in its present state of strong fortification, may be called the citadel of Paris, is confided to the care of the British, who keep guard with great and unusual strictness. Even foreign officers are not admitted within these works, unless accompanied by an Englishman. The hill is bristled with two hundred pieces of cannon; and they make frequent discovery of military stores and ammunition buried or concealed. All these will fall to our share; and, I trust, the two hundred guns will be sent to keep company with the hundred and fifty taken at the battle of Waterloo.

In the meanwhile, it is a strange and most inconsistent circumstance, that the Castle of Vincennes, within three miles of Paris, lying in the midst of these armies, and of no more strength than the White Tower of London, or any other Gothic keep, affects to hold out against the allied army. The commandant, although he has hoisted the white flag, will neither receive a Royalist nor an allied soldier within the castle, and gives himself great airs of defiance, as encouraged by an impunity which he only owes to contempt,

and to the reluctance of the allied sovereigns to increase the King of France's difficulties and unpopularity by punishing the gasconade as it deserves.

I do not observe that the soldiers of the allied nations intermix much in company with each other, although they seem on kind and civil terms when occasionally thrown together. The Museum, which is open to all ranks and conditions, frequently, besides its other striking beauties, exhibits a moving picture of all the nations of Europe in their military dresses. You see the tall Hungarian, the swarthy Italian, the fair-haired Prussian, the flat-faced Tartar, English, Irish, Guardsmen, and Highlanders, in little bands of two or three, strolling up and down a hall as immense as that of the Caliph Vathek, and indulging their curiosity with its wonders. The wildest of them appeared softened and respectful, while forming a part of this singular assemblage, which looks as if all the nations had formed a rendezvous at Paris by military representation. Some of their remarks must of course be very entertaining. One or two I caught. "By, Jack," said an English dragoon to his comrade, pointing to a battle-piece by Salvator, " look at the cuirasses — they have got the battle of Waterloo here already." — " Pooh, you blockhead," said the other, " that an't the battle of Waterloo; don't you see all the horses have got long tails?" I asked a Highland seijeant, who was gazing earnestly on the Venus de Medicis, " How do you like her, countryman?" — " God bless us — is your honour from Inverness?"-was the first exclamation, and then, ".I am told she is very much admired — but I'll show your honour a much better proportioned woman," — and the ambitious serjeant, himself a remarkably little man, conducted me to a colossal female figure, eight feet high. There is no disputing with the judgment of artists, but I am afraid the beauties of this statue are not of a kind most obvious to the uninitiated.

Where there are monarchs at the head of conquering armies, the pomp of war must of course be displayed in its full glories. We have reviews of many thousands every morning, from seven o'clock until ten or eleven. That of the British cavalry was very much admired, notwithstanding the dust which enveloped their movements. The Russians and Prussians exhibited upon another occasion the manoeuvres of a mock engagement, the Emperor commanding the Prussian army, and the King of Prussia, in the dress of a colonel of the Russian guards, enacting the general of the Muscovites. After the battle, the two potentates met and greeted each other

very handsomely. On another occasion, the Prussians entertained us with a rehearsal of the battle of Issy, or the movements of the French army and their own in the attack and defence of that village, upon the 2d of June. At one of these reviews the Russians were commanded by the emperor to charge in line, expressly for the gratification of the English general. You know it is surmised, that the British claim preeminence over all other nations, because the steadiness and bottom of the individual soldiers permit them to hazard a general charge in line, whereas the, column is adopted for the purpose of attack by the French and all other foreigners. Perhaps this was designed as a rebuke to our national vanity. However, the Russians went through the manoeuvre admirably well, dressing a line of very great length with the utmost accuracy, during an advance of half a mile.

It must be owned, that a politician more gloomy than myself, might draw evil augury from the habits, which the reigning sovereigns of Europe may possibly acquire by being for years the inmates of camps, and compelled by the pressure of the imminent crisis to postpone the duties of the sovereign to those of the general. War has been described as cc the game of princesand we know how easily the habit of gambling is acquired, and how irresistible it soon becomes. If it should happen that these powerful monarchs, influenced by the military ideas and habits which have been so long uppermost, should find a state of peace a tedious and dull exchange for the animating perils of war, it will be one instance, among many, of the lasting evils which French aggression, and the necessary means of counteracting it, have entailed on the kingdoms of Europe. I con fide, however, something in the wisdom of these princes, and a great deal in the pacific influence of a deity whose presence we all deprecate, notwithstanding the lessons of wisdom which she is supposed to teach — I mean the Goddess of Poverty.

Two circumstances struck me in the grand military spectacle which I have mentioned, — the great number of actors, and, comparatively speaking, the total absence of spectators. The scale of the exhibition cannot indeed be wondered at, considering the importance of the actors:

> Ha! Majesty, how high thy glory towers,
> When the rich blood of kings is set on fire!

But, in the neighbourhood of so populous a city as Paris, the inhabitants of which have been so long famous for their attachment to public spectacles,

one might have thought spectators enough would have been found besides the military amateurs not immediately engaged, and a few strangers. But I never saw above a hundred Frenchmen, and those of the very lowest order, looking on at these exhibitions, not even at that made in the Place Louis Quinze, under their very eyes. This is the strongest sign of their deeply feeling their present state of humiliation, and proves, more than a thousand others, that they taste the gall in all its bitterness, and that the iron has entered into their soul. In my next letter to my friend Peter, I will communicate what else I have observed on the state of the public mind in France, But I must first ac? quit myself of my promise to our ghostly father, the parson.

Your's entirely,

Paul.

Postscript. By the bye, you must allow me to add to my Waterloo anecdotes, one which relates to a gallant countryman of ours, in whose family you well know that we feel the interest of old and sincere friendships: I mean Colonel Francis Hepburn, of the 3d regiment of Guards, who had the distinguished honour of commanding the detach ment sent to the relief of Hougoumont, when it was attacked by the whole French division of Jerome Buonaparte. He had the charge of maintaining, with his own single battalion, this important post, when the communication was entirely cut off by the French cavalry, and it was not until they were repulsed, that he was reinforced by two battalions of Hanoverians and one of Brunswickers. Colonel Woodforde of the Coldstream Guards, who in the morning reinforced Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonell, commanded in the house and garden, and Colonel Hepburn in the orchard and wood. I am particular in mentioning this, because the name of Leiutenant-Colonel Home, who acted under Colonel Hepburn, appeared in the Gazette instead of his, by a mistake incidental to the confusion of the day, which rendered it impossible accurately to distinguish individual merit. The error has been admitted, but there is a difficulty in correcting it publicly, though there can be none in making our friends in Scotland acquainted with the real share which the relative of our deceased friend, the best and kindliest of ve terans, had, in the most memorable battle that ever was fought, and which in no degree takes away from the admitted gallantry of his countryman, Lieutenant

Colonel Home. Colonel Hepburn, as you will remember, was engaged in the Spanish war, and severely wounded at the battle of Barossa.

Letter XV

Paul to the Reverend Mr, Minister of the Gospel at —

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Do not blame me, my dear friend, if I have been long in fulfilling my promise to you. Religion, so ample a field in most countries, has for some time been in France an absolute blank. From my former letters you must have learned, that in Flanders the catholic system still maintains itself in great vigour. The churches are full of people, most of them on their knees, and their devotion, if not enlightened, seems fervent and sincere. One instance I saw with peculiar pleasure, at Malines — Two Religieusesy sisters of charity, I believe, entered the church at the head of a small school of about twenty poor children, neatly, though coarsely, dressed, and kneeled down with them to their devotions. I was informed, that the poor nuns had dedicated their little income and their whole time, struggling occasionally with all the difficulties incident to a country convulsed by war and political revolutions, to educate these children in the fear of God, and in useful knowledge. Call them nuns, or call them what you will, I think we will neither of us quarrel with an order who thus employ their hours of retirement from the world.

I was less edified by the frequent appearance of a small chapel and an altar, on the side of the road, where the car-man will sometimes snatch a flying prayer, while his huge waggon wanders on at the will of the horses. But your own parishioners sometimes leave their horses' heads for less praiseworthy purposes, and therefore much cannot be said on that score. The rites and solemnities of the catholic church made less impression on me than I expected; even the administration of high mass, though performed by a cardinal, fell far short of what I had anticipated. There is a fidgetting about the whole ceremony, a perpetual dressing and undressing which seems intended to make it more elaborate and complex, but which destroys the grandeur and simplicity so appropriate to an act of solemn devotion. Much of the imposing exterior may now indeed be impaired — the church was the first object of plunder wherever the French came, arid they have

left traces of their rapacity which will not soon be erased.r The vestments look antiquated and tawdry, the music is but indifferent, the plate and jewels have all vanished. The priests themselves are chiefly old men, on whom the gaudy dresses with which they are decorated, sit awkwardly, and who seem in many instances bowed down by painful recollections, as much as by infirmity. In a word, the old Dame of Babylon, against whom our fathers testified so loudly, seems now hardly worth a passing attack, even in the Nineteenthly of an afternoon's sermon, and is in some measure reduced to the pave. Old John Bunyan himself could hardly have wished to see her stand lower in influence and estimation, than she does in the popular mind in France; and yet a few years, and the Giant Pope will be, in all probability, as innoxious as the Giant Pagan. Indeed, since his having shared the fate of other giants, in being transported, like a show, from place to place, by the renowned charlatan Buonaparte, his former subjects have got familiar with his terrors, and excommunication scarcely strikes more horror than the fee fau fum of a nursery tale.

It is remarkable, that this indifference seems to have extended to the enemies, as well as the subjects, of the catholic, church. When Rome was stormed in 1527, the chief amusement of the reformed German soldiers was insulting the rites of the Roman religion, and ridiculing the persons of their clergy. But in 1815, when the conquering armies of two protestant kingdoms marched from Brussels to Paris, the idea of showing scorn or hatred to the catholic religion never occurred to any individual soldier. I would gladly ascribe this to punctuality of discipline; but enough was done, by the Prussians at least, to show, that that consideration alone would not have held back their hands, had they felt any temptation to insult the French through the medium of their religion. But this does not seem to have appeared to them a vulnerable point, and not a crucifix or image was touched, or a pane of painted glass broken, that we could see or hear of, upon the route.

In the churches which we visited, very few persons seemed to attend the service, and these were aged men and women. In Paris this was still more remarkable; for, notwithstanding the zeal of the court, and the example which they exhibit of strict attention to the forms of the church, — an example even too marked for good policy, — those of the city of Paris are empty and neglected. It is melancholy to think that, with the external forms and observances of religion, its vital principles also have fallen into

complete disuse and oblivion. But those under whose auspices the French Revolution commenced, and by whom its terrors were for a time conducted, found their own interest intimately and strictly connected with the dissolution of the powerful checks of religious faith and moral practice. And although the Directory afterwards promulgated, by a formal edict, that France acknowledged the existence of a Supreme Being, and, with impious mockery, appointed a fete in his honour, all opportunity of instruction in religious duties was broken off by the early destination of the youth of France to the trade of arms. A much-esteemed friend at Paris happened to have a domestic of sense, information, and general intelligence above his station. His master upon some occasion used to him the expression," It is doing as we would be done by, — the Christian maxim." The young man looked rather surprised; "Yes," repeated my friend, " I say it is the doctrine of the Christian religion, which teaches us not only to do as we would be done by, but also to return good for evil." — " It may be so, sir," answered the valet; " but I had the misfortune to be born during the heat of the Revolution, when it would have been death to have spoken on the subject of religion, and so soon as I was fifteen years old, 1 was put into the hands of the drill serjeant, whose first lesson to me was, that, as a French soldier, I was to fear neither God nor devil." My friend, himself a soldier, and a brave one, but of a very different cast of mind from that which was thought necessary for the service of France, was both shocked and astonished at this strong proof of the manner in which the present generation had been qualified from their childhood to be the plagues of society. The consideration, that they were thus perverted in their early youth, and rendered unfit for all purposes but those of mischief, is the best consolation for such French patriots as mourn over the devastation which has overwhelmed the youth of their country.

Buonaparte, who, when not diverted from his purpose by his unsatiable ambition, had strong views of policy, resolved upon the reestablishment of the church as a sort of outwork to the throne. He created accordingly archbishops, bishops, and all the appendages of a hierarchy. This was not only intended that they might surround the imperial throne, with the solemn splendours of a hierarchy, and occasionally feed their master's ears with flattery in their pastoral charges, — an office which, by most of them, was performed with the most humiliating baseness, — but also in order to form an alliance between the religious creed which they were enjoined to

inculcate, and the sentiments of the people towards the imperial dignity. The imperial catechism, promulgated under authority, proclaimed the duties of the catechumen to the emperor, to be love, obedience, fidelity, and military service; the causes assigned were Napoleon's high and miraculous gifts, his immediate mission from the Deity, and the consecration by the pope; and the menace to disloyalty was no less than eternal condemnation — here and hereafter. I am sorry to say, that this summary of jus divinum was not entirely of Buonaparte's invention; for, in a Prussian catechism for the use of the soldiers, entitled, " Pflichten der Unterthanen(the Duties of Subjects,) and printed at Breslau, in 1800, I find the same doctrines expressed, though with less daring extravagance. Buonaparte reaped but little advantage from his system of church government, partly owing to the materials of which his monarchy was constructed, (for the best and most conscientious of the clergy kept aloof from such promotion, partly from the shortness of his reign, but principally from the stern impatience of his own temper, which could not long persist in apparent veneration for a power of his own creating, but soon led the way in exposing the new prelates to neglect and contempt.

We must learn to look with better hope upon the more conscientious efforts for reestablishing the]altar, which have been made by the king. Yet we cannot but fear, that the order of the necessary reformation has been, to a certain extent at least, the reverse of what would really have attained the important purposes designed by the sovereign. The rites, forms, and ceremonies of a church, all its external observances, derive, from the public sense of religion itself, the respect which is paid to them. It is true, that, as the shell of a nut will subsist long after the kernel is decayed, so regard for ceremonies and forms may often remain when true devotion is no more, and when ignorant zeal has transferred her blind attachment from the essence of religion to its mere forms. But if that zeal is quenched, and that attachment is eradicated, and the whole system is destroyed both in show and in substance, it is not by again enforcing the formal observances which men have learned to contemn and make jest of, that the vivifying principle of religion will be rekindled. Indeed, far from supposing that the foundation of the altar should be laid upon the ritual of the Romish church, with all the revived superstitions of the twelfth century, it would be more prudent to abandon to oblivion, a part at least of what is shocking to common sense and reason; which, although a Most Christian King might have found

himself under some difficulty of abrogating when it was yet in formal observance, he certainly cannot be called upon to renew, when it has fallen into desuetude.

The catholics of this age are not excluded from the lights which it has afforded; and the attempt to reestablish processions, in which the officiating persons hardly know their places, tales of miraculous images, masses for the souls of state criminals, and all the mummery of barbarous ages, is far from meeting the enlarged ideas which the best and most learned of them have expressed. The peculiar doctrines of their church prohibits, indeed, the formal rejection of any doctrine or observance which she has once received; but I repeat, that the time is favourable in France for rebuilding the Gallican church on a more solid basis than ever, by leaving room for the gradual and slow reformation introduced by the lapse of time, instead of forcing back the nineteenth century into the rude and degrading darkness of the ages of excommunications and crusades. It is with the hearts of the French, and not with the garments of their clergy, that the reformation, or rather the restoration, of religion ought to commence; and I conceive the primary object should be securing the instruction of the rising generation in religious and moral duties, as well as in general education, by carefully filling up the ranks of the parochial clergy, on whose patient and quiet attention to the morals of their flocks the state of the nation must depend, and not upon the colour of a cap, the tinkle of a bell, or the music of high mass.

The truth is, that the king's most natural and justifiable zeal for the establishments of religion, which were his chief consolation in adversity, has already given alarm to several classes of his subjects. Bigotted, or interested priests have been already heard misrepresenting the intentions of their sovereign, so far as to aSSrm, he means to restore to the church all her rights, and impose anew upon the subject the burdens of tithes, and the confusion which must arise from the reclamation of the church lands. How these reports, malignantly echoed by the enemies of the royal family, sound in the ears of men of property, I leave to your own judgment; and can only regret that it is as difficult as it is desirable, for the king to oppose them by a public contradiction.

It is chiefly in the southern districts, where the French protestants still maintain themselves, that this alarm is excited, cherished, and fostered, by those who care for neither one religion nor the other, further than as the jealousies and contentions of both may be engines of bloodshed,

depression, and revolution. In the province of Languedoc especially, the angry passions of both parties are understood to be at full tide; and it unfortunately happens that the contending parties are there envenomed by political hatred. Buonaparte, whose system of national religion included universal toleration, expended his special protection to the professors of the reformed doctrines, and by an organic law concerning worship, published in the year X, guaranteed to them the free exercise of their religion, being the first public indulgence which had been extended to them since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. A system of consistories was established for their internal church government; and so highly were they favoured, that the public exercise of the catholic religion, by processions or other ritual observances performed without the walls of the church, was positively prohibited in suchtowns as had consistorial churches belonging to the protestants. This distinction in favour of a body of subjects, amounting, it has been computed, to two millions of souls, attended by the triumph conferred by the interdiction of the catholic rites where their eyes could be offended by them, raised the spirits of the protestants as much as it exasperated and depressed those of the catholics. They took their ranks in political contest accordingly; and although interests of various kinds prevented the rule from being absolute, yet it was observed, during the last convulsions of state, that the catholics of the South were in general royalists, whereas many of the protestants, in gratitude for past favours conferred on their church, in jealousy of the family of Bourbon, by the bigotry of whose ancestors their fathers had suffered, and confiding in the tolerant spirit of Buonaparte, lent too ready and willing aid to his usurpation. During that event, and those which followed, much and mutual subject of exasperation has unfortunately taken place between these contending parties. Ancient enmities have been awakened, and, amid contradictory reports and statements, we can easily discover that both parties, or individuals at least of both, have been loud in their appeal to principles of moderation when undermost and very ready when they obtained the upper hand to abuse the advantages which the changes of the state had alternately given to them. This is a deep and rankling wound, which will require to be treated with no common, skill. The protestants of the South are descendants of the ardent men who used to assemble by thousands in the wilderness — I will not say with the scoffer, to hear the psalms of Clement Marot sung to the tune of Revelllez vous, belle

Endormie — but rather, as your Calvinistic heroes of moor and moss, in the days of the last Stuarts, are described by a far different bard, dear in remembrance to us both, for the affectionate sympathy and purity of his thoughts and feelings; when in the wilderness

> "arose the song, the loud
> Acclaim of praise s The whirling plover ceased
> Her plaint; the solitary place was glad,
> And on the distant cairns the watcher's ear
> Caught doubtfully at times the breeze-borne note."

On the other hand, the catholics are numerous, powerful in the hope of protection and preference from the crown, and eager to avenge insults, which, in their apprehension, have been aimed alike at the crown and the altar. If we claim for the protestants, whose nearer approach to our own doctrines recommends them to our hearts as objects of interest, the sympathy which is due to their perilous situation, let us not, in candour, deny at least the credit of mistaken zeal to those whom different rites divide from us. In the name of that Heaven, to whose laws both forms of religion appeal, who has disclaimed enforcing the purest doctrines by compulsion, and who never can be worshipped duly or acceptably by bloody sacrifices, let us deprecate a renewal of those savage and bloody wars, which, founded upon difference of religious opinion, seem to convert even the bread of life itself into the most deadly poison. British interference, not surely so proposed as to affront France's feelings of national independence, a point on which late incidents have made her peculiarly irritable — but with the earnest and anxious assurances of that goodwill, for which our exertions in behalf of the royal family, and our interest in the tranquillity of France, may justly claim credit,- — might, perhaps, have some influence with the government. But in what degree, or how far it may be prudent to hazard it, can only be known to those upon whom the momentous charge of public affairs has devolved at this trying crisis. We need not now take up the parable of Lord Shaftesbury, when he compared the reformed churches of France and Savoy to the sister of the spouse in the Canticles, and asked the astonished peers of Charles the Second, " What shall be done for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?" But it is certain, that the security of the protestant religion abroad is now, as in the days of that statesman, a wall and defence unto that which we profess at home; and at all times, when

England has been well administered, she has claimed and exercised the rights of intercession in behalf of the Reformed Churches. I trust, however, that our mediation will be, in the present case, unnecessary, and that the king himself, with the sound judgment and humane disposition which all parties allow him to possess, will show himself the protector of both parties, by restricting the aggressions of either. In the meanwhile, admire the singularity of human affairs. In Ireland discontents exist, because the catholics are not possessed of all the capacities and privileges of their protestant fellow subjects; — in the Netherlands the catholic clergy murmur at the union, because the king has expressed his determination to permit the free exercise of the protestant religion amid his catholic dominionsand in the south of France the sword is nearly drawn, upon the footing of doubts, jealousies, and apprehensions of mutual violence, for which neither party can allege any feasible ground, except mutual dislike and hatred. We may without offence wish that all of them would qualify their zeal for the doctrinal part of their religion with some part of that meekness of spirit, which would be the best proof of its purity.

To return to the religious and moral state of France. It is remarkable that the dissolution of religious principle, the confusion of the Sabbath with the ordinary days of the week, the reduction of marriage to a state of decent and legal concubinage, from which parties can free themselves at pleasure, have, while thus sapping the foundations of the social affections, as well as of religious faith, introduced more vices than crimes, much profligacy, but less atrocity than might have been expected. A Frenchman, to whom you talk of the general decay of morality in his country, will readily and with truth reply to you, that if every species of turpitude be more common in France, delicts of that sort against which the law directs its thunders, are much more frequent in Britain, Murders, robberies, daring thefts, such as frequently occur in «the English papers, are little known in those of Paris. The amusements and habits of the lower orders are, on all occasions of ordinary occurrence, more quiet, peaceable, and orderly than those of the lower English. There are no quarrels in,the street, intoxication is rarely practised even by the lowest of the people, and when assembled for the purpose of public amusement, they observe a good-humoured politeness to each other and to strangers, for which certainly our countrymen are not remarkable. To look at the thousands of rabble whom I have seen streaming through the magnificent apartments at Versailles without laying a finger

upon a painting or an article of furniture, and afterwards crowding the gardens without encroaching upon any spot where -they could do damage; to observe this, and recollect what would be the conduct of an.English mob in similar circumstances, compels one to acknowledge, that the French appear, upon such occasions, beyond comparison the more polished, sensible, and civilized people. But release both parties from the restraints imposed by the usual state of society, and suppose them influenced by some powerful incentive to passion and violence, and remark how much the contrast will be altered. The English populace will huzza, swear, threaten, break windows, and throw stones at the Life Guards engaged in dispersing them; but if a soldier should fall from his horse, the rabble, after enjoying a laugh at his expence, would lend a hand to lift him to his saddle again. A French mob would tear him limb from limb, and parade the fragments in triumph upon their pikes. In the same manner, the Englishman under arms retains the same frank, rough loyalty of character, without the alert intelligence and appearance of polished gallantry which a French soldier often exhibits to strangers. But it would be an outrage to our countrymen to compare the conduct of the two armies when pursuing a defeated enemy, or entering a country as invaders, when every evil passion is awake, and full license is granted to satiate them.

The cause of so extraordinary a contrast may, I think, be expressed in very few words.

The French act from feeling, and the British from principle. In moments, therefore, when the passions are at rest, the Frenchman will often appear, and be in. reality, the more amiable of the two. He is generally possessed of intelligence and the power of reflection, both of which are great promoters of that limited sort of honesty which keeps the windy side of the law. He piques himself upon some understanding and perception of the fine arts, by which he is told his country is distinguished, and he avoids the rudeness and violence which constitute a barbarian. He is, besides, habitually an observer of the forms and decencies of society, and has ample means of indulging licentious passions without transgressing. The Frenchman is further, by nature and constitution, a happy and contented mortal, content with little, and attached to luxuries of the more simple kind; and a mind so constituted is usually disposed to extend its cheerfulness to others. The Englishman is, in some degree, the reverse of all this. His intelligence seldom goes beyond the art to which he is trained, and which

he most frequently practises with mechanical dexterity only; and therefore he is not by habit, unless when nature has been especially bountiful, much of a reasoning animal. As for pretending to admire or understand the fine arts, or their productions, he would consider Such an effort of taste as the most ridiculous affectation, and therefore readily treats with contempt and disrespect what he would upon system be ashamed to understand. Vice and crime are equally forbidden by the Englishman's system of religious morals; if he becomes stained with gross immorality, he is generally ready to rush into legal delict, since, being divested of the curb of conscience, and destroyed in his own esteem, he becomes, like a horse without a bridle, ready to run upon any course which chance or the phrenzy of the moment may dictate. And this may show why, though the number of vicious persons be greater in France than in England in an enormous ratio, yet the proportion of legal criminals is certainly smaller. As to general temper and habits, the Englishman, less favoured in climate and less gay by constitution, accustomed to be a grumbler by his birthright, very often disdains to be pleased himself, and is not very anxious to please others. His freedom, too, gives him a right, when casually mixed with his betters, to push, to crowd, to be a little riotous and very noisy, and to insult his. neighbours on slight provocation, merely to keep his privileges in exercise. But then he is also taught to respect the law, which he invokes as his own protection; to weigh and decide upon what is just and unjust, foul and fair; to respect the religion in which he has been trained, and to remember its restraints, even in the moment of general license. It might indeed be wished that some of the lighter and more amiable qualities of the French could be infused into our populace. But what an infinitely greater service would the sovereign render to France, who should give new sensibility to those moral feelings which have too long lain torpid in the breasts of her inhabitants!

This great end can only be reached by prudent and prospective regulations; for neither religion nor morality can be inforced upon a nation by positive law. The influence of parochial clergy, and of parochial schools, committed to persons worthy of the important trust, are, as I before hinted, the most obvious remedies. But there are others of a prohibitory and preventive nature. It is in the power of government to stop some grand sources of corruption of morals, and to draw their protection and licence at least, from those assemblies which have for their direct object the practice of immoralities of every sort. The Palais Royale, in whose saloons and

porticos Vice has established a public and open school for gambling and licentiousness, far from affording, as at present, an impure and scandalous source of revenue to the state, should be levelled to the ground, with all its accursed brothels and gambling houses, — rendezvouses, the more seductive to youth, as being free from some of those dangers which would alarm timidity in places of avowedly scandalous resort. Gaming is indeed reduced to all the gravity of a science, and, at the same time, is conducted upon the scale of the most extensive manufacture. In the Sallon des Etrangers, the most celebrated haunt of this Dom-Daniel; which I had the curiosity to visit, the scene was decent and silent to a degree of solemnity. An immense hall was filled with gamesters and spectators; those who kept the bank, and managed the affairs of the establishment, were distinguished by the green shades which they wore to preserve their eyes, by their silent and grave demeanour, and by the paleness of their countenances, exhausted by constant'vigils. There was no distinction of persons, nor any passport required for entrance, save that of a decent exterior; and on the long tables, which were covered with gold, an artizan was at liberty to hazard his week's wages, or a noble his whole estate. Youth and age were alike welcome; and any one who chose to play within the limits of a trifling sum, had only to accuse his own weakness if he was drawn in to deeper or more dangerous hazard. Every thing seemed to be conducted with perfect fairness; and indeed the mechanical construct tion of the E O tables, or whatever they are called, appears calculated to prevent the possibility of fraud. The only advantage possessed by the bank (which is, however, enormous) is the extent of its funds, by which it is enabled to sustain any train of reverse of fortune; whereas most of the individuals who play against the bank are in circumstances to be ruined by the first succession of ill luck; so that ultimately the smaller ventures merge in the stock of the principal adventurers, as rivers run into the sea. The profits of the establishment must indeed be very large to support its expences. Besides a variety of attendants who distribute refreshments to the players gratis, there is an elegant entertainment, with expensive wines, regularly prepared about three o'clock in the morning, for those who choose to partake of it. With such temptations around him, and where the hazarding an insignificant sum seems at first venial or innocent, it is no wonder if thousands feel themselves gradually involved in the whirlpool whose verge is so little distinguishable, until they are swallowed up with their time, talent, and

fortune, and often also both body and soul. This is Vice with her fairest vizard; but the same unhallowed precincts contain many a secret cell for the most hideous and unheard of debaucheries, many an open rendezvous of infamy, and many a den of usury and of treason; the whole mixed with a Vanity-fair of shops for jewels, trinkets, and baubles, that bashfulness may not lack a decent pretext for adventuring into the haunts of infamy. It was here where the preachers of the Revolution first found, amidst gamblers, desperadoes, and prostitutes, ready auditors of their doctrines, and active hands to labour in their vineyard. In more recent times, it was here that the plots of the Buonapartists were adjusted, and the number of their partizans recruited and instructed concerning the progress of the conspiracy; and from hence the seduced soldiers, inflamed with many a bumper to the health of the Exile of Elba, under the mystic names of Jean de I'Epee, and Caporal Violet, were dismissed to spread the news of his approaching return, and prepare their comrades to desert their lawful sovereign. In short, from this central pit of Acheron, — in which are openly assembled and mingled those characters and occupations which., in all other capitals, are driven to shroud themselves in separate and retired recesses — from this focus of vice and treason have flowed forth those waters of bitterness of which France has drunk so deeply. Why, after having occasioned so much individual ahd public misery, this source of iniquity is not now stopped, the tenants expelled, and the buildings levelled to the ground, is a question which the consciences of the French ministers can best answer. Thus far at least is certain, that, with the richest soil, and the most cultivated understandings, a people brave even to a fault, kind-tempered, gay, and formed for happiness, have been for twenty years the plague of each other and of Europe; and if their disorders can be plainly traced to want of moral character and principle, it cannot be well to maintain amongst them, for the sake of sharing its polluted profits, such a hot-bed of avowed depravity.

If the French have no strong sense of religion or its precepts, they are not without a share of superstition; and an impostor is at present practising among them, who, by aH accounts, is as successful as Joanna Southcote herself. This lady, a woman, I am assured, of rank and information, pretends, like Baron Swedenborg, to an immediate inters course with the spiritual world, and takes her ecstatic trances for the astonishment of parr ties of good fashion, to whom, on her return to her senses, she recounts.the particulars of her visit to the spiritual world, and whom she treats with

explanations of their past lives, and predictions of the future. It said her art has attracted the attention of some men of high rank in the armies of our allies.

If you disbelieve the powers of this lady, you may also distrust the apparition of Homme Rouge, Qr the red man, said to have haunted Napoleon as the daemon did lias Michael, and advised him in matters of importance. He was, saith the legend, a little muffled figure, to whom, whenever he appeared, access was instantly given, for the spectre was' courteous enough to request to be announced. At Wilna, before advancing into Russia, while Buonaparte was' engaged in traeing the plan of his march, he was told this person requested to speak with him. He desired the attendant to inform his summoner that the Emperor was engaged. When this reply was communicated to the unknown, he assumed an authoritative voice and accent, and, throwing open his cloak, discovered his dress tinder it, which was red, without mixture of any other colour. " Tell the Emperor/' said he, " that VHomme Rouge must speak with him." He was then admitted, and they were heard to talk loud together. As he left the apartment, he said publicly, " You have rejected my advice! you will not again see me till you have bitterly repented your error." The visits of l'Homme Rouge were renewed on Buonaparte's return from Elba; but before he set out on his last campaign, Napoleon again offended his familiar, who took leave of him for ever, giving him up to the red men of England, who became the real arbiters of his destiny. If you have not faith enough for this marvellous story, pray respect the prophecy which was made to Josephine, by one of the negroe soothsayers in the West Indies, that she should rise to the highest pinnacle of modern greatness, but without ever being a queen; that she should fall from thence before her death, and die in. an hospital. I can myself vouch for the existence of this prophecy before the events which it was supposed to predict, for it was told me many years ago, when Buonaparte was only general of the army of Italy, by a lady of rank who lived in the same convent with Josephine. The coincidence of the fortune-teller s presages with the fact, would have been marred by the circumstances of the ex-empress's death, had not somebody's ingenuity discovered that her house, as the name Malmaison implies, had once been a hospital. Buonaparte, it is well known, had strange and visionary ideas about his own fated destiny, and could think of fortune like the Wallenstein of the stage. The following lines from that drama, more grand in the

translation of Coleridge than in the original of Schiller, seem almost to trace the career of Napoleon: —

> “Even in his youth he had a daring soul:
> His frame of mind was serious and severe
> Beyond his years; his dreams were of great objects.
> He walk’d amid, as if a silent spirit,
> Communing with himself:
> Yet have I known him
> Transported on a sudden into utterance
> Of strange conceptions; kindling into splendour,
> His soul reveal’d itself, and he spoke so
> That we look’d round perplexed upon each other,
> Not knowing whether it were craziness,
> Or whether ‘twere a God that spoke in him.
> Thenceforth he held himself for an exempted
> And privileged being, and, as if he were
> Incapable of dizziness or fall,
> He ran along the unsteady rope of life,
> And paced with rapid step the way to greatness;
> Was Count, and Prince, Duke Regent, and Dictator,
> And is all, all this too little for him;
> He stretches forth his hands for a King’s crown,
> And plunges in unfathomable ruin.”

Farewell, my dear friend light and leisure are exhausted in this long detail, concerning the religion of which the French have so little, and the superstition of which they have a considerable portion.

You will groan over many parts of this epistle, but the picture is not without its lights. France has afforded many examples, in the most trying crisis, of firmness, of piety, of patience under affliction; many, too, of generosity and courtesy and charity. The present Royal Family have been bred in the school of adversity, and it is generally allowed that they have the inclination, though perhaps they may mistake the means, of ameliorating the character of the nation, to the government of which they have been so providentially restored.

Letter XVI

Paul to His Cousin Peter

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I am in the centre, you say, of political intelligence, upon the very area where the fate of nations is determined, and send you no intelligence. This seems a severe reproach; for in England, with a friend in the foreign-office, or the advantage of mixing in a certain circle of society, one can always fill up a letter with political events and Speculations some days sooner, and somewhat more accurately, than they appear in the newspapers. But they manage matters otherwise in France. The conferences between the ministers of the allied powers and those of Louis XVIII., are conducted with great and praiseworthy secrecy. They are said to be nearly concluded; but a final arrangement will probably be post poned by an expected change of ministry in the Tuilleries.

All politicians were surprised (none more than thou, Peter) at the choice which the king made of his first ministry. That Fouché, who voted for the death of his brother, Louis XVI., who had been an agent of Robespierre and a minister of Buonaparte — who, in the late Revolution, was regarded as a chief promoter of the unexpected and unnatural union between the discontented patriots, or Liberalists, and the followers of Buonaparte, — that he should have been named minister of police under the restored heir of the Bourbons, seemed wonderful to the royalists. His companions in the provisional government saw themselves with equal astonishment put under the surveillance of their late associate, in his new character; and the letters between him and Carnot, when the latter applied to Fouché, agreeably to the royal proclamation, that a place of residence might be assigned to him, fully, though briefly, express their characteristic feelings. “ Ou veux tu que ge mm vats, Traitre?” signed, Carnot, was a brief question, to which the minister of police a8 briefly replied, “ Ou tu tu veux Imbecille” Fouché.

There are two ways of considering the matter with reference to the minister who accepted the office, and with regard to the sovereign who nominated him.

On the former point little need be said. Times of frequent and hasty changes, when a people are hurried from one government to another

necessarily introduce among the leading statesmen a versatility of character, at which, those who are remote from the pressure of temptation, hold up their hands and wonder. In looking over our own history, we discover the names of Shaftesbury and Sunderland, and of many other statesmen eminent for talent, who changed their political creed with the change of times, and yet contrived to be employed and trusted by successive governments who confided in their fidelity, at least while they could make that fidelity their interest. Independent and steady as the English boast themselves, there were, during the great civil war, persons who made it an avow ed principle to adhere to the faction that was uppermost, and support the administration of the day, enough to form a separate sect, who, in the hypocritical cant of the times, assumed the name of Waiters upon Providence. This prudential line of conduct has been rendered so general in France, during the late frequent changes of government, as to give matter for a catalogue of about four hundred and fifty pages, which has been recently published, under the name of the Dictionnaire des Girouettes, in which we find the names of almost all the men distinguished for talents, or influence, now alive in France, with a brief account of the changes of their political lives. The list grew so scandalously comprehensive, that the editor announces his intention of suppressing, in a second edition, all those who had changed only once, considering them, comparatively, as men of steady political faith and conscience. They must know little of human nature, who can suppose the result would be otherwise with the mass of mankind in times, when universal example sanctioned changes of principle, which were besides pressed upon each individual by ambition, by avarice, by fear, by want, in short, by their interest under the most pressing and seductive forms. The conduct of Fouché, therefore, is by no means singular; although, if it be troe, that, in assuming power under Buonaparte, his real wish was to serve the king, his case merits a particular distinction, — whether favourable or no, may be reasonably doubted.

That Fouché should have accepted power was, therefore, in the order of things, as they have lately gone in France. But, that the king should have trusted, or at least employed him, and that his appointment should have given acknowledged satisfaction to the Duke of Wellington and to Lord Castlereagh, thou, Peter, wilt think more difficult to account for. Consider, however, that Fouché was at the head of a numerous faction, comprehending the greater part of that third party in the state, which, as

uniting all shades of those who use the word Liberty as their war-cry, are generally called Liberalists. If these were divided from the king in the moment of his return, what remained to him save the swords of a few nobles and men of honour, the scattered and subdued bands of La Vended, and the inert wishes of the mass of the population, who might indeed cry Vive le Roi, but had plainly shewed they loved their own barns better than the house of Bourbon. The bayonets of the allies, indeed surrounded Paris, but Buonaparte was still in France and at large, the army of the Loire continued independent and unbroken, many garrisons held out, many provinces were still agitated; and the services of Fouché, who held in his hand the various threads of correspondence through the distracted kingdom, who knew the character and principles of each agitator, and the nature of the materials be had to work with, who possessed, in short, that extent of local and personal knowledge peculiar to one who had been long the head of the French police, were essentially necessary to the establishment of the royal authority, and to preventing a scene of blood and total confusion. That Fouché served the king with great address, cannot be doubted, and his admission into the high office of trust, which he has for some time enjoyed, was a great means of calming the public mind, and restoring to confidence those, who, feeling themselves involved in the general defection, might otherwise have been rendered desperate by the fear of punishment. Talleyrand, also, whose loyalty to the house of Bourbon, during the last usurpation, was never doubted, is understood to have expressed his strong sense of the peremptory necessity of receiving Fouché and his party into power at least, if not into confidence. So much, therefore, for the propriety, or rather necessity, of a measure, which looked strange enough when viewed from a distance, which could not be agreeable to the king personally/and which had its political inconveniences; but, nevertheless, was at the time essential to the royal interest. The first benefit which resulted from this appointment was the close and vigilant pursuit that compelled Napoleon to surrender to the English. The same activity exercised by this experienced politician and his agents, decided and secured a bloodless counterrevolution in most of the towns in France. Upon the general interests of Europe, Fouché is well understood to have entertained such just and moderate views as were acceptable to the ministers of the allied powers, and particularly to those of Britain.

Notwithstanding these advantages, it is not supposed that Fouché will keep his ground in the ministry, and it is supposed the change will occasion the resignation of Talleyrand. As the king's party appears better consolidated, and his power becomes more permanent, the faction of the Royalistes purs et par excellence acquires members and courage, and becomes daily more shocked with the incongruity of Fouché's high place in the administration. His influence is supposed to have one effect, which, if true, is a very bad one — that, namely, of delaying the selecting and bringing to punishment the more notorious agents of the last usurpation. All who know this nation must be aware of what importance it is that their ruler should not seem to fear them; and the king must be aware that his authority will seem little more than an idle pageant till he shall show he is possessed of the power of maintaining it. On the other hand, nothing can be more impolitic than to keep up the memory of this brief usurpation, and the insecure and jealous feelings of all connected with it, by long hesitation on the choice of victims to the offended laws. The sooner that two or three principal criminals can be executed, some dangerous agitators banished, and a general amnesty extended to all the rest, without exception, the sooner and the firmer will the royal authority be established. We have as yet had only one example of severity in the fate of Labedoyere, although no good reason can be given why others of superior consequence, such as Ney and Massena, should not share his fate. But the death.of this, comparatively subordinate agent has acted as a sedative upon the spirit of faction. Last week nothing was heard but threats and defiance, and bold declarations, that the government would not, and dared not, execute the sentence. The rights of the Bourbons seemed to have been so long in abeyance, that it was thought scarce possible to be guilty of treason against them, or that they should dare to regard land punish it as such. This is a popular feeling which the king must remove by a display of firmness, or it will most assuredly once more remove his throne. Accordingly the execution of this criminal has had some effect, and the tone of mutiny and defiance is greatly lowered. The handsome sufferer, however, finds the usual degree of favour in the eyes of the fair. One lady talked of his execution as un horreur, an atrocity unequalled in the annals of France. — " Did Buonaparte never order such executions?" — Who? the Emperor? — never." — " But the Due d'Enghien, madam continued the persevering querist. — " Ah! parlez moi d'Adam et d'Eve," was the reply. A retrospective of three or four years was

like looking back to the fall of man; and the exclamation affords no bad key to the French character, to whom the past is nothing, and the present every thing.

The attacks upon Fouché in our English newspapers are said to have no small share in unsettling his power, by seeming to express the opinion of pur nation against him. I have great reason to doubt whether his successor may not be appointed out of a class to whom we are, as a nation, less acceptable. For, with a few exceptions. I do not think that the English are so much disliked, even by the military men and Imperialists, as they are by the nobility and pure royalists. This class of politicians, whatever may be thought of their bias to despotism, numbers among them so much of high honourable feeling and sincere principle, that I willingly look for some apology for their entertaining sentiments towards England and Englishmen, which, to say the least, are an indifferent requital for our former hospitality and our late effective assistance. I will, therefore, make every allowance for the natural prejudice which they entertain against us for having, as they may conceive, stopped short in the services which it was in our power to have rendered them, and declined to back their pretensions to complete restoration of the rights and property which they had forfeited in the king's cause. I will permit them to feel as Frenchmen as well as royalists, and to view, with a mingled feeling, the victory of Waterloo and the capture of Paris, although their own interest and that of the king was immediately dependent on the success of the allies. I can suppose, that it is painful for them to see foreigners residing at Paris as lords of the ascendant; and it may be a laudable sensibility to the misfortunes of their country, which makes them at this moment retreat from the duties of hospitality, and shun mixing in society with those whose best blood has been so recently shed in the king's service. I can even forgive them, that, being conscious of their weakness in point of numbers and influence (unless through that of the sovereign), they are glad to snatch opportunities of making common cause with the bulk of their countrymen at the expence of foreigners, and are therefore fain to lead the cry against the allies, and especially against our country, in order to show, that whatever may be their interests, their hearts have always been French. But while we pardon the motives, we must be allowed to smile at the effects of this animosity. One would almost suppose while hearing them, that our interference in the affairs of France was altogether gratuitous and unnecessary, and had only prevented a grand

reaction, by which Napoleon would have been walked out of the kingdom as he had walked into it, and a counterrevolution accomplished, as nearly resembling that which concludes the Rehearsal, as the last revolution seemed in ease and celerity to rival that of King Phys. and King Ush. in the same drama. They even extol the conduct of those commandants upon the frontier, who, in defiance of their sovereign's mandate, and with a brutal indifference to human life, maintain, without motive, or means, or hope, a senseless opposition to the allied troops. Some of them have been honourably acquitted when brought to trial; all are praised and caressed, as having maintained the frontiers of France against foreigners, instead of being shot or degraded for the bloodshed occasioned by their resistance both to their country and to the king's allies. Upon the same principle, I suppose the governor of Vincennes, who still holds out his old Donjon, is to be considered as a true patriot, although he, and those who think like him, have no objept in view but to show a reckless and unavailing resistance to their victors. In one of the king's proclamations to his subjects on his restoration, he has been made to take credit, that not one of his own followers had been permitted to draw a sword in defence of his rights, &c. If the state of the royal army was indeed justly rated at twentyfour thousand men and forty pieces of cannon, as given in an order of the day signed by the Duke of Feltre, on 7th April 1815, we may justly complain of the mistaken tendernesss which withheld such a force from the conflict, and demand of the King of France a reckoning for the lives of forty thousand brave men killed in his quarrel, many of whom might have been saved by such a reinforcement. But if the attendants of the king consisted chiefly of a few hundred officers and gardes de corps, to whom the timely arrival of cinq Cent Suisses (that is, not five hundred Swiss, as a sanguine Englishman was led to interpret the phrase, from the pleasure with which he heard the incident detailed, but five individuals of the corps called les Cent Suisses,) was hailed as a timely reinforcement, it should be considered, that, since the days of chivalry are ended, and since no single knight can now rout a legion of cuirassiers with his own good sword, the king must have owed his restoration to Wellington and Blucher; and those who only walked forward in the path which our swords hewed out for them ought to bear with some patience the measures to which their own proved weakness, and the experienced art and strength of their powerful adversaries, compel us to have recourse. It was, I think, Edward I., who replied with scorn to a

competitor for the Scottish crown, in whose cause he had invaded Scotland, when, after the viptory at Dunbar, he ventured to remind him of his pretensions, Ne avons nous autre chose a faire que a vous reaumeys gagner Such an answer we might have returned to Louis XVIII., had we inclined to support any other competitor among the ample choice which the provisional government held out to us; and although we claim no merit for following the open path of faith and loyalty to an unfortunate ally, we ought at least to escape the censure of those who have been most benefited by our exertions, and who confessedly were unable or unwilling to assist themselves. In the meanwhile, if it is meant to confine the king's choice of ministers to the faction of royalistes purs, we are afraid his choice will be limited; for, excepting a few individuals who have been employed in Russia, where strangers are more readily promoted to offices of confidence than elsewhere, we know few who have had the means of acquiring experience in state business. Brave, loyal, and gallant, the French noblesse are by their charter; but the heat of temper which confounds friends and foes; the pre i. e. "Have we nothing to do but to conquer kingdoms for you?"

sumption which pushes direct to its object without calculation of obstacles; a sense of wrongs received, and a desire of vengeance, make them dangerous counsellors at such a crisis as the present.

From the more violent portion of the opposite faction, (inclusive of the Imperialists, who are now hastily melting into the ranks of the general opposition,) the king can, I fear, look for little cordiality, and only for that degree of support which he can make it their interest to afford him. Still, however, there are many cases where ability without principle may be successfully employed, when it would be unsafe to trust to principle unguided by experience and prudence; just as a proprietor will sometimes find it his interest to employ, in the management of his affairs, a skilful knave rather than an honest fool. This is taking an extreme case: there are many degrees between a jacobin enrage and a royaliste pur, and some of the wisest and best of each party will perhaps at length see the necessity of joining in an administration exclusive of neither, which should have at once for its object the just rights of the throne, and the constitutional liberties of the subject. To such a coalition, the king's name would be, indeed, a tower of strength; but founded upon a narrower basis, must run the risque of falling itself, and bearing to ground all who adhere to it.

It must be owned, nevertheless, that the general rallying point of the Liberalists is an avowed dislike to the present monarch and his immediate connections. They will sacrifice, they pretend, so much to the general inclinations of Europe, as to select a king from the Bourbon race; but he must be one of their own chusing, and the Duke of Orleans is most familiar to their mouths. And thus these politicians, who assume the title of Constitutional Royalists, propose to begin their career by destroying hereditary succession, the fundamental principle of a limited monarchy. In Britain, we know that the hereditary right of succession is no longer indeed accounted divine and indefeasible, as was the principle of our ancient royalistes purs et par excellence. But the most sturdy whig never contended that it could be defeated otherwise than by abdication or for feiture, or proposed the tremendous measure of changing the succession purely by way of prevention or experiment. In the most violent times, and under the most peculiar circumstances, the Exclusion Bill, although founded upon an acknowledged and plausible ground of incapability, and levelled against the person of a successor, not of an existing monarch, was rejected as a dangerous innovation on the constitution. It is in order to prevent, as far as possible, such violent and hazardous experiments, that we impute the faults of monarchs not to themselves, but to their ministers, and view, in a political Sense, the wellknown maxim, that the king can do no wrong. For the same reason, in the height of popular indignation against James II., the word abdication was selected in preference to desertion or forfeiture, to express the manner in which the throne became vacant at the Revolution. But the doctrine now held in France strikes at the very foundation of hereditary right, being founded on no overt act of the sovereign tending to affect the liberties of his subjects, but upon jealousies and fears that he has, or may call, evil coun sellors around him, who, at some time or other, will persuade him to attempt the reestablishment of the feudal rights of the nobility and the domination of the church. In this grand counterpart to our constitutional maxim, it is not even alleged that the king has done wrong, but it is assumed that he will do wrong, and proceedings are to be grounded on this prediction as if the evil foreseen already existed. The fact seems to be, that the objections of this faction to the present line is much more a matter of taste or caprice than they are willing to acknowledge. The vanity of the nation, and especially of this class of statesmen, who have not the least share of it, is affronted at being compelled to receive back from the

conquering hand of the allies the legitimate monarch, in whose causeless expulsion they had assisted. They would willingly have had a bit of sugar with the wholesome physic which was forced upon them by English and Prussian bayonets, and they still long for something which may give them an ostensible pretext to say, that their own conduct had not been entirely inconsistent, nor their rebellion al together fruitless. Hence the obstinacy of Buonaparte's two chambers to the very last, in rejecting Louis XVIII. Hence the nicknames of Le Prefet de VAngleterre, and Louis V Inevitablet which their wit attached to the restored monarch; and to this feeling of mortified vanity, less than to any real fears of aggression upon their liberties, may be traced their wish to have a king whose title should be connected with the Revolution, and who might owe his crown more to their courtesy than to his own right. But who will warrant those that set such a dangerous stone rolling, where its course will stop? The body now united in one mass of opposition to the royalistes purs comprehend among themselves a hundred various shades of difference, from the Constitutionalist of 1814 to the Republican of 1793, or the Imperialists of Buonaparte's time. It happened regularly in the French revolution, that so soon as one point was gained or yielded, which the popular party represented as an ultimatum, new demands were set up by demagogues, who affected to plead still higher doctrines of freedom than those with which their predecessors had remained satisfied; the force of those who had been satisfied with the concessions being uniformly found insufficient to defend the breach they themselves had stormed, until all merged in anarchy, and anarchy itself in military tyranny. We have seen already the progress of an Orleans faction, as well as its fatal termination. We have no desire to give another whirl to the revolutionary E O table, or once more to shuffle the cards for the chance of turning up such trumps as will best suit the political gamblers of the Palais Royale.

Besides these two violent parties, one of which aims to restore the abrogated tyranny of priests and seigneurs, and the other to render a hereditary monarchy an elective one at a sweep, there are two classes of great importance, namely, the army and the mass of the people. Much must undoubtedly depend on the disposition of the former, which has been for some time accustomed to act as a deliberative body, and which, however mutilated and disjoined, will, like the several portions of a snake, continue long to writhe under the same impulses by which it was agi tated when

entire. Every effort is now making to place this formidable engine in the hands of the crown, by the dissolution and newformation of the regiments, by recruits, and by the addition of separate corps, levied in the places most attached to the royal interest. But this is, in a great measure, counteracted by the insane policy which, as we have already noticed, applauds in military men the very conduct that indicates, as in the case of Huningen, and other places defended after the king's restoration, an opposition to his mandates; and if bravery alone shall be accounted a sufficient apology for rebellion, the French government will certainly have enough of both. Were a breach, therefore, to take place at this moment between the King and the Constitutionalists, I have little doubt that great part of the army would take part with the latter, though perhaps more out of pique than principle. The Royalists, with all their vehemence in words, have already shewn how infinitely inferior they are to the opposite party in intrigue, as well as in audacity; and discontented soldiers may be seduced to declare for a change of dynasty, or for a republic, as readily as for a Buonaparte. Besides, distant and secure as is Napoleon's present place of exile, we have but scotched the snake, not killed him; and while life lasts, especially after his extraordinary return from Elba, there will not be wanting many to rely upon a third avatar of this singular emanation of the Evil Principle. This is an additional and powerful reason for the king to avoid, in thought, act, and deed, the slightest innovation on the liberties of his subjects as ascertained by the constitutional charter, as certain to provoke a contest in which he would prove inferior.

If you ask me, then, what are the legitimate resources of this unfortunate monarch, placed between the extremes of two violent factions, I would answer, that, under God, I conceive them to rest upon the goodwill of the mass of the people of France. The agitators and intriguers of both parties bear an exceedingly small proportion to the numbers of those who only desire peace, tranquillity, and the enjoyment of the fruits of their industry, under a mild and steady go vernment. With this class of people Louis XVIII. is deservedly popular; their tears attended his expulsion, and their rejoicings his return. It is true that this general feeling of goodwill and affection was not strong enough to bring them to the field, though it threw great obstacles in the way of the usurper. But it is also true, that this class of Loyalists were taken totally at unawares, and became only apprized of their danger when it was too late to take measures for encountering a veteran

army, masters of all the fortresses in the kingdom. The general class of proprietors are also (for the present) disheartened, drained of the young and active spirits whom Buonaparte sacrificed in his wars, rendered callous by habit to the various changes of government, and more passive under each than it is possible for Englishmen to comprehend. But there is very generally among the middling orders in France, and among all, indeed, who are above the lowest vulgar, a kind and affectionate feeling towards the king, well deserved by his mild and paternal character, and which further experience of the blessings of peace, and of a settled government, will kindle into zealous attachment. The best policy of the monarch is, to repress the ardent tempers of the clergy and nobles; to teach them that theif real interest depends upon the crown; and that they will themselves be the first sufferers, if they give pretext for a new attack upon the Bourbons, by setting up pretensions equally antiquated and ill adapted with a free government. At the same time it may be necessary for the king, by exhibiting vigour and decision in his measures, to convince the more violent of the opposite faction that they cannot renew their attempts against the throne with the facility and impunity which heretofore have attended them. The very violence with which these parties oppose each other affords the king the means of mediating betwixt both. Let the people at length see clearly that the king desires no more than his own share in the constitution, but that he stands prepared to defend his own rights, as well as theirs. It may, perhaps take some time to awaken the indifferent from that palsy of the mind which we have alluded to, and to put to rest the jealous.

fears of the proprietors of national property, But good faith and persevering steadiness on the part of the crown may accomplish both, and with these fears will subside the hopes entertained by those who delight in change; revolution will become difficult in proportion as its chance of success shall disappear; the ardent spirits who have frequeated its dangerous paths will seek more pacific avenues to wealth and distinction; and from being her own plague and the terror of her neighbours, France may again be happy in herself, and the most graceful ornament of the European commonwealth.

Upon the subject of awakening France to her true interests, use might surely be made of the principle uppermost in the heart of every Frenchman, and which is capable of guiding him to much good or evil, the interest, namely, which high and low take in the glory of their country. Through the

abuse of this sentiment, (noble in itself, because disinterested,) Napoleon was enabled to consolidate his usurped government in such a manner that it required all his own rashness to undermine it. Did the people ask for bread? — he showed them a temple. Did they require of him the blood of their children? — he detailed to them a victory, — and they retired, satisfied that, if they suffered or wept, France had been rendered illustrious and victorious. It cannot be, that so strong and disinterested a sentiment should be applicable to evil purposes alone; nor do I believe the French so void of reflection or common sense, as not to be made capable, by experience, of valuing themselves as much upon personal freedom, an equal system of laws, a flourishing state of finance, good faith to other nations, and those moral qualities which equally adorn a people and individuals, as they now esteem their country decorated by an unnecessary palace, or by a bloody and fruitless victory. It is true, that the reformation must begin where the corruption was first infused, and that, although converts may be gained gradually to the cause of sound reason, yet we must necessarily be obliged to wait the effects of a better education upon the rising race, before real and genuine patriotism can be generally substituted for what is at present merely national vanity.

This appetite for glory has of late been fed with such unsubstantial food, as has apparently rendered the French indifferent to the distinction betwixt what is unreal and what is solid. Any thing connected with show and splendour, — any thing, as Bayes says, calculated to surprise and elevate, is what they expect from their governors, as regularly as the children of London expect a new pantomime at Christmas. Buonaparte contrived to drown the murmurs which attended his return to Paris, in the universal speculation which he excited by announcing his purpose of holding a Champ deMaiy which is much the same as if William III. had paved the way to the throne by summoning a Wittenagemot. In England, some would have thought the Prince of Orange had lost his senses, and some, that he was speaking Dutch. But all in England knew the meaning of a National Convention, the deomination by which William distinguished the assembly which he convoked. In Paris, it was exactly the contrary — the people did not want to see a national convention, or a national assembly either — they knew, like Costard, “ whereuntill that did amount)but the Champ de Mai was something new, something not easily comprehended; and it would have been a motive with many against expelling Buonaparte prematurely,that

they would have lost the sight of the Champ dfc Mai. And thus they sacrificed their good sense to their curiosity, and showed their minds were more bent on the form of the assembly than on its end and purposes. After all, the fete was indifferently got up, and gave little satisfaction, notwithstanding the plumes and trains of the principal actors. But still it had its use. The Bourbons have been compelled also to sacrifice to this idol; and the king is himself obliged, contrary to his own good sense and, taste, to conform to this passion for theatrical effect. A man was condemned to death, to whom it had been resolved to extend the royal pardon, and the king imagined, tout bonnement, that he had nothing to do but issue one from his chancery. But no-that would have been to defraud the public of their share in the scene. So he was ad vised to go (by pure accident) in the course of his evening drive, into some remote corner of the city, where he was to meet (also accidentally) with the municipality, who were to fall on their knees, and beg mercy for this delinquent, which the king was then to grant with characteristic grace and bounty, and all the bystanders were to shout Vive le Rot. It must not be supposed that a nation, so shrewd and ingenious as the French, are really blinded by these exhibitions got up for their amusement. But they are entertained for the time, and are no more disgusted with the want of reality in the drama, than with the trees upon the stage for being made of pasteboard. They consider the accompaniments as of more importance than the real object of the representation, and fall under the censure due to Prior's

> idle dreamer,
> Who leaves the pye to gnaw the streamer.

To reclaim hawks which have been accustomed to so wild a flight, requires all the address of a falconer. Yet there is at the bottom a strong fund of disinterested patriotism to work upon; for who will deny its existence to a people, the bulk of whom have, on all occasions, thought always of the nation, and never of themselves individually? Should, therefore, the present king meet with a minister calculated, like Fabius, to arrest immediate dangers, and protract or evade angry discussions, until such a long train of quiet shall have elapsed, that men's minds have become estranged from all ideas of force and violence, he may, even in his own time, lay such a foundation of a better system, as will lead future Frenchmen to place their

pride less in vain parade or military glory, than in the freedom, arts, and happiness of France.

The approaching meeting of the National Representatives, if they meet, as the time so peremptorily demands, in the spirit, not of partizans, but of conciliators, may do much to accelerate so desirable an issue. But it is too much to be feared, that it will be founds very difficult to assemble such a body of representatives, as may be justly considered as the organ of the nation. Could such a senate be convoked, we should hear on every side the language of peace and moderation, nor would the debates be warmer or more obstinate, than is necessary for elucidation of the measures proposed. Such an assembly, in the name of the proprietors of France, would deprecate the senseless agitation of theoretical questions, would recommend brief sentence on a limited and narrow selection of the principal agents of the last usurpation, whose fate seems essential to the vindication of justice, and the intimidation of the disaffected; and when that painful duty was executed, would proceed with joy to the more agreeable task of promulgating such a general amnesty as should throw a perpetual veil over the crimes and errors of that unhappy period, I might add, that such a senate would proceed by secret committees to tent the wounds of the country,' to turn their attention towards the state of religion and morals, and to ensure the means of bringing up the rising generation, at least, free from the errors of their fathers. In their adjustment of foreign relations, such a council of state would recollect, that if the country had suffered reiterated humiliation, it was in consequence of reiterated aggression; and, avoiding painful and irritating discussions concerning the past, they would offer by such moderation the surest guarantee for peace and amity in future. Such would be the language of the representatives of the people, did they really speak the sense of the proprietors of France — not that those proprietors are sufficiently enlightened to recommend the special measures for attaining peace and tranquillity, but because they are sighing for that state of good order to which the measures of an enlightened representation ought to conduct them. But I have doubts whether this calm and wise course can be expected from the senators to be shortly assembled, since we hear of nothing on all sides but the exertions made by the two political factions of Royalists and Liberalists to procure returns of their own partizans. We must, therefore, prepare to witness a warm, and, perhaps, a deadly war waged between two contending parties, of which one proposes a complete reaction

and restoration of things, as they stood in the reign of Louis XV., with the advantages perhaps of new confiscations to avenge those by which they were themselves ruined, and the other proposing a gratuitous and uncalled-for alteration of the laws of succession, while each is content to hazard in the attempt a renewal of the horrors of the Revolution.

You may wonder that a spirit should be expected to prevail among the representatives so different from that of the mass of the people by whom they are chosen. The cause seems to be, that those gradations, not of rank only, but of education, intelligence, and habits of thinking upon political men and measures, which enable Englishmen both to chuse representatives, and to watch their conduct when chosen, cannot at present be said to exist in France. Those who propose themselves as candidates are men altogether distinct in their habits of thinking from the voters whom they are to represent. They are considered as politicians by profession, as men belonging to a class entitled exclusively to be chosen, and who, when chosen, relieve their electors from all further trouble in watching or directing their political conduct. The electors may assemble in their organic colleges, and may give their suffrages to a candidate for the Chamber of Representatives; but it will be in the same manner as they might chuse a person to repair the town-clock, when almost all the voters are ignorant of the means which the artist is to adopt for its regulation, and probably some of them cannot tell the hour by the dial-plate when the machine is put in order. On the contrary, the class in England upon whom the election of parliament devolves, is trained to their task by long habit, by being freeholders, members of common councils, vestries, and other public bodies, or by hearing business of a public nature discussed upon all occasions, whether of business or pleasure, and are thereby habituated to consider themselves as members of the body politic. Though, therefore, many may be seduced by interest, biassed by influence, or deluded by prejudice, there will be found among the mass of the British electors, taken generally over the kingdom, a capacity of judging of the fitness of their representatives, a distinct power of observing with attention their conduct in their high office; and they possess means also, collectively speaking, of making their own opinion heard and respected, when there is pressing occasion for it.

I do not mention this difference between the inhabitants of the two countries, as a reason for refusing to France the benefits of a free

representation, but to shew, that, for some time at least, it cannot have the salutary effect upon the political horizon of that country which arises from the like institution in our own, where there exists an intimate and graduated connection between the representative and electors, a general diffusion of political knowledge, and a systematic gradation from the member of parliament to the lowest freeholder — where, in short, there is a common feeling between the representative and his constituent, the one knowing the nature of the power delegated, as well as the other does that which he receives, and both, though differing in extent of information, having something like common views upon the same subject. It may be long ere this general diffusion of political information takes place in France. It will, however, follow, if time is allowed for it, by years of peace, and of that good order which promotes quiet and general discussion of political rights. A freeholder, who suffered free-quarters from pandours and cossacks twice in one year, has scarce tranquillity of mind sufficient to attend to theoretical privileges and maxims of state. But if called upou repeatedly to exercise his right of suffrage, he will gradually begin to comprehend the meaning of it, and to interest himself in the conduct of the representative to whom he gives his voice. Thus, as freemen make a free constitution, so a free constitution, if not innovated upon, and rendered ineffectual, will in time create a general and wholesome freedom of spirit amongst those who have to exercise the privileges which it bestows. Did such a general feeling now exist in France, we should not have to apprehend the desperate results which may attend the struggle of two parties only intent upon their own factious interests — a nobility and clergy, on the one hand, eager to resume privileges inconsistent with general freedom, and on the other, a factious oligarchy of considerable talent and little principle, prepared to run the race of the Brissotins in 1792, and to encounter all the risques with which it was proved to be attended.

To the dangers of this collision of steel and flint, is to be added that which arises from the quantity of tinder and touchwood, which lies scattered around to catch and foster every spark of fire; — an army dishonoured and discontented, bands of royalists, half-organized soldiers, half-voluntary partisans, thousands whom Buonaparte had employed in his extended system of espion? age and commercial regulation; hundreds, also, of a higher class, selected generally for talent, activity, and lack of principle, who have noyv lost their various posts, as Mauris, Prefets, Sous-prefets,

Gommis, and so forth - — all of whom would find their interest in a civil war. And what will restrain the factious from pushing the crisis to this extremity? Only a jealous fear of the allies, whose occupation of the fortresses in the north of France will, in that case, prove her best security; or perhaps the slender chance, that the members of the representation may be wise enough to sacrifice their mutual feuds to the general weal, and remember that they are summoned to wage their contest with the arms of courtesy, and not to push political debate into revolutionary frenzy. I leave them, therefore, with a sincere wish that they may not forget, in the vehemence of their internal dissensions, the duty whieh they owe to a distracted public, which they may at pleasure involve in a civil war by their mutual violence, or save from that dreadful crisis by their temper and moderation.

You must not expect from me any general view of French manners, or habits of society; and it is the less necessary, as you will find ample means of forming your judgment in the very spirited and acute work of Mr John Scott, published during the preceding year. I am inclined to think, that while he has touched the French vices and follies with enough of severity, he may not in some instances have done full justice to the gallant, amiable, and lively disposition, by which, in spite of an execrable education, and worse government, that people are still widely distin guished from other nations on the continent. But the ingenious author had prescience enough to discover the latent danger of the royal government of 1814, when it was disguised and disowned by the members of that government themselves; nor has he in these affairs omitted an opportunity to plead the cause of freedom, religion, and morality, against that of tyranny, infidelity, and licentiousness. I ought also to mention the travels in France in the years 1814-15, the joint production of two young gentlemen, whose taste for literature is hereditary; and I am informed, that another ingenious friend, (Mr Sn of Edinburgh) whose extreme assiduity in collecting information cannot fail to render his journal interesting, intends to give it to the public. To such works I may safely refer you for an ample description of Paris, its environs, public places, and state of manners.

I should willingly have endeavoured to form my own views of the state of French society, as well as of their politics; but the time has been altogether unfavourable, as the persons of fashion in Paris have either retired to the country, or live in strict seclusion from foreigners, upon

principles which it is impossible not to respect. The strangers, therefore, who now occupy this capital, form a class altogether distinct from the native inhabitants, and seek for society among each other. It was very different, I am told, upon the former entry of the allied troops, which for some time the Parisians regarded more as a pacification than a conquest. The Russian and Prussian officers were then eagerly sought after, and caressed by the French nobility; and the allied monarchs, on entering the Parisian theatres, were received with the same honours as in their own. But this is all over. The last cast was too absolute for victory or ruin, and the dye has turned up against France. One class of Frenchmen lament the event of the war as a national misfortune; and even those who have the advantage of it, feel that, in its cause, progress, and conclusion, it will be recorded as a national disgrace. " You own yourself," said I to a lively French friend, a great anti-imperialist, as he writhed his face and shrugged when he passed a foreign offificer, " you own yourself, that they only treated your countrymen as they have merited." — " Very true — and the man that is hanged has no more than his deserts — but I don't like to look at the hangman."

Amid this dereliction, you must not suppose that we sojourners in Paris suffer solitude for want of good society. The extended hospitality of the Duke of Wellington, and of Lord and Lady Castlereagh, has afforded rallying points to the numerous English strangers, who have an opportunity of meeting, in their parties, with almost all the owners of those distinguished names, which for three years past have filled the trumpet of fame. Our minister, whose name will be read with distinction in this proud page of our annals, and to whose determined steadiness in council much of the success of 1814 is unquestionably due, occupies the palace of Pauline Borghese, now that of the British embassy. The Duke of Wellington lives in a large hotel at the corner of the Rue des Champs Elysees, furnished most elaborately by some wealthy courtier of Napoleon.

Among its chief ornaments, is a very fine picture of the ex-emperor, and a most excellent bust of the same personage. It is a thing to remember, that I have seen in that hotel, so ornamented, the greatest and the bravest whom Europe can send forth from Petersburgh to Cadiz, assembled upon the invitation of the British General, and yielding to him, by general assent, the palm of military preeminence. In mentioning those whose attentions rendered the residence of the British at Paris pleasant and interesting, I

ought not to forget Lord Cathcart, whose situation as ambassador to the Russian court gave him opportunities of gratifying the curiosity of his countrymen, by presenting them to the emperor, who has of late played such a distinguished part in European history, and by making them known to such men as Barclay deTolli, Platow, Czernicheff, and other heroes of Kalouga and Beresina, where the spear of the mighty was first broken. Besides the notice of these public characters, my stay in Paris was made happy by the society of many friends, both in the civil and military departments. You know my inherent partiality for the latter class, when they add gentle manners and good information to the character of their profession; and I can assure you, that as there never was a period when our soldiers were more respected for discipline and bravery, so the character of the British officers for gallantry and humanity, for general information, and for the breeding of gentlemen, never stood higher than at the capture of Paris. In such society, whatever secret discontents might in reality exist, Paris was to us like a frozen lake, over whose secret and fathomless gulphs we could glide without danger or apprehension; and I shall always number the weeks I have spent here among the happiest of my life.

In a short time, it is imagined, the greater part of the foreign troops will be withdrawn towards their own countries, or the fortresses they are to occupy in guarantee. It will then be seen whether the good intentions of the king, and the general desire of the country for peace, will be sufficient to maintain the public tranquillity of France amid the collision of so many angry passions; and there will, at the worst, remain this consolation, that if this restless people should draw the sword upon each other, effectual precautions have been taken by the allies to prevent them from again disturbing the peace of Europe.

With the hope of speedily rejoining the beloved circle round the fireside, and acting, in virtue of my travelled experience, the referee in all political disputes,

I am ever your affectionate friend,
Paul.

THE END

LETTERS OF MALACHI MALAGROWTHER

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Letters From Malachi Malagrowther, Esq.

on the Proposed Change of Currency.
Ergo, Caledonia, nomen inane, Vale!

These Letters were addressed to the author's friend, Mr. James Ballantyne, Editor of the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, and they appeared in that newspaper in February and March, 1826. They were then collected into a Pamphlet, and ran through numerous editions: in the subsequent discussions in Parliament, they were frequently referred to: and although an elaborate answer, by the then Secretary of the Admiralty, Mr. Croker, attracted much notice, and was, by the Government of the time, expected to neutralise the effect of the northern lucubrations — the proposed measure, as regarded Scotland, was ultimately abandoned — and that result was universally ascribed to Malachi Malagrowther.

Letter I

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February 21, 1826.

My dear Mr. Journalist,

I am by pedigree a discontented person, so that you may throw this letter into the fire, if you have any apprehensions of incurring the displeasure of your superiors. I am, in fact, the lineal descendant of Sir Mungo Malagrowther, who makes a figure in the *Fortunes of Nigel,* and have retained a reasonable proportion of his ill luck, and, in consequence, of his ill temper. If, therefore, I should chance to appear too warm and poignant in my observations, you must impute it to the hasty and peevish humour which I derive from my ancestor. But, at the same time, it often happens that this disposition leads me to speak useful, though unpleasant truths, when more prudent men hold their tongues and eat their pudding. A lizard is an ugly and disgusting thing enough; but, methinks, if a lizard were to run over my face and awaken me, which is said to be their custom when they observe a snake approach a sleeping person, I should neither scorn his intimation, nor feel justifiable in crushing him to death, merely because he is a filthy little abridgement of a crocodile. Therefore, "for my love, I pray you, wrong me not."

I am old, sir, poor, and peevish, and, therefore, I may be wrong; but when I look back on the last fifteen or twenty years, and more especially on the last ten, I think I see my native country of Scotland, if it is yet to be called by a title so discriminative, falling, so far as its national, or rather, perhaps, I ought now to say its *provincial,* interests are concerned, daily into more absolute contempt. Our ancestors were a people of some consideration in the councils of the empire. So late as my own younger days, an English minister would have paused, even in a favourite measure, if a reclamation of national rights had been made by a Member for Scotland, supported, as it uniformly then was, by the voice of her representatives and her people. Such ameliorations in our peculiar system as were thought necessary, in order that North Britain might keep pace with

her sister in the advance of improvement, were suggested by our own countrymen, persons well acquainted with our peculiar system of laws (as different from those of England as from those of France,) and who knew exactly how to adapt the desired alteration to the principle of our legislative enactments, so that the whole machine might, as mechanics say, work well and easily. For a long time this wholesome check upon innovation, which requires the assimilation of a proposed improvement with the general constitution of the country to which it has been recommended, and which ensures that important point, by stipulating that the measure shall originate with those to whom the spirit of the constitution is familiar, has been, so far as Scotland is concerned, considerably disused. Those who have stepped forward to repair the gradual failure of our constitutional system of law, have been persons that, howsoever qualified in other respects, have had little farther knowledge of its construction, than could be acquired by a hasty and partial survey, taken just before they commenced their labours. Scotland and her laws have been too often subjected to the alterations of any person who chose to found himself a reputation, by bringing in a bill to cure some defect which had never been felt in practice, but which was represented as a frightful bugbear to English statesmen, who, wisely and judiciously tenacious of the legal practice and principles received at home, are proportionally startled at the idea of any thing abroad which cannot be brought to assimilate with them.

The English seem to have made a compromise with the active tendency to innovation, which is one great characteristic of the day. Wise and sagacious themselves, they are nervously jealous of innovations in their own laws — *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari,* is written on the skirts of their judicial robes, as the most sacred texts of Scripture were inscribed on the phylacteries of the Rabbies. The belief that the Common Law of England constitutes the perfection of human reason, is a maxim bound upon their foreheads. Law Monks they have been called in other respects, and like Monks they are devoted to their own Rule, and admit no question of its infallibility. There can be no doubt that their love of a system, which, if not perfect, has so much in it that is excellent, originates in the most praiseworthy feelings. Call it if you will the prejudice of education, it is still a prejudice honourable in itself, and useful to the public. I only find fault with it, because, like the Friars in the Duenna monopolizing the bottle, these

English Monks will not tolerate in their lay-brethren of the North the slightest pretence to a similar feeling.

In England, therefore, no renovation can be proposed affecting the administration of justice, without being subjected to the strict inquiry of the Guardians of the Law, and afterwards resisted pertinaciously until time and the most mature and reiterated discussion shall have proved its utility, nay, its necessity. The old saying is still true in all its points — Touch but a cobweb in Westminster-Hall, and the old spider will come out in defence of it. This caution may sometimes postpone the adoption of useful amendments, but it operates to prevent all hasty and experimental innovations; and it is surely better that existing evils should be endured for some time longer, than that violent remedies should be hastily adopted, the unforeseen and unprovided-for consequences of which are often so much more extensive than those which had been foreseen and reckoned upon. An ordinary mason can calculate upon the exact gap which will be made by the removal of a cornerstone in an old building; but what architect, not intimately acquainted with the whole edifice, can presume even to guess how much of the structure is, or is not, to follow?

The English policy in this respect is a wise one, and we have only to wish they would not insist upon keeping it all to themselves. But those who are most devoted to their own religion, have least sympathy for the feelings of dissenters; and a spirit of proselytism has of late shown itself in England for extending the benefits of their system, in all its strength and weakness, to a country, which has been hitherto flourishing and contented under its own. They adopted the conclusion, that all English enactments are right; but the system of municipal law in Scotland is not English, therefore it is wrong. Under sanction of this syllogism. our rulers have indulged and encouraged a spirit of experiment and innovation at our expense, which they resist obstinately when it is to be carried through at their own risk.

For more than one half of last century, this was a practice not to be thought of. Scotland was during that period disaffected, in bad humour, armed too, and smarting under various irritating recollections. This is not the sort of patient for whom an experimental legislator chooses to prescribe. There was little chance of making Saunders take the patent pill by persuasion — main force was a dangerous argument, and some thought claymores had edges.

This period passed away, a happier one arrived, and Scotland, no longer the object of terror, or at least great uneasiness, to the British Government, was left from the year 1750 under the guardianship of her own institutions, to win her silent way to national wealth and consequence. Contempt probably procured for her the freedom from interference, which had formerly been granted out of fear; for the medical faculty are as slack in attending the garrets of paupers as the caverns of robbers. But neglected as she was, and perhaps because she was neglected, Scotland, reckoning her progress during the space from the close of the American war to the present day, has increased her prosperity in a ratio more than five times greater than that of her more fortunate and richer sister. She is now worth the attention of the learned faculty, and God knows she has had plenty of it. She has been bled and purged, spring and fall, and *talked* into courses of physic, for which she had little occasion. She has been of late a sort of experimental farm, upon which every political student has been permitted to try his theory — a kind of common property, where every juvenile statesman has been encouraged to make his inroads, as in Morayland, where, anciently, according to the idea of the old Highlanders, all men had a right to take their prey — a subject in a common dissecting-room left to the scalpel of the junior students, with the degrading inscription, — Fiat experimentum in corpore vili.

I do not mean to dispute, sir, that much alteration was necessary in our laws, and that much benefit has followed many of the great changes which have taken place. I do not mean to deprecate a gradual approach to the English system, especially in commercial law. The Jury Court, for example, was a fair experiment, in my opinion, cautiously introduced as such, and placed under such regulations as might best assimilate its forms with those of the existing Supreme Court. I beg therefore to be considered as not speaking of the alterations themselves, but of the apparent hostility towards our municipal institutions, as repeatedly manifested in the course of late proceedings, tending to force and wrench them into a similarity with those of England.

The opinions of our own lawyers, nay, of our Judges, than whom wiser and more honourable men never held that high character, have been, if report speaks true, something too much neglected and controlled in the course of these important changes, in which, methinks, they ought to have had a leading and primary voice. They have been almost avowedly regarded

not as persons the best qualified to judge of proposed innovations, but as prejudiced men, determined to oppose them right or wrong. The last public Commission was framed on the very principle, that if Scotch Lawyers were needs to be employed, a sufficient number of these should consist of gentlemen, who, whatever their talents and respectability might be in other respects, had been too long estranged from the study of Scottish law, to retain any accurate recollection of an abstruse science, or any decided partiality for its technical forms. This was done avowedly for the purpose of evading the natural partiality of the Scottish Judges and practitioners to their own system; that partiality, which the English themselves hold so sacred a feeling in their own Judges and Counsel learned in the law. I am not, I repeat, complaining of the result of the Commissions, but of the spirit in which the alterations were undertaken. Unquestionably much was done in brushing up and improving the old machinery of Scottish Law Courts, and in making it move more rapidly, though scarce, I think, more correctly than before. Despatch has been much attended to. But it may be ultimately found, that the timepiece which runs fastest does not intimate the hour most accurately. At all events, the changes have been made and established — there let them rest. And had I, Malachi Malagrowther, the sole power tomorrow of doing so, I would not restore the old forms of judicial proceedings; because I hold the constitution of Courts of Justice too serious matters to be put back or forward at pleasure, like a boy's first watch, merely for experiment's sake.

What I *do* complain of is the general spirit of slight and dislike manifested to our national establishments, by those of the sister country who are so very zealous in defending their own; and not less do I complain of their jealousy of the opinions of those who cannot but be much better acquainted than they, both with the merits and deficiencies of the system, which hasty and imperfectly informed judges have shown themselves so anxious to revolutionize.

There is no explanation to be given of this but one — namely, the entire conviction and belief of our English brethren, that the true Themis is worshipped in Westminster Hall, and that her adorers cannot be too zealous in her service; while she, whose image an ingenious artist has depicted balancing herself upon a *te-totum* on the southern window of the Parliament House of Edinburgh, is a mere idol, — Diana of Ephesus, — whom her votaries worship, either because her shrine brings great gain to the

craftsmen, or out of an ignorant and dotard superstition, which induces them to prefer the old Scottish *Mumpsimus* to the modern English *Sumpsimus.* Now, this is not fair construction in our friends, whose intentions in our behalf, we allow, are excellent, but who certainly are scarcely entitled to beg the question at issue without inquiry or discussion, or to treat us as the Spaniards treated the Indians, whom they massacred for worshipping the image of the sun, while they themselves bowed down to that of the Virgin Mary. Even Queen Elizabeth was contented with the evasive answer of Melville, when hard pressed with the trying question, whether Queen Mary or she were the fairest. We are willing, in the spirit of that answer, to say, that the Themis of Westminster Hall is the best fitted to preside over the administration of the larger and more fertile country of beef and pudding; while she of the te-totum (placed in that precarious position, we presume, to express her instability, since these new lights were struck out) claims a more limited but equally respectful homage, within her ancient jurisdiction — sua paupera regna — the Land of Cakes. If this compromise does not appease the ardour of our brethren for converting us to English forms and fashions, we must use the scriptural question, "Who hath required these things at your hands?"

The inquiries and result of another commission are too much to the purpose to be suppressed. The object was to investigate the conduct of the Revenue Boards in Ireland and Scotland. In the former, it is well known, great mismanagement was discovered; for Pat, poor fellow, had been playing the loon to a considerable extent. In Scotland, *not a shadow of abuse prevailed.* You would have thought, Mr. Journalist, that the Irish Boards would have been reformed in some shape, and the Scotch establishments honourably acquitted, and suffered to continue on the footing of independence which they had so long enjoyed, and of which they had proved themselves so worthy. Not so, sir. The Revenue Boards, in both countries, underwent exactly the same regulation, were deprived of their independent consequence, and placed under the superintendence of English control; the innocent and the guilty being treated in every respect alike. Now, on the side of Scotland, this was like Trinculo losing his bottle in the pool — there was not only dishonour in the thing, but an infinite loss.

I have heard two reasons suggested for this indiscriminating application of punishment to the innocent and to the culpable.

In the first place, it was honestly confessed that Ireland would never have quietly submitted to the indignity offered to her, unless poor inoffensive Scotland had been included in the regulation. The Green Isle, it seems, was of the mind of a celebrated lady of quality, who, being about to have a decayed tooth drawn, refused to submit to the operation till she had seen the dentist extract a sound and serviceable grinder from the jaws of her waiting-woman — and her humour was to be gratified. The lady was a termagant dame — the wench a tame-spirited simpleton — the dentist an obliging operator — and the teeth of both were drawn accordingly.

This gratification of his humours is gained by Pat's being up with the pike and shilelah on any or no occasion. God forbid Scotland should retrograde towards such a state — much better that the deil, as in Burns's song, danced away with the whole excisemen in the country. We do not want to hear her prate of her number of millions of men, and her old military exploits. We had better remain in union with England, even at the risk of becoming a subordinate species of Northumberland, as far as national consequence is concerned, than remedy ourselves by even hinting the possibility of a rupture. But there is no harm in wishing Scotland to have just so much ill-nature, according to her own proverb, as may keep her goodnature from being abused; so much national spirit as may determine her to stand by her own rights, conducting her assertion of them with every feeling of respect and amity towards England.

The other reason alleged for this equal distribution of *punishment,* as if it had been the influence of the common sun, or the general rain, to the just and the unjust, was one which is extremely predominant at present with our Ministers — the *necessity* of uniformity in all such cases; and the consideration what an awkward thing it would be to have a Board of Excise or Customs remaining independent in the one country, solely because they had, without impeachment, discharged their duty; while the same establishment was cashiered in another, for no better reason than that it had been misused.

This reminds us of an incident, said to have befallen at the castle of Glammis, when these venerable towers were inhabited by a certain old Earl of Strathmore, who was as great an admirer of uniformity as the Chancellor of the Exchequer could have desired. He and his gardener directed all in the garden and pleasure-grounds upon the ancient principle of exact correspondence between the different parts, so that each alley had its

brother; a principle which, renounced by gardeners, is now adopted by statesmen. It chanced, once upon a time, that a fellow was caught committing some petty theft, and, being taken in the manner, was sentenced by the Bailie MacWheeble of the jurisdiction to stand for a certain time in the baronial pillory, called the *jougs,* being a collar and chain, one of which contrivances was attached to each side of the portal of the great avenue which led to the castle. The thief was turned over accordingly to the gardener, as ground-officer, to see the punishment duly inflicted. When the Thane of Glammis returned from his morning ride, he was surprised to find both sides of the gateway accommodated each with a prisoner, like a pair of heraldic supporters *chained* and *collared proper.* He asked the gardener, whom he found watching the place of punishment, as his duty required, whether another delinquent had been detected? "No, my Lord," said the gardener, in the tone of a man excellently well satisfied with himself, — "but I thought the single fellow looked very awkward standing on one side of the gateway, so I gave half-a-crown to one of the labourers to stand on the other side for *uniformity's* sake. " This is exactly a case in point, and probably the only one which can be found — with this sole difference, that I do not hear that the members of the Scottish Revenue Board got any boon for standing in the pillory with those of Ireland — for uniformity's sake.

Lastly, sir, I come to this business of extending to Scotland, the provisions of the Bill prohibiting the issue of notes under £5 in six months after the period that the regulation shall be adopted in England.

I am not about to enter upon the question which so much agitates speculative writers upon the wealth of nations, or attempt to discuss what proportion of the precious metals ought to be detained within a country; what are the best means of keeping it there; or to what extent the want of specie can be supplied by paper credit: I will not ask if a poor man can be made a rich one, by compelling him to buy a service of plate, instead of the delf ware which served his turn. These are questions I am not adequate to solve. But I beg leave to consider the question in a practical point of view, and to refer myself entirely to experience.

I assume, without much hazard of contradiction, that Banks have existed in Scotland for near one hundred and twenty years — that they have flourished, and the country has flourished with them — and that during the last fifty years particularly, provincial Banks, or branches of the principal established and chartered Banks, have gradually extended themselves in

almost every Lowland district in Scotland; that the notes, and especially the small notes, which they distribute, entirely supply the demand for a medium of currency; and that the system has so completely expelled gold from the country of Scotland, that you never by any chance espy a guinea there, unless in the purse of an accidental stranger, or in the coffers of these Banks themselves. This is granting the facts of the case as broadly as can be asked.

It is not less unquestionable, that the consequence of this banking system, as conducted in Scotland, has been attended with the greatest advantage to the country. The facility which it has afforded to the industrious and enterprising agriculturist or manufacturer, as well as to the trustees of the public in executing national works, has converted Scotland, from a poor, miserable, and barren country, into one where, if nature has done less, art and industry have done more, than in perhaps any country in Europe, England herself not excepted. Through means of the credit which this system has afforded, roads have been made, bridges built, and canals dug, opening up to reciprocal communication the most sequestered districts of the country — manufactures have been established, unequalled in extent or success — wastes have been converted into productive farms — the productions of the earth for human use have been multiplied twentyfold, while the wealth of the rich, and the comforts of the poor, have been extended in the same proportion. And all this in a country where the rigour of the climate, and sterility of the soil, seem united to set improvement at defiance. Let those who remember Scotland forty years since bear witness if I speak truth or falsehood.

There is no doubt that this change has been produced by the facilities of procuring credit, which the Scottish banks held forth, both by discounting bills, and by granting cash-accounts. Every undertaking of consequence, whether by the public or by individuals, has been carried on by such means; at least, exceptions are extremely rare.

There is as little doubt that the Banks could not have furnished these necessary funds of cash, without enjoying the reciprocal advantage of their own notes being circulated in consequence, and by means of the accommodation thus afforded. It is not to be expected that every undertaking which the system enabled speculators or adventurers to commence, should be well-judged, attentively carried on, or successful in issue. Imprudence in some cases, misfortune in others, have had their usual quantity of victims. But in Scotland, as elsewhere, it has happened in many

instances that improvements, which turned out ruinous to those who undertook them, have, notwithstanding, themselves ultimately produced the most beneficial advantages to the country, which derived in such instances an addition to its general prosperity, even from the undertakings which had proved destructive to the private fortune of the projectors.

Not only did the Banks dispersed throughout Scotland afford the means of bringing the country to an unexpected and almost marvellous degree of prosperity, but in no considerable instance, save one, have their own over-speculating undertakings been the means of interrupting that prosperity. The solitary exception was the undertaking called the Ayr Bank, rashly entered into by a large body of country gentlemen and others, unacquainted with commercial affairs, and who had moreover the misfortune not only to set out on false principles, but to get false rogues for their principal agents and managers. The fall of this Bank brought much calamity on the country; but two things are remarkable in its history: First, that under its too prodigal, yet beneficial influence, a fine county (that of Ayr) was converted from a desert into a fertile land. 2dly, That, though at a distant interval, the Ayr Bank paid all its engagements, and the loss only fell on the original stockholders. The warning was, however, a terrible one, and has been so well attended to in Scotland, that very few attempts seem to have been afterwards made to establish Banks prematurely — that is, where the particular district was not in such an advanced state as to require the support of additional credit; for in every such case, it was judiciously foreseen, the forcing a capital on the district could only lead to wild speculation, instead of supporting solid and promising undertakings.

The character and condition of the persons pursuing the profession, ought to be noticed, however slightly. The Bankers of Scotland have been, generally speaking, *good* men, in the mercantile phrase, showing, by the wealth of which they have died possessed, that their credit was sound; and *good* men also, many of them eminently so, in the more extensive and better sense of the word, manifesting, by the excellence of their character, the fairness of the means by which their riches were acquired. There may have been, among so numerous a body, men of a different character, fishers in troubled waters, capitalists who sought gain not by the encouragement of fair trade and honest industry, but by affording temporary fuel to rashness or avarice. But the number of upright traders in the profession has narrowed the means of mischief, which such Christian Shylocks would otherwise

have possessed. There was loss, there was discredit, in having recourse to such characters, when honest wants could be fairly supplied by upright men, and on liberal terms. Such reptiles have been confined in Scotland to batten upon their proper prey of folly, and feast, like worms, on the corruption in which they are bred.

Since the period of the Ayr Bank, now near half a century, I recollect very few instances of Banking Companies issuing notes, which have become insolvent. One, about thirty years since, was the Merchant Bank of Stirling, which never was in high credit, having been known almost at the time of its commencement by the ominous nickname of *Black in the West.* Another was within these ten years, the East-Lothian Banking Company, whose affairs had been very ill-conducted by a villanous manager. In both cases, the notes were paid up in full. In the latter case, they were taken up by one of the most respectable houses in Edinburgh; so that all the current engagements were paid without the least check to the circulation of their notes, or inconvenience to poor or rich, who happened to have them in possession. The Union Bank of Falkirk also became insolvent within these fifteen years, but paid up its engagements without much loss to the creditors. Other cases there may have occurred not coming within my recollection; but I think none which made any great sensation, or could at all affect the general confidence of the country in the stability of the system. None of these bankruptcies excited much attention, or as we have seen, caused any considerable loss.

In the present unhappy commercial distress, I have always heard and understood, that the Scottish Banks have done all in their power to alleviate the evils which came thickening on the country; and, far from acting illiberally, that they have come forward to support the tottering credit of the commercial world with a frankness which augured the most perfect confidence in their own resources. We have heard of only one provincial Bank being even for a moment in the predicament of suspicion; and of that copartnery the funds and credit were so well understood, that their correspondents in Edinburgh, as in the case of the East Lothian Bank formerly mentioned, at once guaranteed the payment of their notes, and saved the public even from momentary agitation, and individuals from the possibility of distress. I ask what must be the stability of a system of credit, of which such an universal earthquake could not displace or shake even the slightest individual portion?

Thus stands the case in Scotland; and it is clear, any restrictive enactment affecting the Banking system, or their mode of issuing notes, must be adopted in consequence of evils, operating elsewhere perhaps, but certainly unknown in this country.

In England, unfortunately, things have been very different, and the insolvency of many provincial banking companies, of the most established reputation for stability, has greatly distressed the country, and alarmed London itself, from the necessary reaction of their misfortunes upon their correspondents in the capital.

I do not think, sir, that the Advocate of Scotland is called upon to go farther, in order to plead an exemption from any experiment which England may think proper to try to cure her own malady, than to say such malady does not exist in her jurisdiction. It is surely enough to plead, "We are well, our pulse and complexion prove it — let those who are sick take physic." But the opinion of the English Ministers is widely different; for granting our premises, they deny our conclusion.

The peculiar humour of a friend, whom I lost some years ago, is the only one I recollect, which jumps precisely with the reasoning of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. My friend was an old Scottish laird, a bachelor and a humorist — wealthy, convivial, and hospitable, and of course having always plenty of company about him. He had a regular custom of swallowing, every night in the world, one of Dr. Anderson's pills, for which reasons may be readily imagined. But it is not so easy to account for his insisting on every one of his guests taking the same medicine; and whether it was by way of patronising the medicine, which is in some sense a national receipt, or whether the mischievous old wag amused himself with anticipating the scenes of delicate embarrassment, which the dispensation sometimes produced in the course of the night, I really cannot even guess. What is equally strange, he pressed this request with a sort of eloquence, which succeeded with every guest. No man escaped, though there were few who did not make resistance. His powers of persuasion would have been invaluable to a Minister of State. "What! not one *Leetle Anderson,* to oblige your friend, your host, your entertainer! He had taken one himself — he would take another, if you pleased. — Surely what was good for his complaints must of course be beneficial to yours?" It was in vain you pleaded your being perfectly well, — your detesting the medicine, — your being certain it would not agree with you — none of the apologies were

received as valid. You might be warm, pathetic, or sulky, fretful or patient, grave or serious, in testifying your repugnance, but you were equally a doomed man; escape was impossible. Your host was in his turn eloquent, — authoritative, — facetious, argumentative, — precatory, — pathetic, above all, pertinacious. No guest was known to escape the *Leetle Anderson.* The last time I experienced the laird's hospitality, there were present at the evening meal the following catalogue of guests: — a Bond-street dandy, of the most brilliant water, drawn thither by the temptation of grouse-shooting — a writer from the neighbouring borough (the laird's *Doer,* I believe) — two country lairds, men of reserved and stiff habits — three sheep-farmers, as stiffnecked and stubborn as their own haltered rams — and I, Malachi Malagrowther, not facile or obvious to persuasion. There was also the Esculapius of the vicinity — one who gave, but elsewhere was never known to take medicine. All succumbed — each took, after various degrees of resistance, according to his peculiar fashion, his own *Leetle Anderson.* The Doer took a brace. On the event I am silent. None had reason to congratulate himself on his complaisance. The laird has slept with his ancestors for some years, remembered sometimes with a smile on account of his humorous eccentricities, always with a sigh when his surviving friends and neighbours reflect on his kindliness and genuine beneficence. I have only to add, that I hope he has not bequeathed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, otherwise so highly gifted, his invincible powers of persuading folks to take medicine, which their constitutions do not require.

Have I argued my case too high in supposing that the present intended legislative enactment is as inapplicable to Scotland, as a pair of elaborate knee-buckles would be to the dress of a kilted Highlander! I think not.

I understand Lord Liverpool and the Chancellor of the Exchequer distinctly to have admitted the fact, that no distress whatever had originated in Scotland from the present issuing of small notes of the bankers established there, whether provincial in the strict sense, or sent abroad by branches of the larger establishments settled in the metropolis. No proof can be desired better than the admission of the adversary.

Nevertheless, we have been positively informed by the newspapers that Ministers see no reason why any law adopted on this subject should not be imperative over all his Majesty's Dominions, including Scotland, *for uniformity's sake.* In my opinion, they might as well make a law that the Scotsmen, for uniformity's sake, should not eat oatmeal, because it is found

to give Englishmen the heartburn. If an ordinance prohibiting the oatcake, can be accompanied with a regulation capable of being enforced, that in future, for uniformity's sake, our moors and uplands shall henceforth bear the purest wheat, I for one have no objection to the regulation. But till Ben-Nevis be level with Norfolkshire, though the natural wants of the two nations may be the same, the extent of these wants, natural or commercial, and the mode of supplying them, must be widely different, let the rule of uniformity be as absolute as it will. The nation which cannot raise wheat, must be allowed to eat oat-bread; the nation which is too poor to retain a circulating medium of the precious metals, must be permitted to supply its place with paper credit; otherwise, they must go without food, and without currency.

If I were called on, Mr. Journalist, I think I could give some reasons why the system of banking which has been found well adapted for Scotland is not proper for England, and why there is no reason for inflicting upon us the intended remedy; in other words, why this political balsam of Fierabras, which is to relieve Don Quixote, may have a great chance to poison Sancho. With this view, I will mention briefly some strong points of distinction affecting the comparative credit of the banks in England and in Scotland; and they seem such as to furnish, to one inexperienced in political economics (upon the transcendental doctrines of which so much stress is now laid,) very satisfactory reasons for the difference which is not denied to exist betwixt the effects of the same general system in different countries.

In Scotland, almost all Banking Companies consist of a considerable number of persons, many of them men of landed property, whose landed estates, with the burdens legally affecting them, may be learned from the records, for the expense of a few shillings; so that all the world knows, or may know, the general basis on which their credit rests, and the extent of real property, which, independent of their personal means, is responsible for their commercial engagements. In most banking establishments this fund of credit is considerable, in others immense; especially in those where the shares are numerous, and are held in small proportions, many of them by persons of landed estates, whose fortunes, however large, and however small their share of stock, must be all liable to the engagements of the Bank. In England, as I believe, the number of the partners engaged in a banking concern cannot exceed five; and though of late years their landed property has been declared subject to be attached by their commercial

creditors, yet no one can learn, without incalculable trouble, the real value of that land, or with what mortgages it is burdened. Thus, *cæteris paribus,* the English banker cannot make his solvency manifest to the public, therefore cannot expect, or receive, the same unlimited trust, which is willingly and securely reposed in those of the same profession in Scotland.

Secondly, the circulation of the Scottish banknotes is free and unlimited; an advantage arising from their superior degree of credit. They pass without a shadow of objection through the whole limits of Scotland, and, although they cannot be legally tendered, are current nearly as far as York, in England. Those of English Banking Companies seldom extend beyond a very limited horizon; in two or three stages from the place where they are issued, many of them are objected to, and give perpetual trouble to any traveller who has happened to take them in change on the road. Even the most creditable provincial notes never approach London in a free tide — never circulate like blood to the heart, and from thence to the extremities, but are current within a limited circle; often, indeed, so very limited, that the notes issued in the morning, to use an old simile, fly out like pigeons from the dovecot, and are sure to return in the evening to the spot which they have left at break of day.

Owing to these causes, and others which I forbear mentioning, the profession of provincial Bankers in England is limited in its regular profits, and uncertain in its returns, to a degree unknown in Scotland; and is, therefore, more apt to be adopted in the south by men of sanguine hopes and bold adventure (both frequently disproportioned to the extent of their capital,) who sink in mines, or other hazardous speculations, the funds which their banking credit enables them to command, and deluge the country with notes, which, on some unhappy morning, are found not worth a penny; — as those to whom the foul fiend has given apparent treasures, are said in due time to discover they are only pieces of slate.

I am aware it may be urged, that the restrictions imposed on those English provincial Banks are necessary to secure the supremacy of the Bank of England; on the same principle on which dogs kept near the purlieus of a royal forest, were anciently lamed by the cutting off of one of the claws, to prevent their interfering with the royal sport. This is a very good regulation for England, for what I know; but why should the Scottish institutions, which do not, and cannot, interfere with the influence of the Bank of England, be put on a level with those of which such jealousy is, justly or

unjustly, entertained? We receive no benefit from that immense Establishment, which, like a great oak, overshadows England from Tweed to Cornwall — Why should our national plantations be cut down or cramped for the sake of what affords us neither shade nor shelter, and which besides can take no advantage by the injury done to us? Why should we be subjected to a monopoly, from which we derive no national benefit?

I have only to add, that Scotland has not felt the slightest inconvenience from the want of specie, nay, that it has never been in request among them. A tradesman will take a guinea more unwillingly than a note of the same value — to the peasant the coin is unknown. No one ever wishes for specie save when upon a journey to England. In occasional runs upon particular houses, the notes of other Banking Companies have always been the value asked for — no holder of these notes ever demanded specie. The credit of one establishment might be doubted for the time — that of the general system was never brought into question. Even Avarice, the most suspicious of passions, has in no instance I ever heard of, desired to compose her hoards by an accumulation of the precious metals. The confidence in the credit of our ordinary medium has not been doubted even in the dreams of the most irritable and jealous of human passions.

All these considerations are so obvious, that a statesman so acute as Mr. Robinson must have taken them in at the first glance, and must at the same time have deemed them of no weight, compared with the necessary conformity between the laws of the two kingdoms. I must, therefore, speak to the justice of this point of uniformity.

Sir, my respected ancestor, Sir Mungo, when he had the distinguished honour to be *whipping,* or rather, *whipped boy,* to his Majesty James the Sixth of gracious memory, was always, in virtue of his office, scourged when the King deserved flogging; and the same equitable rule seems to distinguish the conduct of Government towards Scotland, as one of the three United Kingdoms. If Pat is guilty of peculation, Sister Peg loses her Boards of Revenue — if John Bull's cashiers mismanage his money-matters, those who have conducted Sister Margaret's to their own great honour, and her no less advantage, must be deprived of the power of serving her in future; at least that power must be greatly restricted and limited.

"Quidquid delirant reges plectuntur Achivi."

That is to say, if our superiors of England and Ireland eat sour grapes, the Scottish teeth must be set on edge as well as their own. An uniformity in

benefits may be well — an uniformity in penal measures, towards the innocent and the guilty, in prohibitory regulations, whether necessary or not, seems harsh law, and worse justice.

This levelling system, not equitable in itself, is infinitely unjust, if a story, often told by my poor old grandfather, was true, which I own I am inclined to doubt. The old man, sir, had learned in his youth, or dreamed in his dotage, that Scotland had become an integral part of England, — not in right of conquest, or rendition, or through any right of inheritance, — but in virtue of a solemn Treaty of Union. Nay, so distinct an idea had he of this supposed Treaty, that he used to recite one of its articles to this effect: — "That the laws in use within the kingdom of Scotland, do, after the Union, remain in the same force as before, but alterable by the Parliament of Great Britain, with this difference between the laws concerning public right, policy, and civil government, and those which concern private right, that the former may be made the same through the whole United Kingdom; but that no alteration be made on laws which concern private right, *excepting for the evident* utility of the subjects within Scotland. " When the old gentleman came to the passage, which you will mark in italics, he always clenched his fist, and exclaimed, " Nemo me impune lacesset! " which, I presume, are words belonging to the black art, since there is no one in the Modern Athens conjuror enough to understand their meaning, or least to comprehend the spirit of the sentiment which my grandfather thought they conveyed.

I cannot help thinking, sir, that if there had been any truth in my grandfather's story, some Scottish Member would, on the late occasion, have informed the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that, in virtue of this treaty, it was no sufficient reason for innovating upon the private rights of Scotsmen in a most tender and delicate point, merely that the Right Honourable Gentleman saw no reason why the same law should not be current through the whole of his Majesty's dominions; and that, on the contrary, it was incumbent upon him to go a step further, and to show that the alteration proposed was *for the evident utility* of the subjects within Scotland, — a proposition disavowed by the Right Honourable Gentleman's candid admission, as well as by that of the Prime Minister, and contradicted in every circumstance by the actual state of the ease.

Methinks, sir, our "Chosen Five and Forty," supposing they had bound themselves to Minister's by such oaths of silence and obedience, as are taken by Carthusian friars, must have had freewill and speech to express

their sentiments, had they been possessed of so irrefragable an argument in such a case of extremity. The sight of a father's life in danger is said to have restored the power of language to the dumb; and truly, the necessary defence of the rights of our native country is not, or at least ought not to be, a less animating motive. Lord Lauderdale almost alone interfered, and procured, to his infinite honour, a delay of six months in the extension of this act, — a sort of reprieve from the southern *jougs,* — by which we may have some chance of profiting, if, during the interval, we can show ourselves true Scotsmen, by some better proof than merely by being "wise behind the hand."

In the first place, sir, I would have this Old Treaty searched for, and should it be found to be still existing, I think it decides the question. For, how can it be possible, that it should be for the "evident utility" of Scotland to alter her laws of private right, to the total subversion of a system under which she is admitted to have flourished for a century, and which has never within North Britain been attended with the inconveniences charged against it in the sister country, where, by the way, it ever existed? Even if the old parchment should be voted obsolete, there would be some satisfaction in having it looked out and preserved — not in the Register-Office, or Advocates' Library, where it might awaken painful recollections — but in the Museum of the Antiquaries, where, with the Solemn League and Covenant, the Letter of the Scottish Nobles to the Pope on the independence of their country, and other antiquated documents once held in reverence, it might silently contract dust, yet remain to bear witness that such things had been.

I earnestly hope, however, that an international league of such importance may still be found obligatory on both the *high* and the *low* contracting parties; on that which has the power, and apparently the will, to break it, as well as on the weaker nation, who cannot, without incurring still worse, and more miserable consequences, oppose aggression, otherwise than by invoking the faith of treaties, and the national honour of Old England.

In the second place, all ranks and bodies of men in North Britain (for all are concerned, the poor as well as the rich,) should express by petition their sense of the injustice which is offered to the country, and the distress which will probably be the necessary consequence. Without the power of issuing their own notes, the Banks cannot supply the manufacturer with that credit

which enables him to pay his workmen, and wait his return; or accommodate the farmer with that fund which makes it easy for him to discharge his rent, and give wages to his labourers, while in the act of performing expensive operations which are to treble or quadruple the produce of his farm. The trustees on the high roads and other public works, so ready to stake their personal credit for carrying on public improvements, will no longer possess the power of raising funds by doing so. The whole existing state of credit is to be altered from top to bottom, and Ministers are silent on any remedy which such a state of things would imperiously require.

These are subjects worth struggling for, and rather of more importance than generally come before County Meetings. The English legislature seems inclined to stultify our Law Authorities in their department; but let us at least try if they will listen to the united voice of a Nation in matters which so intimately concern its welfare, that almost every man must have formed a judgment on the subject, from something like personal experience. For my part, I cannot doubt the result.

Times are undoubtedly different from those of Queen Anne, when Dean Swift having, in a political pamphlet, passed some sarcasms on the Scottish nation, as a poor and fierce people — the Scythians of Britain — the Scottish peers, headed by the Duke of Argyle, went in a body to the ministers, and compelled them to disown the sentiments which had been expressed by their partisan, and offer a reward of £300 for the author of the libel, well known to be the best advocate and most intimate friend of the existing administration. They demanded also, that the printer and publisher should be prosecuted before the House of Peers; and Harley, however unwillingly, was obliged to yield to their demand.

In the celebrated case of Porteous, the English legislature saw themselves compelled to desist from vindictive measures, on account of a gross offence committed in the metropolis of Scotland. In that of the Roman Catholic Bill, they yielded to the voice of the Scottish people, or rather of the Scottish mob, and declared the proposed alteration of the law should not extend to North Britain. The cases were different, in point of merit, though the Scots were successful in both. In the one, a boon of clemency was extorted; in the other, concession was an act of decided weakness. But ought the present administration of Great Britain to show less deference to our temperate and general remonstrance, on a matter concerning ourselves

only, than their predecessors did to the passions, and even the ill-founded and unjust prejudices, of our ancestors?

Times, indeed, have changed since those days, and circumstances also. We are no longer a poor, that is, so *very poor* a country and people; and as we have increased in wealth, we have become somewhat poorer in spirit, and more loth to incur displeasure by contests upon mere etiquette, or national prejudice. But we have some grounds to plead for favour with England. We have borne our pecuniary impositions, during a long war, with a patience the more exemplary, as they lay heavier on us from our comparative want of means — our blood has flowed as freely as that of England or of Ireland — our lives and fortunes have been as unhesitatingly devoted to the defence of the empire — our loyalty as warmly and willingly displayed towards the person of our Sovereign. We have consented with submission, if not with cheerfulness, to reductions and abolitions of public offices, required for the good of the state at large, but which must affect materially the condition, and even the respectability, of our overburdened aristocracy. We have in every respect conducted ourselves as good and faithful subjects of the general empire.

We do not boast of these things as actual merits; but they are at least duties discharged, and, in an appeal to men of honour and of judgment, must entitle us to be heard with patience, and even deference, on the management of our own affairs, if we speak unanimously, lay aside party feeling, and use the voice of one leaf of the holy Trefoil, one distinct and component part of the united kingdoms.

Let no consideration deter us from pleading our own cause temperately but firmly, and we shall certainly receive a favourable audience. Even our acquisition of a little wealth, which might abate our courage on other occasions, should invigorate us to unanimous perseverance at the present crisis, when the very source of our national prosperity is directly, though unwittingly, struck at. Our plaids are, I trust, not yet sunk into Jewish gaberdines, to be wantonly spit upon; nor are we yet bound to “receive the insult with a patient shrug.” But exertion is now demanded on other accounts than those of mere honourable punctilio. Misers themselves will struggle in defence of their property, though tolerant of all aggressions by which that is not threatened. Avarice herself, however mean-spirited, will rouse to defend the wealth she possesses, and preserve the means of gaining more. Scotland is now called upon to rally in defence of the sources of her

national improvement, and the means of increasing it; upon which, as none are so much concerned in the subject, none can be such competent judges as Scotsmen themselves.

I cannot believe so generous a people as the English, so wise an administration as the present, will disregard our humble remonstrances, merely because they are made in the form of peaceful entreaty, and not *secundum perfervidum ingenium Scotorum,* with "durk and pistol at our belt." It would be a dangerous lesson to teach the empire at large, that threats can extort what is not yielded to reasonable and respectful remonstrance.

But this is not all. The principle of "uniformity of laws," if not manfully withstood, may have other blessings in store for us. Suppose, that when finished with blistering Scotland while she is in perfect health, England should find time and courage to withdraw the veil from the deep cancer which is gnawing her own bowels, and make an attempt to stop the fatal progress of her *poor-rates.* Some system or other must be proposed in its place — a grinding one it must be, for it is not an evil to be cured by palliatives. Suppose the English, for uniformity's sake, insist that Scotland, which is at present free from this foul and shameful disorder, should nevertheless be included in the severe *treatment* which the disease demands, how would the landholders of Scotland like to undergo the scalpel and cautery, merely because England requires to be scarified?

Or again; — Supposing England should take a fancy to impart to us her sanguinary criminal code, which, too cruel to be carried into effect, gives every wretch that is condemned a chance of one to twelve that he shall not be executed, and so turns the law into a lottery — would this be an agreeable boon to North Britain?

Once more; — What if the English ministers should feel disposed to extend to us their equitable system of process respecting civil debt, which divides the advantages so admirably betwixt debtor and creditor — *That* equal dispensation of justice, which provides that an imprisoned debtor, if a rogue, may remain in undisturbed possession of a great landed estate, and enjoy in a jail all the luxuries of Sardanapalus, while the wretch to whom he owes money is starving; and that, to balance the matter, a creditor, if cruel, may detain a debtor in prison for a lifetime, and make, as the established phrase goes, *dice of his bones* — Would this admirable reciprocity of privilege, indulged alternately to knave and tyrant, please Saunders, better

than his own humane action of Cessio, and his equitable process of Adjudication?

I will not insist farther on such topics, for I dare say, that these apparent enormities in principle are, in England, where they have operation, modified and corrected in practice by circumstances unknown to me; so that, in passing judgment on them, I may myself fall into the error I deprecate, of judging of foreign laws without being aware of all the premises. Neither do I mean that we should struggle with illiberality against any improvements which can be borrowed from English principle. I would only desire that such ameliorations were adopted, not merely because they are English, but because they are suited to be assimilated with the laws of Scotland, and lead, in short, *to her evident utility,* and this on the principle, that in transplanting a tree, little attention need be paid to the character of the climate and soil from which it is brought, although the greatest care must be taken that those of the situation to which it is transplanted are fitted to receive it. It would be no reason for planting mulberry-trees in Scotland, that they luxuriate in the south of England. There is sense in the old proverb, "Ilk land has its ain lauch."

In the present case, it is impossible to believe the extension of these restrictions to Scotland can be for the *evident utility* of the country, which has prospered so long and so uniformly under directly the contrary system.

It is very probable I may be deemed illiberal in all this reasoning; but if to look for information to practical results rather than to theoretical principles, and to argue from the effect of the experience of a century, rather than the deductions of a modern hypothesis, be illiberality, I must sit down content with a censure, which will include wiser men than I. The philosophical tailors of Laputa, who wrought by mathematical calculation, had, no doubt, a supreme contempt for those humble fashioners who went to work by measuring the person of their customer; but Gulliver tells us that the worst clothes he ever wore were constructed upon abstract principles; and truly I think we have seen some laws, and may see more, not much better adapted to existing circumstances, than the captain's philosophical uniform to his actual person.

It is true, that every wise statesman keeps sound and general political principles in his eye, as the pilot looks upon his compass to discover his true course. But this true course cannot always be followed out straight and diametrically; it must be altered from time to time, nay, sometimes

apparently abandoned, on account of shoals, breakers, and headlands, not to mention contrary winds. The same obstacles occur to the course of the statesman. The point at which he aims may be important, the principle on which he steers may be just; yet the obstacles arising from rooted prejudices, from intemperate passions, from ancient practices, from a different character of people, from varieties in climate and soil, may cause a direct movement upon his ultimate object to be attended with distress to individuals, and loss to the community, which no good man would wish to occasion, and with dangers which no wise man would voluntarily choose to encounter.

Although I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been rather precipitate in the decided opinion which he is represented to have expressed on this occasion, I am far from entertaining the slightest disrespect for the right honourable gentleman. “I hear as good exclamation upon him as on any man in Messina, and though I am but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.” But a decided attachment to abstract principle, and to a spirit of generalizing is — like a rash rider on a headstrong horse — very apt to run foul of local obstacles, which might have been avoided by a more deliberate career, where the nature of the ground had been previously considered.

I make allowance for the temptation natural to an ingenious and active mind. There is a natural pride in following out an universal and levelling principle. It seems to augur genius, force of conception, and steadiness of purpose; qualities which every legislator is desirous of being thought to possess. On the other hand, the study of local advantages and impediments demands labour and inquiry, and is rewarded after all only with the cold and parsimonious praise due to humble industry. It is no less true, however, that measures which go straight and direct to a great general object, without noticing intervening impediments, must often resemble the fierce progress of the thunderbolt or the cannonball, those dreadful agents, which, in rushing right to their point, care not what ruin they make by the way. The sounder and more moderate policy, accommodating its measures to exterior circumstances, rather resembles the judicious course of a well-conducted highway, which, turning aside frequently from its direct course,

“Winds round the cornfield and the hill of vines,”

and becomes devious, that it may respect property and avoid obstacles; thus escaping even temporary evils, and serving the public no less in its more circuitous, than it would have done in its direct course.

Can you tell me, sir, if this *uniformity* of civil institutions, which calls for such sacrifices, be at all descended from, or related to, a doctrine nearly of the same name, called Conformity in religious doctrine, very fashionable about 150 years since, which undertook to unite the jarring creeds of the United Kingdom to one common standard, and excited a universal strife by the vain attempt, and a thousand fierce disputes, in which she

> "umpire sate,
> And by decision more embroil'd the fray?"

Should Uniformity have the same pedigree, Malachi Malagrowther proclaims her "a hawk of a very bad nest."

The universal opinion of a whole kingdom, founded upon a century's experience, ought not to be lightly considered as founded in ignorance and prejudice. I am something of an agriculturist; and in travelling through the country, I have often had occasion to wonder that the inhabitants of particular districts had not adopted certain obvious improvements in cultivation. But, upon inquiry, I have usually found that appearances had deceived me, and that I had not reckoned on particular local circumstances, which either prevented the execution of the system I should have theoretically recommended, or rendered some other more advantageous in the particular circumstances.

I do not therefore resist theoretical innovation in general; I only humbly desire it may not outrun the suggestions arising from the experience of ages. I would have the necessity felt and acknowledged before old institutions are demolished — the *evident utility* of every alteration demonstrated before it is adopted upon mere speculation. I submit our ancient system to the pruning-knife of the legislature, but would not willingly see our reformers employ a weapon, which, like the sword of Jack the Giant-Killer, cuts before the point.

It is always to be considered, that in human affairs, the very best imaginable result is seldom to be obtained, and that it is wise to content ourselves with the best which can be got. This principle speaks with a voice of thunder against violent innovation, for the sake of possible improvement, where things are already well. We ought not to desire better bread than is made of wheat. Our Scottish proverb warns us to *let weel bide;* and all the world has heard of the untranslateable Italian epitaph upon the man, who died of taking physic to make him better, when he was already in health.

I am, Mr. Journalist,
Yours,
Malachi Malagrowther.

Postscript.

Since writing these hasty thoughts, I hear it reported that we are to have an extension of our precarious reprieve, and that our six months are to be extended to six years. I would not have Scotland trust to this hollow truce. The measure ought, like all others, to be canvassed on its merits, and frankly admitted or rejected; it has been stirred, and ought to be decided. I request my countrymen not to be soothed into inactivity by that temporizing, and, I will say, unmanly vacillation. Government is pledged to nothing by taking an open course; for if the bill, so far as applicable to Scotland is at present absolutely laid aside, there can be no objection to their resuming it at any period, when, from change of circumstances, it may be advantageous to Scotland, and when, for what I know, it may be welcomed as a boon.

But if held over our heads as a minatory measure, to take place within a certain period, what can the event be but to cripple and ultimately destroy the present system, on which a direct attack is found at present inexpedient? Can the Bankers continue to conduct their profession on the same secure footing, with an abrogation of it in prospect? Must it not cease to be what it has hitherto been — a business carried on both for their own profit, and for the accommodation of the country? Instead of employing their capital in the usual channels, must they not in self-defence employ it in forming others? Will not the substantial and wealthy withdraw their funds from that species of commerce? And may not the place of these be supplied by men of daring adventure, without corresponding capital, who will take a chance of wealth or ruin in the evolutions of the game?

If it is the absolute and irrevocable determination that the bill is to be extended to us, the sooner the great penalty is inflicted the better; for in politics and commerce, as in all the other affairs of life, absolute and certain evil is better than uncertainty and protracted suspense.

Letter II

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February 28, 1826.

Dear Mr. Journalist,

When I last wrote to you, I own it was with the feelings of one who discharges a painful duty, merely because he feels it to be one, and without much hope of his endeavour being useful. Swift says that kingdoms may be subject to poverty and lowness of heart as well as individuals; and that in such moments they become reckless of their own interests, and contract habits of submission, which encourage those who wish to take advantage of them to prefer the most unreasonable pretensions. It was when Esau came from the harvest, faint, and at point to die, that Jacob proposed to him his exorbitant bargain of the mess of pottage. There is a deep and typical mystery under the scriptural transaction; but, taken as a simple fact, the sottish facility of the circumvented heir rather aggravates the unfeeling selfishness of the artful brother, to whom he was made a dupe. The "whoreson Apoplexy" of Scotland may be rather a case of repletion than exhaustion, but it has the same dispiriting effects.

Yet, into whatever deep and passive slumber our native country may have been lulled from habits of peaceful acquiescence, the Government have now found a way to awaken her. The knife has gone to the very quick, and the comatose patient is roused to most acute possession of his feelings and his intellect. The heather is on fire far and wide; and every man, woman, and child in the country, are bound by the duty they owe to their native land, to spread the alarm and increase the blaze.

> Jam proximus ardet
> Ucalegon — —

The city of Edinburgh has uttered a voice becoming the ancient Queen of the North. The Law Bodies, and the Gentry of Mid-Lothian, have set the example of petitioning Government, and proclaiming their sense of the measure designed; it has been followed in other counties, and I trust to see it soon spread into the smallest burghs, into the most wild districts of

Scotland. There are none which the impending misery will not reach — there are no Scotchmen so humble that they have not a share in a national insult, so lowly that they will not suffer from a national wrong — none that are uninterested in maintaining our rights both individually, and as a people — and none, I trust, that have not spirit to do so, by all legal and peaceable means.

I congratulate you, sir, on the awakened spirit of our representatives in the two Houses of Parliament. Our truehearted Duke of Athole, and Lord Lauderdale, whose acuteness and powers of thinking and reasoning may, without disparagement, be compared with those of any statesman now living, have set an example not to be forgotten; and we know that the slender proportion of aristocracy, which Scotland was left in possession of at the Union, entertain the same patriotic sentiments. We are equally assured of the faith of our representatives in the Lower House, and they on their part may believe they will not serve an ungrateful public. Scotland expects from them the exertions corresponding to their high trust — a trust of which they must render an account to their constituents, and that very shortly. Let every body of electors, from Dumfries to Dingwall, instruct its representative upon their own sentiments, and upon the conduct which they desire he should hold during this great national crisis; and let the Administration be aware, that if any of our members should desert the public cause on this occasion, they are not like to have the benefit of their implicit homage in the next Parliament. Burns's address to them in jest, is language which may now be held to the Scottish representatives in serious earnest: —

> "Does ony great man glunch and gloom,
> Speak out and never fash your thumb;
> Let posts and pensions sink or soom
> Wi' those wha grant them;
> If honestly they cannot come,
> Far better want them."

I have been told by some cautious friends, that the time for such remonstrances as I do most earnestly recommend to our Scottish representatives, would be now more unfavourable than formerly — so unfavourable, that they represent the case as desperate. Admitting all I had said in my first epistle, these *douce* men see no resource but in the most submissive acquiescence to the commands of those in whose breasts, they

say, is now lodged the uncontrolled power to listen to reason, justice, nay, compassion, or to prefer the exercise of their own pleasure to the dictates of them all. Your birthright, proceed these Job's comforters, will be taken from you at all events by superior numbers. Yield it up, therefore, with a good grace, and thank God if they give you a mess of pottage in return — it will be just so much gain. These desponding persons explain the state of total insignificance into which, they say, we have fallen, by a reference to the Irish Union, which has added an hundred more members to Parliament; so that the handful assigned to Scotland (which never possessed a very influential power in the House, so far as numbers go,) must now altogether lose consideration, in opposition to the majorities of a peremptory Minister, who, like the "merciless Macdonald,"

> "from the Western Isle,
> With Kernes and Gallowglasses is supplied."

It requires but little arithmetic to compute, that the fated number, fortyfive, bears a less proportion to six hundred and thirteen than to five hundred and thirteen, the number of the House of Commons at the time of the Scottish Union. Yet, sir, I am not altogether discouraged with this comfortless prospect. I think I can see means of relief arising even out of the very difficulties of the case. Let us regard the matter somewhat more closely.

In the first place, I will consider what we can do by our present Scottish representation, — our own proper force. Next, I will have a friendly word or two with those same auxiliaries of Ireland, whom, perhaps, the Sassenagh may find less implicit followers in the present case, than my chicken-hearted advisers apprehend. Lastly, I will address myself to the English members, and especially to such who, on great occasions, prefer the exercise of their own understanding to an absolute and obsequious deference to the dictates of an administration, however much they may respect the statesmen of whom it is composed, or are disposed to acquiesce in the general principles on which they act.

Upon the first point I beg to remind you, that much greater effect is derived from the decided, conjoined, and simultaneous exertion of a comparatively small force, than from the efforts of a more numerous body, not bound together by the same strong ties of duty and necessity. Battles have been often gained, and political measures have been as frequently

carried, by the determined urgency, or no less determined resistance, of a comparatively insignificant number.

Nos numerus sumus, is a logical argument perfectly understood by an English minister, and has had great weight in the scale. I will give a ludicrous instance of this. There was of old a certain nobleman, who, by means of certain boroughs, sent certain members to Westminster, which members, being there, were certain to hold the same opinions with the Noble Lord, and to vote in the House of Commons exactly to the same tune as his lordship in the House of Peers. The Great Man, who was the animating soul of this Holy Alliance, had occasion to ask some favour of Government. It was probably something very unreasonable — at any rate, it was so disagreeable to the minister, that, I am told, he would as soon have relished the proposal of giving silver for a twenty-shilling note of the Bank of Scotland. The Minister made civil excuses — the peer observed in reply — We are seven votes — The minister stopped, cleared his throat, changed his argument — We are seven voices, was again the only answer — The Great Man, usually flattered, became flatterer in his turn — he conjured — he even threatened — The peer was as unassailable, in his numerical proposition, by entreaty or argument, as the sweet little rustic girl in a poem which it is almost a sin to parody —

> "Whate'er the minister could say
> The Noble Lord would have his way,
> And said, Nay, we are seven. "

They parted on these terms. The Minister retired to rest, and dreamed that he saw the pertinacious Peer advancing to storm the cabinet, after having, like the great magician Kehama, broke himself up into seven subdivisions of equal strength, and by means of this extraordinary process of multiplication, advancing to his daring enterprise by seven avenues at once. The vision was too horrible — and a "private and confidential" note gave the necessary assurance to the Noble Lord, that the magical number Seven had as much weight in Saint Stephen's, as Dr. Slop assigns to it in the Catholic mysteries; so the seven planets continue to move regularly in their political orbit.

This is a strong proof, sir, of the *vis unita fortior*, and contains a good lesson for our Representatives upon the present occasion. It would be strange, indeed, if they, to whom their country has given her confidence,

should hesitate to save her from dishonour and deep distress, which may approach nigh to ruin [I will make my words good before I have done,] when it is only necessary that they should be as determined and inflexible, where the safety of an ancient kingdom is concerned, as the selfish old borough-jobber and his political friends showed themselves pertinacious, in pursuit of some wretched personal object of private advantage.

The Scottish members of Parliament should therefore lose no time — not an instant — in uniting together in their national character of the Representatives of Scotland. If the scene were to be the British Coffeehouse, the hour halfpast six o'clock p.m., and the preliminaries of business a few glasses of claret to national toasts, I should not have the worse opinion of the sense of the meeting. Their first resolution should be, to lay aside every party distinction which can interfere with the present grand object, of arresting a danger so evident, so general, so imminent. It may be at first an awkward thing for Whig and Tory to draw kindly together; for any of the natural Scottish spirit which is left among us has been sadly expended in feeding a controversy in which we must always play a subordinate part, and these party distinctions have become far too much a matter of habit to us on both sides to be easily laid aside. Indeed, we poor Scotsmen are so conscious that our civil wars are but paltry and obscure episodes in the great political quarrel, that we have usually endeavoured to attract attention, and excite an idea of their importance, by the personal violence and noisy ferocity with which we wage them. We, the Whigs and Tories of Scotland, have played in our domestic quarrels the respectable part of two bulldogs, who think it necessary to go by the ears under the table, because their blue-sleeved beef-eating masters have turned up for a set-to. The quadrupeds worry each other inveterately, while not a soul notices them, till the strife of the bipeds is appeased or decided, and then the bleeding and foaming curs are kicked separate by their respective owners. We play among the great *dramatis personæ* the part of *Mob on both sides,* who enter and scuffle in the back scene, and shout so that their cries at least may be heard, since no one will attend to any thing which they say in articulate language. You may have been a bottleholder of this kind, Mr. Journalist, to one or other of the great parties. I am sure I have, and I daresay may have sometimes made mischief, though I have oftener endeavoured to prevent it; for, like the good knight Jacques de Lalain, " De feu bouter ne voulois — je être consentant. " Still, however limited my

share may have been in those jars, I have lived to see the day when I must regret bitterly my having had the slightest accession to them, could I conceive the opinions of so obscure an individual may have added gall to the bitterness which has estranged Scotsmen from each other. Let these follies be ended; and do not let us, like our ancestors at Falkirk, fall to jealousies among ourselves, when heart, and voice, and hand, should be united against the foreign *enemy.* I was about to erase the last word; but let it remain, with this explanation — that the purpose of this invasion of our rights is acknowledged to be kind and friendly; but as the measure is unauthorised by justice, conducted without regard to the faith of treaties, and contrary to our national privileges, we cannot but term the enterprise a hostile one. When Henry VIII. despatched a powerful invading army to compel the Scots to give the hand of their young Queen Mary to his son Edward, an old Scottish nobleman shrewdly observed, "He might like the match well enough, but could not brook the mode of wooing." We equally are sensible of England's goodwill, we only do not relish the mode in which it is at present exhibited.

The Scottish Members having thus adopted a healing ordinance, reconciled their party quarrels or laid them aside for the time, would by that very act decide the fate of their country; and when drinking to concord among Scotsmen of all political opinions,

> "In the cup an *Union* shall they throw
> Better than that which four successive kings
> In Britain's crown have worn."

Thus united, sir, their task will be a very easy one. Let each, in his own style, and with the degree of talent, from plain common sense up to powerful eloquence, with which he chances to be gifted, state to Administration the sentiments of his constituents, and those of his own breast; let it be perfectly understood that the representatives of Scotland speak in the name of their country, and are determined, one and all, to see the threatened and obnoxious measure departed from, and till that time to enter into no public business, — I cannot help thinking that such a remonstrance, in a case of vital importance to Scotland, and of such trifling consequence to England, would be of itself perfectly sufficient. But if not, our representatives must stand firm. I would advise that, to all such intimations as are usually circulated, bearing, "That your presence is

earnestly requested on such an evening of the debate, as such or such a public measure is coming on," the concise answer should be returned, " We are five-and-forty; " and that no Scottish members do on such occasions attend — unless it be those who feel themselves conscientiously at liberty to vote against Government on the division. Is this expecting too much from our countrymen, on whom we have devolved so absolutely the charge of our rights, the duty of stating our wrongs? We exclaim to them in the language of the eloquent Lord Belhaven — "Should not the memory of our noble predecessors' valour and constancy rouse up our drooping spirits? Are our brave ancestors' souls got so far into the English cabbage-stock and cauliflower, that we should show the least inclination that way? Are our eyes so blinded — Are our ears so deafened — Are our hearts so hardened — Are our tongues so faltered — Are our hands so fettered, that, in this our day — I say, my countrymen, in this our day, we should not mind the things that concern the wellbeing, nay, the very being, of our ancient kingdom, before the day be hid from our eyes?" If there is, among that chosen band, a mean-spirited Scotsman, who prefers the orders of the minister to the unanimous voice of his country, imploring the protection of her children, let England keep him to herself. Such a man is deaf even to the voice of self-interest, as well as of patriotism. He cannot be a Scotch proprietor — he hazards his own rents; he cannot be a Scotsman employed in commerce — he undermines his own trade; he cannot be a professional person — he sacrifices the law of his country; he cannot be a Scottish man in spirit — he betrays the honour of Scotland. Let him go out from among us — he is not of us. Let him, I say, remain in England, and we wish her joy of such a denizen. Let him have his title and his pension — for the cur deserves his collar and his bone. But do not let him come back to Scotland, where his presence will be as unwelcome to us, as our reception may be ungratifying to him.

It is needless to say, that what Scotland demands from her representatives in the House of Commons, she expects, with equal confidence and ardour, from the small, but honourable portion of the Upper House, who draw their honours from her ancient domains. Their ancestors have led her armies, concluded her treaties, managed her government, served her with hand and heart, sword and pen; and by such honourable merit with their country, have obtained the titles and distinctions which they have transmitted to the present race, by whom, we are well assured, they

will be maintained with untarnished honour. A Scottish lord will dare all, save what is dishonourable; and whom among them could we suspect of deserting the Parent of his Honours, at the very moment when she is calling upon him for his filial aid? Sir, I pledge myself, ere I am done, to give such a picture of the impending distress of this country, that a Scotsman, and especially a Scottish nobleman, would need to take opium and mandragora, should he hope to slumber, after having been accessary to bringing it on. If the voice of the public in streets and highways did not cry shame on his degeneracy, even inanimate objects would find a voice of reprobation. The stones of his ancient castle would speak, and the portraits of his ancestors would frown and look black upon him, as he wandered in his empty halls, now deprived of the resort of the rich, and the homage of the vassal. But I have no fear of this. A little indolence — a little indifference — may have spread itself among our young men of rank; it is the prevailing fashion and fault of the day. But the trumpet of war has always chased away such lethargic humours; and the cry of their common country, that invocation which Scotland now sends forth from one end of the land to the other, is a summons yet more imperious, and will be, I am confident, as promptly obeyed.

It may be said, that the measures which I venture to recommend to our Scottish representatives, of tacking, as it were, their Petition of Rights, to every other measure, and making it, so far as they can, a *sine qua non* to their accommodation with Government, may be the means of interrupting the general business of the empire.

To this objection I reply, *First,* that I only recommend such a line of conduct as an *ultimum remedium,* after every other and milder mode of seeking redress shall have been resorted to, and exhausted without effect. *Secondly,* In case of need it cannot be denied, that the plan proposed is a Parliamentary remedy, and corresponds with the conduct of patriots upon former occasions, when they conceived that the magnitude of the object in view warranted their making the most vigorous efforts to obtain it. *Thirdly,* It will not be difficult to demonstrate, that, whatever prejudice may be suffered from a temporary delay of other business, it will be incalculably less than the evil, which will infallibly ensue upon the obnoxious measure in question being adopted; an evil, the effect of which cannot be confined to Scotland alone (for no component part of the empire can have sufferings so local, that the consequences do not extend to the others,) but must reach

England and Ireland also. When a limb of the human body is disjointed or broken, the whole frame must feel the effect of it.

But to return to the opinion of my cautious friends, who believed that the proportional numbers of the Scottish Members being so small, compared to those of England and Ireland, no good issue could be hoped from their exertions, however united, however zealous. I reply, that their country is entitled to expect from them resistance in her behalf, not only while a spark of hope remains, but when that last spark is extinguished. There is no room for compromise or surrender. Our statesmen of to-day must be like our soldiers in ages past —

> "They must fight till their hand to the broadsword is glued,
> They must fight against fortune with heart unsubdued."

If they do so, not only will they play the part of true men and worthy patriots, but they will procure that sort of weight with their constituents which will enable them to be useful, and, with the blessing of God, effectual mediators, in what, I fear, is likely to prove a very distracted time and country.

But besides this, I can tell my timorous friends, as Hotspur does his cautious correspondent — "Out of this nettle Danger we pluck the flower Safety." I do not think the Imperial Parliament consisting, as it now does, of deputies from every kingdom of the Union, is so likely to take a hasty and partial view of any appeal from Scotland, as it might have been when we had to plead our cause before the Parliament of Great Britain only. I trust we should in no case have been treated unjustly or harshly, and I will presently state my reasons for thinking that we should not; but arguing the question on the illiberal and almost calumnious idea, that, if not confuted in argument, we were in danger to be borne down by force of numbers, I should derive hope, not fear, from the introduction of the third Kingdom into the discussion.

Betwixt Scotland and England, Mr. Journalist, there have been, as you are aware, ancient causes of quarrel, lulled to sleep during the last fifty years, until of late, when a variety of small aggressions, followed by the present seven-leagued stride, show that perhaps they have not been so fully forgotten by our neighbours as we thought in our simplicity, and that the English Ministers may not be indisposed to take the opportunity of our torpidity to twitch out our fang-teeth, however necessary for eating our

victuals, in case we should be inclined, at some unlucky moment, to make a different use of them. Or, the line of conduct of which we complain, may be compared to a wellknown operation resorted to for taming the ferocity of such male animals as are intended for domestication, and to be employed in patient drudgery. The animal becomes fat, patient, sleek, and in so far is benefited by the operation; but had his previous consent been required, I wonder what the poor Scotch stot would have said?

Patrick, my warm-hearted and shrewd friend, how should you like this receipt for domestication, should it travel your way? You have your own griefs, and your own subjects of complaint, — are you willing to lose the power of expressing them with energy? You have only to join with the Ministry on this debate — you have only to show in what light reverence you are willing to hold the articles of an Union not much above a century old, and then you will have time to reflect at leisure upon the consequences of such an example. In such a case, when your turn comes (and come, be sure, it will,) you will have signed your own sentence. You will have given the fatal precedent to England of the annihilation of a solemn treaty of incorporating Union, and afforded the representatives of Scotland vindictive reasons for retaliating upon you the injury which you aided England in inflicting upon us. Whereas — step this way, Pat — and see there is nobody listening — why should not you and we have a friendly understanding, and assist each other, as the weaker parties, against any aggressions, which may be made upon either of us, "for uniformity's sake?" — Your fathers are called by our Scottish kings, "Their ancient friends of the Erischerie of Eirland," and for my part I have little doubt that Malachi, who wore the collar of gold, must have been an ancestor of my own. Now, what say you to a league offensive and defensive, against all such measures as tend to the suppression of any just right belonging to either country, in virtue of the Articles of Union respectively? — You are a scholar, Pat —

" Tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet. "

Between ourselves, Patrick, John Bull is, not unnaturally, desirous of having rather more than his own share in managing the great national coach-and-six. He will drive four-in-hand; and though he has hitherto allowed you a postilion of your own, yet in some scheme of economy he may dismiss him if you do not look sharp, and drive the whole set of six horses himself. It is different portions of their ancient independence which are reserved to Scotland and Ireland by their respective treaties of union.

Scotland retained her ancient laws, and Ireland a typical representation of her national sovereignty. But both rights are held by the same tenure, and if Ireland set an example, by aiding a gross infringement of the Scottish Union — if she aid England, in destroying for mere humour — I beg pardon, for mere "uniformity's sake," — every little mark of independence which is left us — if she countenance the obvious desire which exhibits itself to break down all peculiar privileges due to the separate nations of the union, to engross the whole management in Boards, which, sitting in London, and begirt by Englishmen, are to dispense the patronage, and direct the improvements, of another nation of the Union, Ireland will accelerate her own then unpitied degradation. What is our case to-day, brothers of Erin, will be yours the instant you have got a little tranquillity, — are caught napping — and are in condition to have the aforesaid ceremony practised upon you without danger — I mean danger to the operator, for peril to the creature itself is of no consequence. I see you grasp your shilellah at the very thought! Enough; we understand each other: Let us be friends. Patrick aids Saunders to-day; Saunders pays back Patrick tomorrow, or I will throw away my thistle, burn my St. Andrew's cross, and disclaim my country!

But what do I talk of to-day or tomorrow? The cause of Ireland is tried along with that of Scotland. She stands, at this very moment, at the bar beside her sister, and the prohibitory decree passed against the system of currency, which has spread universal fertility through Scotland, is extended to Ireland at the very moment when she proposed to have recourse to it, as well suited to the improvement of her rich soil, and promising the extension of means of cultivation, where cultivation is so greatly wanted, and would be so productive in the return. I am certain that I am correct in saying, that, in the course of last summer, there were several banking companies on the Scottish plan on the point of being established in different parts of Ireland, and Scotsmen of experience, capable of understanding and directing such establishments, were eagerly sought for, and invited over to act as superintendents. Whether the system which had been so eminently successful in Scotland might be found quite as well qualified for the meridian of Ireland, it would be great presumption in me to decide. But it is very likely that success would ensue, provided too much were not expected at once, and that the requisite discretion were used in bounding the issue of notes, and the grants of credit. More or less probable, it was at least an experiment which Ireland had apparently a perfect right to make, an

experiment by which she might reasonably hope to profit; and if she was willing to undertake it at her own risk, I can conceive nothing more unjust than preventing her from doing so — excepting always the still greater iniquity of interdicting in Scotland a system, the benefit of which has been proved by a century's experience, during all which period it has been attended with advantage, but in the last fifty years with the most brilliant success.

Ireland is, therefore, called upon to interfere on this occasion, not merely by the chance of standing, at some no very distant period, in the very predicament in which Scotland is now placed, but from the stake which she herself has in the question at issue. She cannot but remember that Rome subjected the free states around her much less by the force which was actually her own, than by the use which she made of those whom she had rendered her tools under the name of auxiliaries. The Batavians were employed in the conquest of Britain, the flower of the Britons were carried off from their native country, that they might help to subjugate the Germans. But such a policy, were it entertained, is not likely to deceive nations in the present age, when statesmen are judged of not more by the measure which they mete to countries less capable of resistance, than by that which they use in dealing towards one upon whom it may not be immediately convenient to inflict the same unjust terms.

Ireland may read her future fate in that of Scotland, as in a mirror. Does she still continue to entertain any wish of imitating the Scottish system? The measure of interdiction about to be passed against her renders it impossible. Does she still expect to be occasionally consulted in the management of her own affairs? She may lay aside for ever that flattering hope, unjess she makes common cause with her sister of Scotland, where every human being in the nation is entreating and imploring that dearest privilege of a free country. Finally, let us have a word of explanation with England herself.

And first let me say, that although the urgent necessity of the case requires that it should be pleaded in every possible form which its advocates can devise — although I press upon Scotland the necessity of being importunate, steady, and unanimous — although I show to Ireland the deep interest which she also must feel in the question at issue, yet it is to England herself, and to her representatives in Parliament, that, taking upon me, however unworthy, to speak for my Country, when the task is perhaps

an obnoxious one, I make my most immediate, and I trust not an ineffectual appeal.

The motto of my epistle may sound a little warlike; but, in using it, * I have only employed the

* It was the following verse of an old song: —

> When the pipes begin to play
> *Tutti taittie* to the drum,
> Out claymore, and down wi' gun,
> And to the rogues again.

I have laid it aside in this edition, some cautious friends thinking it liable to misinterpretation. — S. The Motto had been sharply criticized by Mr. Croker. — Ed.

summons which my countrymen have been best accustomed to obey. Saunders, if it please your honours, has been so long unused to stand erect in your honours' presence, that, if I would have him behave like a man, I must (like Sir Lucius O'Trigger backing Bob Acres) slap him on the shoulder, and throw a word in every now and then about his *honour.* But it is not a hostile signal towards you. The drums beat to *arms* and the trumpets sound *Heraus,* as well when the soldiers are called out for a peaceful as for a military object. And, which is more to the purpose, the last time the celebrated Fiery Cross was circulated in the Highlands, (it was in the country of the Grants,) the clansmen were called forth not to fight an enemy, but to stop the progress of a dreadful conflagration which had been kindled in the woods. To my countrymen I speak in the language of many recollections, certain they are not likely to be excited beyond the bounds of temperate and constitutional remonstrance, but desirous, by every effort in my, power, to awaken them to a sense of their national danger.

England — were it mine to prescribe the forms, my native country ought to address nearly in the words of her own Mason, mangled, I fear, in my recollection —

> "Sister, to thee no ruder spell
> Will Scotland use, than those that dwell
> In soft Persuasion's notes, and lie
> Twined with the links of Harmony. "

Let us, therefore, my countrymen, make a proper and liberal allowance for the motives of the Ministers and their friends on this occasion. We ought not to be susprised that English statesmen, and Englishmen in general, are not altogether aware of the extent of the Scottish privileges, or that they do not remember, with the same accuracy as ourselves, that we have a system of laws peculiar to us, secured by treaties. These peculiarities have not, by any question lately agitated, been placed under their view and recollection. As one race grows up, and another dies away, remembrances which are cherished by the weaker party in a national treaty, are naturally forgotten by the stronger, and viewed, perhaps, as men look upon an old boundary stone, half-sunk in earth, half-overgrown with moss, and attracting no necessary attention, until it is appealed to as a proof of property. Such antiquated barriers are not calculated immediately to arrest the progress of statesmen intent upon some favourite object, any more than, when existing on the desolate mountain in their physical shape, such a bound-mark as I have described, always checks the eagerness of a stranger upon the moors, in keen and close pursuit of his game. But explain to the ardent young Southern sportsman that he trespasses upon the manor of another — convince the English statesman that he cannot advance his favourite object without infringing upon national right, — and, according to my ideas of English honour and good faith, the one will withdraw his foot within the boundary of private property, with as much haste as if he trode on burning marle; the other will curb his views of public good, and restrain even those within the limits which are prescribed by public faith. They will not, in either case, forget the precepts so often reiterated in Scripture, fenced there with a solemn anathema, and received as matter of public jurisprudence by the law of every civilized country — "Remove not the old landmark, and enter not into the fields of the fatherless." The high and manly sense of justice by which the English nation has been honourably distinguished through the world, will not, I am certain, debase itself by aggression towards a people, which is not indeed incapable of defending itself, but which, though fearless of inequality, and regardless of threats, is yet willing to submit even to wrong, rather than hazard the fatal consequences to be incurred by obstinate defence, *via facti,* of its just rights. We make the sense of English justice and honour our judge; and surely it would be hard to place us in a situation where our own sense of general mischief, likely to ensue to the empire, may be the only check upon the sentiments which

brave men feel, when called on to defend their national honour. There would be as little gallantry in such an aggression, as in striking a prisoner on parole.

It is to explain more particularly to the English nation, the real and deep reason which Scotland has to combat the present purpose of Ministers, that I have chiefly undertaken this Second Epistle.

I have stated in my former Letter, that the system respecting the currency, which is now about to be abrogated, has been practised in Scotland for about one hundred and thirty years, with the greatest advantage to the country and inhabitants. I have also shown from the Treaty of Union, that it cannot be altered, unless the preliminary is established to the conviction of Parliament, that the alteration is for the evident advantage *of the subjects in Scotland.* No advantage, evident or remote, has ever been hinted at, so far as Scotland is concerned: it has only been said, that it will be advantageous to England, to whose measures Scotland must be conformable, as a matter of course, though in the teeth of the article stipulated by our Commissioners, and acceded to by those of England, at the time of the Union. I have therefore gained my cause in any fair Court.

But protesting that I have done enough to entitle me to a judgment, I have no objection to go a step farther; and, taking on myself a burden of proof, which could not be justly imposed on me, I am willing to explain, in a general and popular manner, the peculiar nature of the paper currency in Scotland, and especially the guards and protections by which it is secured against such evil consequences as have resulted in England from a system the same in name, but operating very differently in practice.

The people of Scotland are by no means, as a hasty view of their system of currency might infer, liable to be imposed upon, or to suffer loss, through the rash and crude speculations of any man, or association of men, who, without adequate capital and experience, might choose to enter into a Banking concern, and issue their own notes.

The Banking Companies of Scotland, who take on themselves the issuing of notes, are, no doubt, independent of each other so far as they severally contract with the public; but a certain course of correspondence and mutual understanding is indispensable among themselves, and, in that respect, the whole Banks and Banking Companies in Scotland may be said to form a republic, the watchful superintendence of the whole profession being extended to the strength or weakness of the general system at each

particular point; or, in other words, to the management of each individual Company.

No new Banking institution can venture to issue notes to the public, till they have established a full understanding that these notes will be received as cash by the other Banks. Without this facility, an issue of notes would never take place, since, if issued, they could have no free or general currency. It is not the interest of the established Banks to raise rivals in their own profession, and it is directly contrary to that interest to accept of payment in the notes of a new Company, to whose responsibility there occurs any shadow of doubt. They, therefore, only agree to give currency to such new issues, where satisfactory information has been obtained of the safety of affording it. The public have, in this manner, the best possible guarantee against rash and ill-concocted speculations, from those who are not only best informed on the subject, but, being most interested in examining each new project of the kind, are least likely to be betrayed into a rash confidence, and have the power of preventing a doubtful undertaking at the very outset.

The circulation of a Scottish Banking Company, when once established, cannot maintain itself a week without redeeming its pledge to the Banks which receive its notes, by taking them up, and replacing the value either in the notes of such Banks reciprocally, or in specie. A check is thus imposed, which is continually in operation, and every Bank throughout Scotland is obliged to submit its circulation, twice a-week in Edinburgh, to the inspection of this Argus-eyed tribunal. Satisfactory information that any distant Banking Companies were leaving the safe and moderate walk of commerce, and embarking their capital in precarious speculations, would very soon draw upon them the suspicion of the moneyed interest at large, and certainly put a period to their existence before it could injure the public.

This important species of check is unknown to the practice of England; nay, it is probably impossible to establish it there, since the metropolis which is naturally the common point of union, is nearly inaccessible to the notes of private Banking Companies. In stating a circumstance, not perhaps generally known, I may perhaps remove some of the prejudice which has extended towards the Scottish system, as if exposed to the same inconveniences with that of the sister kingdom.

The cash-credits, as they are called, are a most important feature in our banking system, and, as I believe, entirely peculiar to it.

The nature of the transaction is the simplest possible. A person, either professional, engaged in commerce or manufactures, or otherwise so situated as to render an occasional command of money convenient, obtains a cash account to an extent proportioned to his funds, either by pledging his house, shop, or other real property, or by giving the bank two sufficient sureties to be answerable for the balance, if any, which shall be due to the company when the account is closed. The holder of the cash-credit is then entitled to draw on the banker for such sums as he may occasionally need, within its limits. He lodges, on the other hand, with the bank, such cash as he may from time to time receive from the returns of his business, or otherwise. Interest is calculated on the advances drawn from the bank at five per cent., on the customer's deposits at three per cent. only, and the account is finally balanced twice a-year. The interest varies according to the general rate of the money-market. I have stated it upon the general and legal rate, which it never does or can exceed.

This very simple accommodation is so general through Scotland, that no undertaking of the slightest magnitude is entered into without sufficient funds being provided in this manner, in order that the expense may be maintained without inconvenience until the profits come round. By means of such credits, the merchant carries on his trade, the agriculturist manages his farm, the professional man discharges the advances necessary in his business and the landed gentleman maintains his credit, and pays his way, while waiting for the tardy return of his rents. The trustees who conduct public works have recourse to the same accommodation. Scarce any one who is not too rich to need an occasional advance (a case very rare in Scotland,) or too poor to obtain credit, but is provided and acts upon some cash-account of this kind, being a sort of fluctuating system of borrowing and lending. In the former case, the customer borrows of the bank the advances which he needs, in such sums and at such times as they are necessary; whereas, without such mutual accommodation, the loan must have been borrowed in an entire sum, and paid up at once, though in the former case it included more money than was immediately wanted; and, in the latter, the settlement of the whole demand at once might be untimely and inconvenient.

Supposing the money lodged to exceed the amount of the credit, the customer becomes a creditor to the banker for the balance due to him, and receives a stated interest for it; while, at the same time, it lies, as in an

ordinary deposit-account, at his immediate command. This system is, no doubt, liable, like every thing earthly, to abuse. But the general prosperity of the country, managed almost entirely on such an arrangement betwixt those who deal in capital, and those who need the use of it, has shown that the partial abuse bears no proportion to the universal advantage. The system has, in its exercise, been, as Shakspeare says of mercy, " twice blessed. " It has prospered both with the giver and the taker; and while the holder of the account has been enabled to derive wealth from schemes which he could not otherwise have executed, the increasing funds of the banker, and his additional power of serving the country, and aiding, in similar instances, the progress of general improvement, add to the sum of national riches.

It is also to be observed, that the intimate connexion between the bankers who grant, and the respectable individuals who hold cash-credits, from £100 to £1000 and upwards, tends greatly to the security of the former. These customers, of whom each thriving bank possesses many, are the chief holders and disposers of notes; and, linked as they are with the banks who grant the accommodation, by mutual advantage, they have both the interest and credit necessary to quash any unreasonable alarm, and secure the company against what is called a run, a circumstance to which Scottish banks have never been materially exposed, and which is not very consistent with the character of the people.

These undeniable facts afford, so far as Scotland is concerned, a decisive confutation to an argument which has been advanced, for abrogating the issue of small notes. It has been alleged, that such issues being chiefly in the hands of the lower classes, these were agitated easily by rumours, and they became the occasion of the *runs* above-mentioned, by which the banking companies are ruined; as men are crushed to death in a crowd, when those around them are agitated by some cause, very likely a vain one, of panic terror. In itself, it seems, that depriving men of a lucrative branch of their profession, merely because, under certain circumstances, it may become dangerous to their stability, is very like the receipt of Sheepface in the farce, who kills his master's sheep to prevent their dying. But, in Scotland, there exists not the least approach to the disease, which it seems necessary to anticipate in so desperate a manner; for the apprehended *runs* on Scotch banks, by the holders of small notes, have never taken place, and from the assigned reasons, are never likely to do so. But should such an event occur, the interference of the banks' customers, parties so much

interested, would stop such a headlong movement, as a strong and well-ordered police would prevent the fatal agitations of a mob, ere they trode each other to death.

The general principle of the Credits thus granted is one which, in a poor country at least, or among poor traders, is highly desirable. It affords the farmer, trader, or country gentleman, a convenient and equitable means of pledging their property for a fund of credit to conduct their undertakings. It resembles in principle, though on a much more equitable and liberal footing, the impignoration of moveables, which affords facilities, without which the small, yet indispensable branches of traffic, could not be carried on. Let us, in due humility, follow out a comparison at which our pride might be justly revolted. In London, and other great cities, the market-women, and persons of that description, are constantly in the practice of raising a small credit, by pledging their little articles of value, whether ornaments or wearing apparel, or the like, on which they maintain their trade till Saturday brings the weekly returns, when the ornaments are redeemed from the pawnbrokers, worn perhaps on the Sunday, and returned to *lavender* (as the phrase goes) on the next Monday. It is now many years since some well-disposed and benevolent persons, becoming aware of this practice, were shocked and scandalized at the extent of the interest exacted from those poor people, and made or proposed a law for rendering this course of pawnbroking illegal. Sir, the general mass of misery which was about to attend on the well-meant interference of the Legislature, was so evident and so alarming, that the measure was either departed from ere it was completed, or repealed immediately, I forget which.

Paulo majora — The principle is in effect the very same on which, to restore public credit, the Bank of England itself is about to advance three millions of money on the security of mercantile commodities.

In the same way, we have in Scotland got into the regular habit of pledging our credit in the manner above described, for the purpose of raising a disposable capital. The advantage obtained by both parties is very equitably balanced; but, were it as iniquitous as that of the most grinding pawnbroker, still habit and manners have rendered it absolutely indispensable to us; and when a general source of credit is forcibly snatched from a country which has relied on it so long, you literally wrest the crutch from the infirm, because, in your mind, it is not of a handsome fashion.

After all, is it not just that we, the party concerned, should be admitted to have a preponderating vote in this matter? If we are eventually losing by adhering to an old and tried system, we can blame no one, but must suffer for our own obstinacy; but if Scotland is to be reduced to distress by having a system forced upon her which she is unable to maintain or carry on, who is to answer for the evils it may bring upon us?

It is by the profit arising upon issuing their small notes, that the bankers are enabled to make the beneficial advances which custom has now rendered nearly indispensable to the carrying on business of almost any kind in Scotland. Above all, without that profit, the bankers could not, as hitherto, continue to allow a rateable interest on money deposited in their hands. Let us take a hasty view of some of the advantages attached to this peculiarity of the system.

The general convenience of the banker affording interest upon deposits is obvious. It is much more convenient to the individual to receive some interest for his ready cash, than that it should lie idle in his desk; and its being thus put into a productive state, instead of remaining an unproductive capital, must be much more useful to the country. This needs no commentary.

It has, besides, tended much to the diminution of crime in Scotland. We have forgot the period preceding the banking system, but it is easily recalled. Look at the old magazines or newspapers, during the time when the currency was chiefly maintained by specie, a ready temptation to the ruffian — the murder of graziers and dealers returning from fairs where they had sold their cattle, was a not infrequent occurrence. Farmhouses of the better class, as well as gentlemen's baronial residences, were defended by bars on the windows, upper and under, like those of a prison; yet these houses were often broken open by daring gangs, to possess themselves of the hoards which the tenant must have then kept beside him against rent-day, and his landlord, for the current expense of his household. At present — Cantabit vacuus — the drover or grazier has a banker's receipt for the price of his cattle, in the old almanack which serves him for a pocketbook, and fears no robbery — while the farmhouse, or manor, is secure from the attack of ruffians, who are like to find no metal there more precious than the tongs and poker.

Passing over the tendency of the present system to prevent crime, I come to its influence in recommending industry and virtue; and I am

confident in stating, that the degree of morality, sobriety. and frugality, which is admitted to exist in Scotland, has been much fostered, though certainly not entirely produced, by the banks' allowing interest on small sums, which, if the present prohibitory measure passes, they will be no longer in a capacity to afford. Let the effect of such a violent change be considered merely in respect to the lowest order of depositors, who lodge in the bank from the sum of ten pounds to fifty. The first motive to save, among petty tradesmen, mechanics, farm-servants, domestics, and the like, is the delight of forming a productive capital; and in that class, the habit of saving and of frugality is the foundation of a sober, well-regulated, and useful society. Every judicious farmer scruples to repose perfect reliance in a farm-servant or a labourer, till he knows that he is possessed of a capital of a few pounds in some neighbouring bank; and when that is once attained, the man becomes tenfold steady and trustworthy. Instances have occurred, to my certain knowledge, before the time of the Savings-Banks, where the master, to hasten this advantageous step in his dependent's life, would advance a servant of character a little money to complete a deposit, when the man's savings did not amount to ten pounds, which is the least sum received by the Banks. And, by the way, it is not easy to see how these excellent institutions, the Savings-Banks themselves, can be continued in Scotland, if interest is no longer allowed by the general Bank; for we are at too great a distance to avail ourselves of the Public Funds for that purpose.

At any rate, the cessation of payment of interest by the Banks, attendant on the abolishing the issue of small notes, would greatly injure, if not effectually destroy, the formation of those virtuous and frugal habits, which are as essential to the class of society a little richer than that to which the Savings-Banks apply, as to the inferior description to whom these invaluable institutions afford encouragement and protection.

What is a poor hind or shepherd to do with his £20 or £30, the laborious earnings of his life, and which he looks to, under God, for keeping his widow and family from the parish, if bankers can no longer afford him some interest for the use of it? Where is he to get decent security for his petty capital? He will either be swindled out of it by some rascally attorney, or coaxed to part with it to some needy relation — in either case, never to see it more. It is difficult enough, oven at present, for masters, who take an interest in their servants' welfare, to, get them to place their money safe in the bank; if this resource is taken away, where is it to be lodged, with any

chance of security? But I think I can guess its fate, friend Journalist. The Banks will be forcing back on the hands of the shepherd or farm-servant his deposit, just at the time when they are unwillingly distressing his master for the balance on his cash-account, called up before his well-judged, but half-executed improvements, undertaken on the faith of the continued credit, have become productive. The farmer will, in the hour of need and pressure, borrow the petty capital of his servant; he will be unable to repay it; and then, when the distress becomes chin-deep, they may turn beggars together — for uniformity's sake.

If that settling day should ever come, Mr. Journalist, when the bankers, dunned for deposits in their hands, are compelled to be as rigorous with those who have received advances from them — that awful day, when the hundreds of thousands, nay millions, hitherto divided between the Banks and the public, must be all called up at once, and accounts between them closed — that settling day will be remembered as long in Scotland as ever was the Mirk Monday!

But what can the bankers do? their whole profession must undergo a universal change, that discounts and every species of accommodation may be brought within the narrowest possible limits. At present, the profits divided among the profession, upon perhaps a million and a half of small notes, enable them to advance liberally to individuals upon any reasonable security. But if the banker's occupation is henceforth to consist in stocking himself with a great abundance of gold, and for that purpose engaging in an eternal struggle, not to *preserve* (for that is impossible) but to *restore* an eternally vacillating proportion betwixt the metallic circulation and the wants of the country, such expensive labour alone will be likely to prove quite enough for his talents and funds.

The injury done to the bankers, by depriving them of such a principal and profitable branch of their profession, is not to be passed over in silence. The English are wont, in other cases, to pay particular heed ere they alter any peculiar state of things, upon the faith of which property has been vested in a fixed and permanent line of employment. But this proposed enactment will go as far as the in-calling of one million and a half of notes can do, to destroy the emoluments of the profession. You deprive them of those very notes which travel farthest from home, and which return most slowly; nay, which, from various causes, are subject not to return at all. It is therefore in vain to say that thus the profession is left uninjured, when it is

limited to the issue of notes of five pounds and upwards. It might be as reasonably stated in a case of mutilation, that a man was left in the entire and uninjured possession of his hand, the prisoner having only cut off his five fingers.

If, therefore, the proposed measure shall take place, the banker's profession must suffer greatly, nay, in its present form, must cease to exist. We cannot, as a nation, afford to be deprived of such an honourable and profitable means of settling our sons in the world. We cannot afford to lose a resource which has proved to so many respectable and honourable families a means ad *re-ædificandum antiquam domum,* and which has held out to others a successful mode of elevating themselves, by liberal and useful industry, to the possession of wealth, at once to their own advantage and to that of Scotland. Thus it must needs be, if the proposed measure should pass; and when we come to count the gains we shall then have made, by change from a paper circulation to one in specie, I doubt it will form a notable example of the truth of the proverb, " That gold may be bought too dear. "

The Branches established by Banks in remote parts of Scotland must be given up. The parent Banks would vainly exhaust themselves in endeavouring to draw specie from London, and to force it, at whatever expense, into more fertile districts of Scotland, which, of course, would receive it in small quantity, and pay for it at a heavy charge. But as to the remote and sterile regions, it must be with the Highlands and Isles of Scotland, as it is now in some remote districts of Ireland, where scarce any specie exists for the purpose of ordinary currency, and where, for want of that representative for value or paper money in its stead, men are driven back to the primitive mode of bartering for every thing — the peasant pays his rent in labour, and the fisher gets his wages in furnishings. Misery is universal — credit is banished — and with all the bounties of nature around them, ready to reward industry — the sinews of that industry are hewn asunder, and man starves where Nature has given abundance!

Great Britain would be then somewhat like the image in Belteshazzar's dream. London, its head, might be of fine gold — the fertile provinces of England, like its breast and arms, might be of silver — the southern half of Scotland might acquire some brass or copper — but the northern provinces would be without worth or value, like the legs which were formed of iron and clay. What force is to compel gold to circulate to these barren

extremities of the island, I cannot understand; and, when once forced there, I fear its natural tendency to return to the source from which it is issued will render all efforts to detain it as difficult as the task of the men of Gotham, when they tried to hedge in the cuckoo. Our Bankers, or such as may continue in the profession under the same name, but with very different occupation and prospects, will be condemned to the labour of Sisyphus, — eternally employed in rolling a cask of gold up a Highland hill, at the risk of being crushed by it as the influence of gravity prevails, and it comes rolling down upon their heads.

Mrs. Primrose, wife to the excellent Vicar of Wakefield, carried on a system of specie, with respect to her family, at a much cheaper rate than that at which Scotland will be able, I fear, to accomplish the same object. "I gave each of them a shilling," says the good man, speaking of his daughters, "though for the honour of the family it must be observed, that they never went without money themselves; as my wife always generously let them have a guinea each to keep their pockets, but with strict injunctions *never* to change it. " Our state is not so favourable, Mr. Journalist. We shall be obliged to lay out our guinea every morning of our lives, and to buy back another every evening, at an increasing per centage, to pay the expense of the next day. Moreover, Mrs. Primrose was more reasonable (begging pardon for the expression) than our English friends; for, although she enforced the specie system in her own family, we do not hear that she was ever desirous to intrude it into that of Neighbour Flamborough.

I do not mean to enter into the general question of the difference betwixt the circulation of specie and of paper money. I speak of them relatively, as applicable to the wants and wishes of Scotland only. Yet, I must say, it seems strange, that under a liberal system, of which freedom of trade is the very soul, we should be loaded with severe restrictions upon our own national choice, instead of being left at liberty to adopt that representative of value, whether in gold or paper, that best suits our own convenience!

To return to the remote Highlands and Islands, Mr. Journalist, I need not tell you that they are inhabited by a race of men, to use Dr. Currie's phrase, "patient of labour and prodigal of life," for succouring whose individual wants the tenth part of an English coal-heaver's wages would be more than enough, but yet who are human creatures, and cannot live absolutely without food — who are men, and entitled to human compassion — Christians, and entitled to Christian sympathy. But their claims as men and

Christians are not all they have to proffer to administration and to England. The distress to which they are about to be exposed will return upon the state at large in a way very little contemplated.

Those sterile and remote regions have been endowed by Providence with treasures of their own, gained from the stormy deep by their hardy inhabitants. The fisheries in the distant Highlands and Isles, under the management of an enlightened Board, have at length accomplished what was long the warmest wish of British patriots, and have driven the Dutch out of all rivalry in this great branch of national industry. The northern fisheries furnish exports to our colonies and to the Continent, exceeding half a million of money annually, and give employment to a very great number of hardy seamen. The value of such a plentiful source of prosperity, whether considered as supplying our navy or affecting our manufactures, is sufficiently obvious. Now observe, Mr. Journalist, how these fisheries are at present conducted.

The branches of these obnoxious establishments the Scottish Banks, maintained at convenient and centrical points in the North of Scotland, furnish all the remote and numerous stations where the fisheries are carried on, with small notes and silver for payment of the actual fisher's labour, and in return accept the bills of the fish-curers upon the consignees. This they do at a moderate profit; on which principal alone private industry, and enterprise, and capital, can be made conducive to the public good. The small notes thus circulated in the most distant parts of Scotland, return, indeed, in process of time, to the Banks which issued them; but the course of their return is so slow and circuitous, that the interest accruing on them during their absence amply reimburses the capitalist for the trouble and risk which attend the supply. But let any man who knows the country, or will otherwise endeavour to conceive its poverty and sterility, imagine if he can, the difficulties, expense, and hazard, at which gold must be carried to points where it would never have voluntarily circulated, and from whence, unless detained in some miser's hoard (a practice which the currency in specie, and disuse of interest on deposits, is likely to revive,) it will return to London with the celerity of a carrier-pigeon.

The manufacture of Kelp, which is carried on to an immense extent through all the shores and isles of the Highlands, supporting thousands of men with their families, who must otherwise emigrate or starve, and forming the principal revenue of many Highland proprietors, is nearly, if

not exactly, on the same footing with the fisheries; is carried on chiefly by the same medium of circulation; and, like them, supplied by the Bankers with small notes for that purpose, at a reasonable profit to themselves, and with the utmost advantage to the country and its productive resources.

Referring once more to the state of misery in the distant districts of Ireland, I must once more ask, if these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry tree? If the want of circulation creates poverty and misery in the comparatively fertile country of Ireland, what is to become of those barren deserts, where even at present the hardest labour which the human frame can endure is necessary to procure the most moderate pittance on which human life can be supported? The inhabitants are now healthy, enterprising, laborious; and their industry, producing means of existence to themselves, is of immense profit to their country. If their means of obtaining the payment of their labour is destroyed, nay, even interrupted, the state must either feed idle paupers, who once flourished a hardy and independent race of labourers, or it must be at the expense of transporting the inhabitants to Canada and New South Wales, and leaving totally waste a country which few but those bound to it by the *Amor patriæ* will desire to reside in, even if the means of procuring subsistence were left unimpaired.

Can any thing short of the utmost necessity justify an experiment which threatens to depopulate a part of the empire, and destroy the happiness of thousands? and how can such a necessity exist, without the least symptom of its having been felt or suspected during the last hundred and thirty years, when the present system has been in exercise?

Destroy the existing conduit, and let me again inquire, what forcing-pump, what new-invented patent pressure, were it devised by Bramah himself, is to compel specie into those inaccessible regions? The difficulty of conveying the supplies is augmented by the risk of carrying wealth unguarded through the regions of poverty. I know my countrymen are indifferent honest, as Hamlet says; yet I would not advise the Genius of the specie system to travel through Scotland, moral as the country is, after the fashion of the fair pilgrim, “rich and rare,” in Moore’s beautiful melody, just by way of trying the integrity of the inhabitants. Take my word for it, the absence of temptation is no valueless guardian of virtue. If convoys of gold must be sent through lonely mountains, I venture to say, that smugglers will be converted into robbers, and that our romance-writers

need not turn back to ancient times for characters like John Gunn or Rob Roy Macgregor.

This I am sure of, that if the mere authority of a legislative enactment can force a sufficient quantity of gold into those parts, to carry on the fishery and kelp manufactures, it can do a great deal more in favour of the poor but hardy inhabitants. Why should our statesmen be so stinted in their bounty, if it depends merely on legislative enactment? Why not enact, that whereas the dress now worn by his Majesty's loving inhabitants of the Lewis, Uist, Harries, Edderachyllis, Cape Wrath, and Loch Erriboll, is scanty, thin, and indecorous, each inhabitant of those districts should in future wear a full-trimmed suit of black silk or velvet; and, as his only representative of wealth has been hitherto a crumpled dog's-ear'd piece of Scotch paper, that, in future, he never presume to stir out of his cabin without having, and bearing about his person, the sum of at least five golden sovereigns? The working the stuffs may be a means of relieving the starving weavers of Spitalfields, and the clothes could be conveniently enough forwarded by the escorts who are to protect the chests of specie.

It is not amiss to observe, that this violent experiment on our circulation — demanded by no party in Scotland — nay, forced upon us against the consent of all who can render a reason, fraught with such deep ruin if it miscarry, and holding forth no prospect whatever of good, even should it prove successful, — can only be carried on at a very considerable expense to England. She must coin for the service of Scotland at least a million and a half of specie — sustain the loss of tear and wear — the chance of accident and plunder — of disappearance by pilfering and hoarding — and be at the expense of supplying this immense quantity of precious metals, not for the benefit, but for the probable ruin of our devoted country. It is fairly forcing gold down our throats, as little to our advantage, as when the precious metal was sent in a molten state down the gullet of Cyrus, or Crassus,—I forget which.

No argument has been alleged by the English statesmen for pressing this measure, but that of "uniformity;" by virtue of which principle, a little more extended, they may introduce the Irish Insurrection Law into England tomorrow, and alter the whole national law of Scotland the day after. This argument, I therefore think, proves a little too much, and is, in consequence, no argument at all. In absence of avowed motives, and great darkness as to any imaginable cause, men's minds have entertained very strange and wild

fancies, to account for the zeal with which this obnoxious measure is driven forward. Some, who would be thought to see farther into a millstone than others, pretend the real reason is to soothe the jealousy of the Bank of England, by preventing the possibility of Scots notes passing in England. It is easy to see how people must be puzzled to discover the semblance of a possible motive, when they have recourse to such figments as this. Can it be conceived that our dearest interests are to be tampered with for such an object? — It is very true, that in the adjacent counties of England, innkeepers for courtesy, and drovers and others dealing at Scots fairs, on account of convenience, readily accept of Scots notes in payment; but that notes, which nobody is obliged to accept, and which the English banks refuse to change, can circulate to such an extent as to alarm the Bank of England! — why, sir, I will as soon believe, that, during the old wars, the city of London beat to arms, called out their Trained-bands, and manned their walls, because the Teviotdale Borderers had snapped up a herd of cattle in Northumberland. What becomes of the comparative excellence of the specie circulation to be established in England, if apprehensions are entertained that it cannot stand its ground against the reprobated paper system of Scotland? In God's name, are they afraid people will prefer paper to gold — leaving, like Hamlet's misjudging mother, the literally golden meads of England, to batten on a Scottish moor? It is like the ridiculous story told, that there is a by-law, or at least a private understanding, that no Scotsman shall be chosen a director of the Bank of England, lest our countrymen engross the whole management in the course of a few years. Why, sir, these opinions remind one of the importance attached to the fated stone in Westminster Abbey, of which it is said, that the Scots shall reign wheresoever it is carried. But, sir, we must not swallow such flattering compliments. The Bank of England jealous of the partial circulation of a few Scottish notes in the north of England!!! Sir, it would be supposing the blessed sun himself jealous of a gaslight manufactory.

A few general observations on England's late conduct to us, and I will release you.

A very considerable difference may be remarked, within these twentyfive years, in the conduct of the English towards such of the Scotch individuals, as either visit the metropolis as mere birds of passage, or settle there as residents. Times are much changed since the days of Wilkes and Liberty, when the bare suspicion of having come from North of the Tweed,

was a cause of hatred, contempt, and obloquy. The goodnature and liberality of the English seem now even to have occasioned a reaction in their sentiments towards their neighbours, as if to atone for the national prejudices of their fathers. It becomes every Scotsman to acknowledge explicitly, and with gratitude, that whatever tenable claim of merit has been made by his countrymen for more than twenty years back, whether in politics, arts, arms, professional distinction, or the paths of literature, it has been admitted by the English, not only freely, but with partial favour. The requital of North Britain can be little more than good wishes and sincere kindness towards her southern Sister, and a hospitable welcome to such of her children as are led by curiosity to visit Scotland. To this ought to be added the most grateful acknowledgment.

But though this amicable footing exists between the public of each nation, and such individuals of the other as may come into communication with them, and may God long continue it — yet, I must own, the conduct of England towards Scotland as a kingdom, whose crown was first united to theirs by our giving *them* a King, and whose dearest national rights were surrendered to them by an incorporating Union, has not been of late such as we were entitled to expect.

There has arisen gradually, on the part of England, a desire of engrossing the exclusive management of Scottish affairs, evinced by a number of circumstances, trifling in themselves, but forming a curious chain of proof when assembled together; many of which intimate a purpose to abate us, like old Lear, of our train, and to accustom us to submit to petty slights and mortifications, too petty perhaps individually to afford subject of serious complaint, but which, while they tend to lower us in our own eyes, seem to lay the foundation for fresh usurpations, of which this meditated measure may be an example.

This difference of treatment, and of estimation, exhibited towards *individuals* of the Scottish nation, and to the *nation itself* as an aggregate, seems at first sight an inconsistency. Does a Scotchman approach London with some pretension to character as a Preacher, a Philosopher, a Poet, an Economist, or an Orator, he finds a welcome and all-hail, which sometimes surprises those whom he has left on the northern side of the Tweed, — little aware, perhaps, of the paragon who had emigrated, till they heard the acclamations attending his reception — Does a gentleman of private fortune take the same route, he finds a ready and voluntary admission into the class

of society for which he is fitted by rank and condition — Is the visitor one of the numerous class who wander for the chance of improving his fortunes, his national character as a Scotsman is supposed to imply the desirable qualities of information, prudence, steadiness, moral and religious feeling, and he obtains even a preference among the Southern employers, who want confidential clerks, land-stewards, head-gardeners, or fit persons to occupy any similar situation, in which the quality of trustworthiness is demanded.

But, on the other hand, if the English statesman has a point of great or lesser consequence to settle with Scotland *as a country,* we find him and his friends at once seized with a jealous, tenacious, wrangling, overbearing humour, and that they not only insist upon conducting the whole matter according to their own will, but are by no means so accessible to the pleas of reason, justice, and humanity, as might be expected from persons in other cases so wise and liberal. We cease at once to be the Northern Athenians, according to the slang of the day — the moral and virtuous people, who are practically and individually esteemed worthy of especial confidence. We have become the caterpillars of the island, instead of its pillars. We seem to be, in their opinion, once more transmuted into the Scots described by Churchill — a sharp sharking race, whose wisdom is cunning, and whose public spirit consists only in an illiberal nationality, inclining us, by every possible exertion of craft, to obtain advantage at the expense of England.

Sir, the Englishman, just and liberal in his ordinary and natural movements, is prone to feverish fits of suspicion, during which he is apt to conceive that those qualities of frankness and generosity render him peculiarly liable to be imposed on. He will always *give* willingly, but he often becomes shabby and litigious in making a bargain. John Bull is, in these points, exactly similar to his own Hotspur, who, in his dispute with Glendower about the turning of the Trent, exclaims, —

> "I do not care — I'll give thrice so much land
> To any well-deserving friend;
> But in the way of *bargain,* mark ye me,
> I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair." *

* 1st Henry IV., Act iii., scene i.

The Continent has seen John in both these moods; and not being able to understand the cause of the change, has been apt to suppose his habits are entirely altered; whereas they see only the same man in two different and

extreme humours; in one of which he would willingly relieve a begging vagabond, because the rascal must live; and, in the other, will hardly be brought to pay the bill of a poor tradesman, because he is afraid of being overreached. The ancient and modern mode in which the English travellers did, and do now, pay their ordinary bills on the Continent, are an example of this piebald humour: — Formerly, John travelled *en prince,* and even overlooked any species of imposition in innkeepers and *valets-de-place,* as not worth the care of *un homme tel que lui.* Now, he insists upon a preliminary contract — a solemn treaty for his *coutelet* and his *vin de pais* — and, neither for love of money, nor for want of money, but from a feverish apprehension that he may possibly be cheated in a reckoning, goes so miserably to work, that all the world cries "Shame on him!" *

* See the amusing work called *The English in Italy.* — S.

To the better, more natural, more predominating disposition of our neighbours, I am well disposed to ascribe the many marks of partiality and kindness shown to individual Scotsmen by the English at large — to the latter suspicious, dogged illiberal determination to have the best of the bargain — that ungracious humour, which forgets even justice as well as liberal feelings, for fear their goodnature should be imposed upon, — I am compelled to ascribe much of their recent behaviour in international discussions. In such fits of jealousy, men are like those who wear green spectacles. Every object they look upon is tinged with the predominant colour, which exists not in the objects themselves, but in the medium through which they are viewed. Talk to an English statesman of the fairest, the most equitable proposal for the advancement of Scotland as a nation, the most just and indisputable claim on behalf of her public establishments or functionaries, the idea of a *Scotch Job* starts up like an apparition, and frightens all power of equitable decision out of the Minister's head. It is in vain urged, that even the expense of the proposed measure must be discharged by Scotland herself — her sister is ready with the schoolboy's answer to his fag, — "All that is *yours* is *ours,* and all *ours* is *our own.* " Let the scales of Justice be trimmed with the nicest exactness if you will, but do not let Authority throw the sword into the scale from mere apprehension, lest, after having done her utmost to secure the advantage, she be cheated in the weighing.

In an old Scottish law, to be convicted of being an Egyptian, or gipsy, was equivalent to conviction that the party was a common and notorious thief. And truly the English seem to think (in public matters, though by no means in private relations,) that being a Scotsman is equivalent to being an embezzler of public money, a jobber, and a peculator. But when they suppose that we are able and willing in all such cases to impose on them, they do injustice alike to their own shrewdness and our integrity.

It arises out of this unhappy state of feeling towards us, more than to any actual desire of giving us offence, that England has of late abated our establishment in many respects in which our rank as a kingdom of the Union is in some degree compromised.

Last year a bill, deeply affecting the national interests of Scotland, by altering many most important points in our judicature, was depending in Parliament. Grave objections appeared to the Law Bodies and others in Scotland, to attach to some particular arrangements thereby proposed. They required, not that the bill should be given up, but that it should be suspended at least, till the country in which it was to operate, and which alone was to be hurt or benefited by the enactment, should have time to consider the measure in all its bearings, and to express their national sense upon the subject. Can it be believed that it required the strongest possible remonstrances of the great law-officer of the crown with his Majesty's Ministers to obtain a few months' reprieve, as if the demolition, or alteration at least, of our laws, was a matter as little deserving a month's delay, as the execution of some flagrant criminal, justly and fully convicted of the most gross crimes? Take one or two instances more.

Till of late, there was generally an Admiral on this station; but since the gallant Sir John Beresford struck his flag, that mark of distinction seems to have been laid aside, probably for ever. Our army establishment is dwindled to a shadow, scarce worthy of being placed under the command of the distinguished MajorGeneral who now holds it, although he only commands the forces, instead of being, as was commonly the case till of late years, a Commanderin-Chief, with a LieutenantGeneral and two MajorGenerals, under him. I need hardly say, that I would wish this abatement of our dignity, in some measure at least, amended, not by the *removal,* but by the *promotion* of the gallant General.

It may be replied, that we are complimented in being thus left to ourselves — that we are a moral people, therefore do not require a military

force to keep the peace — a loyal people, therefore do not need an armed force to put down tumult — that we have our own brave yeomanry, who, at no distant period, showed themselves capable of affording their country protection in the most desirable manner, anticipating mischief by their promptitude, and preventing evil before it had come to a head. But have these yeomen, who twice in a few months abandoned their homes at a few hours' warning, marched many miles, and by their demonstration of readiness, put an end to a very serious affair, and what might have been a very disastrous one — have they, I say, since that period, received the countenance due for their goodwill from the Government, and which should have been rendered alike in policy and justice? I am informed they have not. I am informed that they are, at least particular troops of them are, refused the small allowance made on the days when they are called out for exercise, and must either discharge the duty of training always sufficiently expensive and inconvenient, entirely at their own expense, as some of them have done for two years, or suffer their discipline to fall into decay. Can it be that our English brethren have taken a notion that sabres are only curved broadswords, and that these are unhappy weapons in the hands of Scotsmen? I acquit them of such meanness. But they despise us a little too much.

Sir, Discontent is the child of Distress, and Distress is the daughter of ill-timed Experiment. Should we again see disorderly associations formed, and threats of open violence held out — should such a winter and spring as 1821 return, it may not, in the event of the measure with which Scotland is threatened, be quite so easy, as at that period, to assemble on a given spot, within a day or two, twelve or fourteen hundred yeomen to support the handful of military left within Scotland. That general spirit of loyalty will, I am sure, be the same. But when proprietors are embarrassed, tenants distressed, commercial people in doubt and danger, men lose at once their zeal, and the means for serving the public. This is not unworthy of serious consideration.

I mentioned in my former Letter another circumstance, of which I think my country has reason to complain. It is that sort of absolute and complete state of tutelage to which England seems disposed to reduce her sister country, subjecting her in all her relations to the despotic authority of English Boards, which exercise an exclusive jurisdiction in Scottish affairs, without regard to her local peculiarities, and with something like contempt

of her claims as a country united with England, but which certainly has never resigned the right of being at least consulted in her own concerns. I mentioned the restrictions, and, as I conceive them, degrading incapacities inflicted on our Revenue Boards, — I might extend the same observations to the regulations in the Stamp-Office; — and I remember, when these were in progress, that it was said in good society, that the definitive instructions (verbal, I believe) communicated to the able officer upon whom the examination and adjustment of the alterations in that department devolved, and who was sent down hither on purpose, were to this purport: — "That he was to proceed in Scotland without more regard to the particular independence of that country than he would feel in Yorkshire." These, however, were matters interesting the general revenue — the servants of the Crown had a right to regulate them as they pleased. But if they were regulated with a purposed and obvious intention to lessen the consequence of Scotland, throw implied discredit on her natives, as men unworthy of trust, and hold her recollections and her feelings at nought, they make links in a chain which seems ready to be wound around us whenever our patience will permit.

This, sir, is an unwise, nay, an unsafe proceeding. An old chain, long worn, forms a callosity on the limb which bears it, and is endured, with whatever inconvenience, as a thing of custom. It is not so with restraints newly imposed. These fret — gall — gangrene — the iron enters first into the flesh, and then into the soul. I speak out what more prudent men would keep silent. I may lose friends by doing so: but he who is like Malachi Malagrowther, old and unfortunate, has not many to lose, and risks little in telling truths before, when men of rising ambition and budding hopes would leave them to be discovered by the event. The old tree and the withered leaf are easily parted.

But, besides such matters of punctilio, Mr. Journalist, there has been in England a gradual and progressive system of assuming the management of affairs entirely and exclusively proper to Scotland, as if we were totally unworthy of having the management of our own concerns. All must centre in London. We could not have a Caledonian canal, but the commissioners must be Englishmen, and meet in London; — a most useful canal they would have made of it, had not the lucky introduction of steamboats — Deus ex machina — come just in time to redeem them from having made the most expensive and most useless undertaking of the kind ever heard of

since Noah floated his ark! We could not be intrusted with the charge of erecting our own kirks, (churches in the highlands,) or of making our roads and bridges in the same wild districts, but these labours must be conducted under the tender care of men who knew nothing of our country, its wants and its capabilities, but who, nevertheless, sitting in their office in London, were to decide, without appeal, upon the conduct of the roads in Lochaber! — Good Heaven, sir! to what are we fallen? — or rather, what are we esteemed by the English? Wretched drivellers, incapable of understanding our own affairs; or greedy peculators, unfit to be trusted? On what ground are we considered either as the one or the other?

But I may perhaps be answered, that these operations are carried on by grants of public money; and that, therefore, the English — undoubtedly the only disinterested and public-spirited and trustworthy persons in the universe — must be empowered exclusively to look after its application. Public money forsooth!!! I should like to know whose pocket it comes out of? Scotland, I have always heard, contributes four millions to the public revenue. I should like to know, before we are twitted with grants of public money, how much of that income is dedicated to Scottish purposes — how much applied to the general uses of the empire — and if the balance should be found to a great amount on the side of Scotland, as I suspect it will, I should like still farther to know how the English are entitled to assume the direction and disposal of any pittance which may be permitted, out of the produce of our own burdens, to revert to the peculiar use of the nation from which it has been derived? If England was giving us alms, she would have a right to look after the administration of them, lest they should be misapplied or embezzled. If she is only consenting to afford us a small share of the revenue derived from our own kingdom, we have some title, methinks, to be consulted in the management, nay, intrusted with it.

This assumption of uncalled-for guardianship accelerates the circulation a little, and inclines one to say to his countrymen,

> “Our blood has been too cold and temperate,
> Unapt to stir at such indignities.”

You could not keep a decent servant in your family, sir, far more a partner, if you obviously treated such a person as a man in whom no confidence was to be reposed even in his own department. A ludicrous mode has been lately fallen upon of keeping up in appearance, and as far as the almanack goes,

our old list of Scottish offices. First, they deprive a high office of state of all its emoluments, and then they unite it with one to which some emolument is still permitted to attach; so they are doubled, like slices of bread and butter laid face to face — English fashion, as schoolboys used to call it — with this great difference, that only one slice is buttered — an improvement which would scarce suit John Bull's taste. The office of Lord Clerk Register is thus united with that of the Keeper of the Signet, with the emolument attached to the last alone. * It was at another time proposed, on the

* The Right Hon. Lord Clerk Register has deserved — what he will think better than either office or salary — the solemn thanks of his countrymen, for the frank and decided tone which he has taken in the Currency Question. — S.

same liberal footing, to unite the office of the Lord Justice-General, (salary suppressed,) though I believe the bill did not pass.

This is really, sir, putting the few offices we have left to indicate our ancient independence, on a more ridiculous footing than the Dukes of Normandy and Aquitaine, which imaginary vassals of England used to revive at every coronation, and were each of them allowed a whole man to represent them; * while poor Scotland's high officers of

* The good taste which directed the last august ceremony, dispensed with the appearance of these phantoms. — S.

state resemble Coleman's

"Two single gentlemen roll'd into one;"

or rather remind us of the starveling shifts of a strolling company, in which two parts are performed by one actor and for one salary. There may be an emblem in the thing though. It is perhaps designed to represent an union between two kingdoms, or an incorporating union, in which one enjoys the full advantages and supereminent authority, and the other remains,

"Magni nominis umbra."

I do not suppose this farce will be continued long. We shall in due time, I suppose, be put all under English control, deprived even of the few native dignitaries and office-holders we have left, and accommodated with a set of English superintendents in every department. It will be upon the very reasoning of Goneril before alluded to: —

"What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?" —

Patrick, will you play Regan, and echo,

— "What need *one? "*

Take care, my good fellow! for you will scarce get a great share in our spoils, and will be shortly incapacitated, and put under a statute of lunacy as well as ourselves.

But what will England take by this engrossing spirit? Not the miserable candle-ends and cheese-parings; these, I dare say, she scorns. The mere pleasure, then, of absolute authority — the gratification of humour exacted by a peevish and petted child, who will not be contented till he has the toy in his own hand, though he break it the next moment. Is any real power derived by centering the immediate and direct control of every thing in London? Far from it. On the contrary, that great metropolis is already a head too bulky for the empire, and, should it take a vertigo, the limbs would be unable to support it. The misfortune of France, during the Revolution, in all its phases, was, that no part of the kingdom could think for itself or act for itself; all were from habit necessitated to look up to Paris. Whoever was uppermost there — and the worst party is apt to prevail in a corrupted metropolis — were, without possibility of effectual contradiction, the uncontrolled and despotic rulers of France — absit omen!

Again, would the British empire become stronger, were it possible to annul and dissolve all the distinctions and peculiarities, which, flowing out of circumstances, historical events, and difference of customs and climates, make its relative parts still, in some respects, three separate nations, though intimately incorporated into one empire? Every ropemaker knows, sir, that three distinct strands, as they are called, incorporated and twisted together, will make a cable ten times stronger than the same quantity of hemp, however artificially combined into a single twist of cord. The reason is obvious to the meanest capacity. If one of the strands happen to fail a little, there is a threefold chance that no imperfection will occur in the others at the same place, so that the infirm strand may give way a little, yet the whole cord remain trustworthy. If the single twist fail at any point, all is over. For God's sake, sir, let us remain as Nature made us, Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen, with something like the impress of our several countries upon

each! We would not become better subjects, or more valuable members of the common empire, if we all resembled each other like so many smooth shillings. Let us love and cherish each other's virtues — bear with each other's failings — be tender to each other's prejudices — be scrupulously regardful of each other's rights. Lastly, let us borrow each other's improvements, but never before they are needed and demanded. The degree of national diversity between different countries is but an instance of that general variety which Nature seems to have adopted as a principle through all her works, as anxious, apparently, to avoid, as modern statesmen to enforce, any thing like an approach to absolute "uniformity."

It may be said that some of the grievances I have complained of are mere trifles. I grant they are — excepting in the feelings and intentions towards Scotland which they indicate. But, according to Bacon's maxim, you will see how the wind sits by flinging up a feather, which you cannot discern by throwing up a stone. Affronts are almost always more offensive than injuries, although they seldom are in themselves more than trifles. The omitting to discharge a gun or two in a salute, the raising or striking of a banner or sail, have been the source of bloody wars. England lost America about a few miserable chests of tea — she endangered India for the clipping of a mustache.

But let us humble ourselves to our situation, and confine our remonstrances to the immediate grievance, which surely cannot be termed punctilious or unimportant.

To England we say, therefore, Let us appeal from Philip intoxicated to Philip sober. Leave out exasperating circumstances on either side, and examine our remonstrance, not in the jealous feeling of which we have reason to complain, but in the gentlemanlike and liberal tone so much more becoming a great nation, and according, I must say, so much better with your natural disposition. As you mean that a value should be set upon your free public voice by your legislators, allow the natural influence of that of Scotland, in a matter exclusively relating to her own affairs, but so intimately connected with her welfare, that nothing since the year 1748 has occurred of such importance. The precedent is a bad one at any rate; the consequences will be much worse.

> "Prevent — resist it. Let it not be so,
> Lest children's children call against you — woe! "

Our Scottish Nobles and Gentlemen, I cannot better exhort to resist the proposal at every stage, by the most continued and unremitting opposition — to be discouraged by nothing — to hope to the last — to combat to the last — than by using once more the words of the patriotic Belhaven: — "Man's extremity is God's opportunity. He is a present help in time of need; a deliverer, and that right early. Some unforeseen providence will fall out, that may cast the balance. Some Moses will say, Why do you strive together when you are brethren? Some Judah or other will say, Let not our hand be upon him, he is our brother. Let us up then, and be doing; and let our noble patriots behave themselves like men, and we know not how soon a blessing may come."

I am, Mr. Journalist,
Yours,
Malachi Malagrowther.

Letter III

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March 7,1826.

Dear Mr. Journalist,

This third set of Mr. Baxter's last words is rather a trial on your patience, considering how much *Balaam* (speaking technically) I have edged out of your valuable paper; how I have trodden on the toes of your Domestic Intelligence, and pushed up to the wall even your Political Debates, until you have almost lost your honoured title of the Edinburgh Journal in that of Malachi's Chronicle.

I returned from the Meeting of Inhabitants on Friday last, sir, convoked for considering this question, with much feeling of gratification from what I saw and heard; but still a little disappointed that no one appeared on the opposite side, excepting one gentleman ("self pulling," as Captain Crowe says, "against the whole ship's crew,") whose eloquence used no other argument than by recommending implicit deference to the wisdom of Ministers. I am a pretty stanch Tory myself, but not up to this point of humility. I never have nor will bargain for an implicit surrender of my private judgment in a national question of this sort. I am but an unit, but of units the whole sum of society is composed. On the present question, had I been the born servant of Ministers, I would have used to them the words of Cornwall's dependent, when he interferes to prevent his master from treading out Gloster's eyes —

> "I have served you ever since I have been a child,
> But better service have I never done you,
> Than now to bid you *Hold*. "

Or in a yet more spirited passage in the same drama —

> "Be Kent unmannerly,
> When Lear is mad."

To return to the business. By the unanimity of the meeting, I lost an opportunity of making a very smart extempore speech, which I had sate up

half the night for the purpose of composing. To have so much eloquence die within me unuttered, excited feelings like those of Sancho, when, in the deserts of the Sierra Morena, his good things rotted in his gizzard. To console me, however, I found, on my return to my lodgings in the Lawnmarket, my own lucubrations blazing in the goodly form of two responsible pamphlets. I seized on them as if I had never seen them before, and recited the more animated passages aloud, striding up and down a room, in which, from its dimensions, striding is not very convenient. I ended with reading aloud the motto, which I designed in the pride of my heart to prefix to my immortal twins, hen, side by side, under the same comely cover, whey shall travel down to posterity as a crown octavo; —

> "He set a bugle to his mouth,
> And blew a blast sae shrill,
> The trees in greenwood shook thereat,
> Sae loud rang ilka hill." *

* Ballad of Hardyknute.

But while I mentally claimed for myself the honour of alarming Scotland, from Coldstream Bridge to the far Highlands, I was giving, by the noise I made, far greater alarm to my neighbour, Christopher Chrysal, who keeps the small hardware and miscellaneous shop under the turnpike stair. Now, sir, you must know that Chrysal deals occasionally in broken teaspoons and stray sugar-tongs, dismantled lockets and necklaces (which have passed with more or less formality from ladies to their waiting-maids,) seals, out of which valets have knocked the stones that the setting might be rendered available, and such other small gear, — nay, I once saw an old silver coffeepot in his possession. On the score, therefore, of being connected with the precious metals by his calling, neighbour Chrysal has set himself up for a patron and protector of gold and silver, and a stout contender for bullion currency. With a half-crown in one hand, and a twenty-shilling note in the other, he will spout like a player over the two pictures in Hamlet, and it is great to hear him address them alternately —

"This is the thing itself — Off, off, ye lendings!"

But with all the contempt he expressed for the paper substitute, I have always seen that it steals quietly back to the solitude of his little pocketbook. Indeed, the barber says Mr. Chrysal has other reasons for wishing a change of currency, or a currency of change, in respect of his own

acceptances not being in these sharp times quite so locomotive as usual — They love the desk of the holder, sir, better than the counter of his great Neighbours in Bank Street. You understand me — but I hate scandal.

I had no sooner apologized to Christopher for the disturbance I had occasioned (which I did with some shame of countenance,) than I politely offered him a copy of my pamphlet. He thanked me, but added with a grin (for you know no man is a prophet in his own common stair,) that he had nothing particular to wrap up at present: "But in troth, Mr. Malachi," said he, "I looked over your pamphlet in the reading-room, and I must tell you as a friend, you have just made a fool of yourself, Mr. Malachi." — "A fool!" replied I; "when, how, and in what manner?" — "Ye have set out, sir," replied he, — for Chrysal is a kind of orator, and speaks as scholarly and wisely as his neighbours, — "with assuming the principle, which you should have proved — You say, that in consequence of restoring the healthful currency of the precious metals, instead of keeping those ragged scraps of paper, Scotland will experience a want of the circulating medium, by which deprivation her industry will be cramped, her manufactures depressed, her fisheries destroyed, and so forth. But you know nothing of the nature of the precious metals, and how should you?"

"Why, not by dealing in old thimbles, broken buckles, and children's whistles, certainly, or stolen sprecherie, " said I; "but speak out, man, wherein do I evince ignorance of the nature of the precious metals — tell me that?"

"Why, Mr. Malachi Malagrowther," said my friend, in wrath, "I pronounce you ignorant of the most ordinary principles of Political Economy. In your unadvised tract there, you have shown yourself as irritable as Balaam, and as obstinate as his ass. You are making yourself and other people fidgety about the want of gold, to supply the place of that snuff-paper of yours; now in this, I repeat, you are ignorant."

Here he raised his voice, as if speaking *ex cathedra.* "Gold," continued he, "is a commodity itself, though it be also the representative of other commodities; just as a banker is a man, though his business is to deal money. Gold, therefore, like all other commodities, will flow to the place where there is a demand for it. It will be found, assure yourself, wherever it is most wanted; just as, if you dig a well, water will percolate into it from all the neighbourhood. Twenty years ago you could not have seen a cigar in Edinburgh. Gillespie, the greatest snuff-merchant of his day, would not have

known what you wanted had you asked him for one; and now the shop-windows of the dealers are full of real Havannahs, — and why? — because you see every writer's apprentice with a cigar in his mouth. It is the demand that makes the supply, and so it will be with the gold. The balance of freetrade, whether the commodity be gold or grain, will go where the one finds mouths to be fed, the other a currency to be supported. What sent specie into the lagoons of Venice, and into the swamps of Holland formerly, as well as into the emporium of London now, while large cities, situated under a finer climate, and in a more fertile country, were and are comparatively destitute of the precious metals? — what, save the tendency of commerce, like water, to find its own just level, and to send all the commodities subject to its influence, the precious metals included, to the points where they are most wanted?"

Now, Mr. Journalist, I am a man of a quick temper, but somewhat of a slow wit; and though it struck me that there was something fallacious in this argument, yet, bolstered out as it was by his favourite metaphor, it sounded so plausible, that the right answer did not at once occur to me. Chrysal went on in triumph: "You speak of your Fisheries and Kelp manufacture, and such like, and seem to dread that they will be all ruined for want of a circulating medium. But, sir, one of two, things must happen. Either first, assuming that these branches of industry are beneficial to the individuals, and make advantageous returns; as such they will have the usual power of attracting towards them the specie necessary to carry them on, and, of course, no change whatever will take place. Or, secondly, these fisheries, and so forth, produce no adequate return for the labour expended on them, and are therefore a compulsory species of manufacture, like those establishments instituted at the direct expense, and under the immediate control of government, which we see fading in despotic countries, or only deriving a sickly existence by the expenditure of the Sovereign, and not by their own natural vigour. In that latter case," he pursued, "those fishing and kelping operations are not productive — are useless to the country — and ought not to be carried on an hour longer; they only occasion the misemployment of so much capital, the loss of so much labour. Leave your kelp-rocks to the undisturbed possession of seals and mermaids, if there be any — you will buy *barilla* cheaper in South America. Send your Highland fishers to America and Botany Bay, where they will find plenty of food, and let them leave their present sterile residence in the utter and undisturbed

solitude for which Nature designed it. Do not think you do any hardship in obeying the universal law of nature, which leads wants and supplies to draw to their just and proper level, and equalize each other; which attracts gold to those spots, and those only, where it can be profitably employed, and induces man to transport himself from the realms of famine to those happier regions, where labour is light and subsistence plentiful.

"Lastly," said the unconscionable Christopher, "sweep out of your head, Mr. Malachi, all that absurd rubbish of ancient tradition and history about national privileges — you might as well be angry with the Provost who pulled down the Luckenbooths. They do not belong to this day, in which so many changes have taken place, and so many more are to be expected. We look for what is useful, sir, and to what is useful only; and our march towards utility is not to be interrupted by reference to antiquated treaties, or obsolete prejudices. So, while you sit flourishing your claymore, Mr. Malachi, on the top of your Articles of Union, very like the figure of a Highlander on the sign of a whisky-office, take care you are not served as the giant who built his castle on the marvellous beanstalk — Truth comes like the old woman with the 'cuttie-axe' — it costs but a swashing blow or two, and down comes Malachi and his whole system." — So saying, *exit* Christopher, *ovans.*

There was such a boldness and plausibility about the fellow, and such a confidence in the arguments which he expressed so fluently, that I felt a temporary confusion of ideas, and was obliged to throw myself into what has been, for many generations, the considering position of the Malagrowther family: that is to say, I flung myself back in our hereditary easychair, fixing my eyes on the roof, but keeping them, at the same time, half shut; having my hands folded, and twirling my thumbs slowly around each other, a motion highly useful in unravelling and evolving the somewhat tangled thread of the ideas. Thus seated, in something short of two hours I succeeded in clearing out the ravelled skean, which evolved itself in as orderly a coil before me as if it had been touched by the rod of Prince Percinet, in the fairy tale, and I am about to communicate the result. I must needs own that my discoveries went so far as was like to have involved you in an examination of the general principles on which the doctrine of currency depends. But since, *entre nous,* we might get a little beyond our depth on the subject, I have restrained myself within the limits of the question, as practically applicable to Scotland.

My present business is to inquire how this meditated change of circulation, supposing it forcibly imposed on us, is to be accomplished — by what magic art, in other words, our paper is to be changed into gold, without some great national distress, nay, convulsion, *in transitu?*

My neighbour deems anxiety in this case quite ridiculous. Gold, he says, is a commodity, and whenever its presence becomes necessary, there it will appear. Guineas, according to Christopher, are like the fairy goblets in Parnell's tale,

> "that with a wish come nigh,
> And with a wish retire."

I don't know how it may be in national necessities, but I have some reason to think that friend Chrysal has not, any more than I have myself, found the maxim true, in so far as concerns our personal experience. I heartily wish, indeed, this comfortable doctrine extended to individual cases, and that the greater occasion a poor devil had for money, the more certain he should be of his wants being supplied by the arrival of that obliging article, which is said to come wherever it is wanted. Since Fortunatus's time, the contrary has in general proved to be the case, and I cannot deny it would be very convenient to us to have his system restored.

And yet there is some truth in what my neighbour says; for if a man is indispensably obliged to have a sum of money, why he must make every effort to raise it. Supposing I was in business, and threatened with insolvency, I might find myself under the necessity of getting cash by selling property at an under rate, or procuring loans at usurious interest on what I retained, and in that ruinous manner I might raise money, because still nearer ruin stared me in the face if I did not. The question is, how long supplies so obtained could continue; — Not an instant longer than I have articles to sell or to pawn. After this, my usual wants would be as pressing, but I might wish my heart out ere I found a groat to relieve them — No fairy will leave a silver penny in my shoe. Now, I fear it must be by some such violent sacrifices, as those in the case supposed, that Scotland must purchase and maintain her metallic currency, if her present substitute is debarred.

Mr. Chrysal's proposition should not then run, that gold will come when it is most needed, but should have been expressed thus, — that in countries where the presence of gold is rendered indispensable, it must be obtained,

whatever price is given for it, while the means of paying such a price remain.

He amuses himself, indeed, and puzzles his hearers, by affirming that gold is like water, and, like water when poured out, it will find its level. — A metaphor is no argument in any instance; but I think I can contrive in the present to turn my friend's own water-engine against him. Scotland, sir, is not *beneath* the level to which gold flows naturally. She is *above* that level, and she may perish for want of it ere she sees a guinea, without she, or the State for her, be at the perpetual expense of maintaining, by constant expenditure of a large per centage, that metallic currency which has a natural tendency to escape from a poor country back to a rich one. Just so, a man might die of thirst on the top of a Scottish hill, though a river or a lake lay at the base of it. Therefore, if we insist upon the favourite comparison of gold to water, we must conceive the possibility of the golden Pactolus flowing up Glencroe in an opposite direction to the natural element, which trots down from the celebrated *Rest and be Thankful.*

If my friend would consult the clerk of the Water Company, at his office in the Royal Exchange, he would explain the matter at once. "Let me have," says Mr. Chrysal, "a pipe of water to my house." — "Certainly, sir; it will cost you forty shillings yearly." — "The devil it will! Why, surely the Lawnmarket is lower than the Reservoir on the Castlehill? It is the nature of water to come to a level. What title have you to charge me money, when the element is only obeying the laws of Nature, and descending to its level?" — "Very true, sir," replies the clerk; "but then it was no law of Nature brought it to the reservoir, at a height which was necessary to enable us to disperse the supply over the city. On the contrary, it was an exertion of Art in despite of Nature. It was forced hither by much labour and ingenuity. Lakes were formed, — aqueducts constructed, rivers dammed up, pipes laid for many miles. Without immense expense, the water could never have been brought here; and without your paying a rateable charge, you cannot have the benefit of it."

This is exactly the case with the gold currency. It must have a natural tendency to centre in London, for the exchange is heavily against Scotland. We have the whole public income, four millions a-year, to remit thither. Independent of that large and copious drain, we have occasion to send to England the rents of non-resident proprietors, and a thousand other payments to make to London, which must be done in specie, or by bills

payable in the metropolis. So that the circulation moves thither of freewill, like a horse led by the bridle; while Scotland's attempts to detain it, are like those of a wild Highlandman catching his pony by the tail. Or, to take a very old comparison, London is like Aboulcasem's well, full of gold, gems, and every thing valuable. The rich contents are drawn from it by operations resembling those of a forcing-pump, which compel small portions into the extreme corners of the kingdom; but all these golden streamlets, when left to themselves, trickle back to the main reservoir.

My friend's idea of a voluntary, unsolicited, and unbought supply of metallic currency, is like the reasoning of old Merrythought, when, with only a shilling in his pocket, he expresses a resolution to continue a jovial course of life. "But how wilt thou come by the means, Charles?" says his wife. "How?" replied the gay old gentleman, in a full reliance on his resources, — "How? — Why, how have I done hitherto, these forty years? — I never came into my dining-room, but, at eleven and six o'clock, I found excellent meat and drink on the table. My clothes were never worn out, but next morning a tailor brought me a new suit, and, without question, it will be so ever — use makes perfectness." The dramatist has rescued his jolly epicurean out of the scrape before his slender stock was exhausted; but in what mode Scotland is to be relieved from the expense about to be imposed on a country, where industry and skill can but play a saying game, at best, against national disadvantages, is not so easy to imagine.

What may be the expense of purchasing in the outset, and maintaining in constant supply, a million and a half of gold, I cannot pretend to calculate, but something may be guessed from the following items: — To begin, like Mrs. Glass's recipe for dressing a hare, *first catch your hare* — first buy your gold at whatever sacrifice of loss of exchange; then add to the price a reasonable profit to those who are to advance the purchase-money — next insure your specie against water-thieves and land-thieves, perils of winds, waves, and rocks, from the Mint to the wharf, from the wharf to Leith, from Leith to Edinburgh, from Edinburgh to the most remote parts of Scotland, unprotected by police of any kind — the insurances can be no trifle; besides, that an accident or two, like the loss of the Delight smack the other day, with £4000 of specie on board, will make a tolerably heavy addition to other bills of charges, as the expense of carriages, guards, and so forth — then add the items together, and compute the dead loss of interest upon the whole sum. The whole may be moderately calculated at an

expense of more than *five per cent.,* a charge which must ultimately be laid on the Scottish manufactures, agricultural operations, fisheries, and other public and private undertakings; many of which are not at present returning twelve or fifteen per cent. of profit at the uttermost.

My friend Chrysal's reasoning rested on this great mistake, that he confounds the necessity of our procuring gold under the operation of the new system, and the supplies which that necessity must necessarily oblige us to purchase, with a voluntary determination of unbought treasures running uphill to find their level at Stornoway, Tongue, or Oban. He imagines that the specie, for which we have to pay a heavy consideration, will come to our service voluntarily. I answer, in one word, the gold will come, if purchased, and not otherwise. The expense attending the operation will be just a tax upon the parties who pay it, with this difference, that it makes no addition to the public revenue. Every sovereign we get, which passes, of course, for twenty shillings, will, before it gets to the north of Scotland, have cost *one -and-twenty.* Illustrations of so plain a proposition are endless. Suppose Government had imposed a stamp-duty upon any commodity, and, whilst with some other cowl'd neighbours I am canvassing its effects, I ask, as a party concerned, — "But how are we to come by these stamps? The branch of commerce to which they apply is not able to bear the impost." Up rises my friend Chrysal in reply — "Stamped paper," says he, "is a commodity; and, like all commodities, flows to the point where there is a demand." True — but, unhappily, when the stamped paper is in bodily presence, I cannot have a slip of it till I pay the impost; and if my trade does not enable me to do so, I must give it up, or be a ruined man!

The same consequences must attend the increased expense of the circulation under the proposed measure, as would apply to a tax in any other form. The manufactures, public works, and private speculations, which are making a return, enabling them to defray the charge attending the more expensive medium of circulation, will struggle on as they can, with less profit by the direct amount, and more disadvantages arising from the means of circulation being at the mercy of winds and waves, and subjected to long and perilous transportation before the gold reaches them. Those, on the other hand, whose trade makes more precarious returns, will be no longer able to wait for better times. They will give up all, and the consequences to Scotland — and England also — omitting all allusion to individual distress, will be a black history.

I have already said, that the Fisheries and Kelp shores, and improvements on the more bleak and distant districts, will probably be the first sufferers. And my neighbour replies, with a sweeping argument, that enterprises which cannot support themselves by their own exertions, and natural returns of profit, ought not to have the encouragement of Government — that they are only vain schemes, in which labour and expense are wasted without their bringing the necessary return, and that the force employed in keeping up these barren and fruitless undertakings, should, as soon as possible, be directed into a more productive channel. If I urge, that, although these undertakings may not, as yet, have made the full returns expected, yet they support many people, natives of a country otherwise too poor to furnish the means of livelihood to its inhabitants, why, — the answer is equally ready. Let the Highlander emigrate, or be transported to Botany Bay; and supply his place with sheep, — — goats, — any thing, or nothing at all.

I do not mean to deny, sir, that there is general truth in the maxims, which recommend that a free trade be left to sustain itself by its own exertions; deprecating the system of forcing commerce when its natural efforts were not successful, and warning against planting colonies in unhealthy or barren spots, where the colonists must perish, or exist in a state of miserable and precarious dependence on the bounties of the mother country. To these political truths I subscribe cheerfully — But an old civilian used to tell me, *fraus latet in generalibus;* and no general maxim can be safely, wisely, or justly applied, until it has been carefully considered how far it is controlled by the peculiar circumstances of the case. The precepts of Religion herself, as expressed in the holiest texts of Scripture, have been wrested into sophistry — the soundest political principles may, by the frigid subtleties of metaphysical moonshine, be extended so as, in appearance, to authorise aggressions on national rights, as well as on the dictates of sound wisdom and humanity.

I have more replies than one to my neighbour's doctrines of Political Economy (though true in the abstract,) when I consider them as applicable to the case in question.

In the *first* place, I deny that the Scottish Fisheries are in the predicament to which the maxim quoted triumphantly by my friend Chrysal, applies. I say that they are already supporting themselves, and producing a moderate but certain profit; only that this profit is as yet so

moderate, that it certainly will not bear an impost of probably five or six per cent. upon the gross capital employed; and that, therefore, it is the highest impolicy to smother, by such a burden, important national undertakings, which are, without such new imposition, in a condition to maintain themselves. It would be breaking the reed ere it had attained its strength, and quenching the smoking flax just when about to burst into flame.

Secondly, Admitting, from the great poverty of the inhabitants, and other discouraging circumstances, that the Scottish fisheries have for a long time required the support of Government, I still aver, that the expense attending such support has been well and wisely disposed of, — just as a landlord would act not generously only, but most prudently, in giving favourable terms of settlement to a tenant, who was to improve his farm largely. An exotic shrub, when first planted, must be watered and cared for — a child requires tenderness and indulgence till he has got through the sickly and helpless years of infancy. A fishery or manufacture, established in a wild country, and among a population of indolent habits, unaccustomed to industry, and to the enjoyment of the profits derived from it, will, at the outset, require assistance from the State, till old habits are surmounted, and difficulties overcome. There is something in the nature of the people, who have been long depressed by poverty, resembling the qualities of their own peat-earth. Left alone, it is the most anti-septic and inert of Nature's productions; but when, according to the process of compost invented by the late ingenious Lord Meadowbank, this *caput mortuum* is intermixed with a small portion of active manure, it heats, ferments, changes its sluggish nature, and fertilizes the whole country in the vicinity. No agriculturist regards the expense of the proportion of manure necessary to commence this vivifying operation; and neither will any wise government regret the outlay of sums employed in exciting the industry, improving the comforts, and amending the condition, of its inhabitants. In the present case, Government has done this duty amply — The tree has taken root, the child is rising fast to youth and manhood — the establishments of the fisheries are in full progress to triumphant success. The question is not, if you are yet to continue your encouragement — nor whether the public is to save some expense by withdrawing it? In these questions there would be a direct and palpable motive, that of a saving to the State, which, so far as it went, would be a real, if not an adequate motive, for breaking up these establishments. But the question at issue turns on this very different point

— whether, by a measure obnoxious to Scotland, and in which England cannot challenge an interest remote or direct, you are to adopt an enactment so likely to create the ruin of these establishments, now that they have already attained prosperity? The wish of many of the wisest English patriots has been accomplished — the barren and desolate shores are compensated in that desolation by the riches of the sea — foreigners are driven from engrossing as formerly their wealth, and selling to Britain herself at advantage, the produce of her own coasts. Thriving villages are already found where there were scarcely to be seen the most wretched hovels; a population lazy and indolent, because they had no motive for exertion, have become, on finding the employment, and tasting the fruits of industry, an enterprising and hardy race of seamen, well qualified to enrich their country in peace — to defend her in time of war. *All this* is gained. Shall all be lost again, to render the system of currency betwixt England and Scotland uniform? all sacrificed to what I can call little more than a political conundrum? In my opinion, the Dutchmen might as well cut the dikes, and let the sea in upon the land their industry has gained from it. In the case of Holland, she would at least save the money expended in maintaining her ramparts. In our case, the State gains nothing and loses every thing.

Lastly, I would say a word in behalf of the people of Scotland, merely as human beings, and entitled to consideration as such. I will suppose this alteration is recommended by some expected advantages of great importance, but the nature of which are prudently concealed. I will suppose, what is not easily understood, that in some unintelligible manner England is to gain with addition what Scotland is condemned to lose. (The process, by the way, seems to resemble that recommended by Molière's quack, who prescribes the putting out of one eye, that the other may see further, and more acutely.) I will suppose that our statesmen, by enforcing this measure, condemn to emigration, or transportation — the punishment she inflicts on felons — the inhabitants of distant and desert tracts, on the mainland and in the Hebrides, to save her from some expense, and because she thinks a country so different from her own fertile valleys, cannot be fit for human habitation. In that case I would say, Consider first, the character of the population you are about to consign thus summarily to the effects which must follow the destroying their present means of livelihood. My countrymen have their faults, and I am well aware of them. But this I will say, that there is more vice, more crime — nay, more real want and misery,

more degrading pauperism and irremediable wretchedness, in the parish of Saint Giles's alone, than in the whole Highlands and pastoral districts of Scotland, or perhaps in all Scotland together. Poor as the inhabitants are, the wants of the Highlanders are limited to their circumstances; and they have enjoyments which make amends, in their own way of reckoning, for deprivations which they do not greatly feel. Their land is to them a land of many recollections. I will not dwell on that subject, lest I be thought fantastic in harping on a tune so obsolete. But every heart must feel some sympathy when I say, they love their country, rude as it is, because it holds the churches where their fathers worshipped, and the churchyards where their bones are laid.

This is not all. Mountainous countries inspire peculiarly strong attachments into the natives, showing, perhaps, if we argue up to the Final Great Cause, that while it was the pleasure of God that men should exist in all parts of the world, which His pleasure called into being, the Beneficence of the Common Father annexed circumstances of consolation, which should compensate the mountaineers for want of the fertility and fine climate enjoyed by the inhabitants of the plain. Some philosophers, looking to secondary causes, have referred the sense of this local attachment amongst mountaineers to the influence of the sublime though desolate scenery around them, as stamping the idea of a peculiar country more deeply on their bosoms. The chief cause seems to me to be, that such tribes rarely change their dwellings, and therefore become more wedded to their native districts than are the inhabitants of those where the population is frequently fluctuating. The land is not only theirs now, it pertained to a long list of fathers' before them; and the coldest philosopher will regard what is called a family estate with greater attachment than he applies to a recent purchase.

But independent of this, the inhabitants of the wilder districts in Scotland have actually some enjoyments, both moral and physical, which compensate for the want of better subsistence and more comfortable lodging. In a word, they have more liberty than the inhabitants of the richer soil. Englishmen will start at this as a paradox; but it is very true notwithstanding, that, if one great privilege of liberty be the power of going where a man pleases, the Scotch peasant enjoys it much more than the English. The pleasure of viewing "fair Nature's face," and a great many other primitive enjoyments, for which a better diet and lodging are but indifferent substitutes, are more within the power of the poor man in

Scotland than in the sister country. A Scottish gentleman, in the wilder districts, is seldom severe in excluding his poor neighbours from his grounds; and I have known many that have voluntarily thrown them open to all quiet and decent persons who wish to enjoy them. The game of such liberal proprietors, their plantations, their fences, and all that is apt to suffer from intruders, have, I have observed, been better protected than where severer measures of general seclusion were adopted. *Haud inexpertus loquor.*

But in many districts, the part of the soil which, with the utmost stretch of appropriation, the firstborn of Egypt can set apart for his own exclusive use, bears a small proportion indeed to the uncultivated wastes. The step of the mountaineer on his wild heath, solitary mountain, and beside his far-spread lake, is more free than that which is confined to a dusty turnpike, and warned from casual deviation by advertisements which menace the summary vindication of the proprietor's monopoly of his extensive park, by springguns or man-traps, or the more protracted, yet scarce less formidable denunciation, of what is often, and scarce unjustly spelled, *" persecution* according to law." Above all, the peasant lives and dies as his fathers did, in the cot where he was born, without ever experiencing the horrors of a workhouse. This may compensate for the want of much beef, beer, and pudding, in those to whom habit has not made this diet indispensable.

It is to be hoped that experimental legislation will pause ere consigning a race, which is contented with its situation, to banishment, because they only offer at present their hardy virtues and industry to the stock of national prosperity, instead of communicating largely to national wealth. Even considered as absolute paupers, they have some right to such slight support as may be necessary to aid them in maintaining themselves by their own industry. If the poor elsewhere could be maintained without the degrading sense that they were receiving eleemosynary aid, it would be the better for themselves and their country.

I will admit, for argument's sake, that the public funds which have established those fishing stations might have been bestowed to better advantage; still, having been so expended, we ought certainly not to be hasty in withdrawing our support, even if we may judge that it was incautiously granted at first. The philosopher, in the fanciful tale of *Frankenstein,* acted unwisely in creating the unnatural being to which art enabled him to give life and motion; but when he had, like a second

Prometheus, given sensation and power of thought to the creation of his skill and science, he had no title to desert the giant whom he had called into existence; and the story shows that no good came of his being discontented with his own handiwork. But I contend, that the establishments to which I allude exhibit nothing save what may render the founders and encouragers proud of the result of their patriotic labours.

I do therefore hope that the present contented and rapidly improving condition of so many fellow-creatures, will be considered as something in the scale, when a measure shall be finally weighed, which, in the opinion of all connected with the north of Scotland, threatens to deprive them of the means of livelihood.

On other national topics I have already said enough. Those who look only at states and ledgers, hold such feelings as arise upon points of national honour, as valueless as a cipher without a numeral prefixed. Right or wrong, however, they still have an effect on the people of Scotland, as all can bear witness who were here when his Majesty honoured the capital of his ancestors with his own presence. We would not plead these too high neither, nor cling tenaciously by antiquated pretensions, which may obstruct the general welfare of the empire; but we deprecate that sort of change which is made for the mere sake of innovation. A proud nation cannot endure such experiments when they touch honour — a poor one cannot brook them when attended with heavy loss. We are all aware that many changes must of necessity be — the political atmosphere is heavy and gloomy with the symptoms of them, —

"And coming events cast their shadows before."

These changes will be wrought in their time; but we trust they will not be forced forward suddenly, or until the public mind is prepared for, and the circumstances of the country require them.

Seasonable improvements are like the timely and regular showers, which, falling softly and silently upon the earth, when fittest to be received, awaken its powers of fertility. Hasty innovation is like the headlong hurricane, which may indeed be ultimately followed by beneficial consequences, but is, in its commencement and immediate progress, attended by terror, tumult, and distress.

This is indeed a period when change of every kind is boldly urged and ingeniously supported, nay, finds support in its very singularity: as the wildest doctrines of enthusiasm have been often pleaded with most

eloquence, and adopted with most zeal. One philosopher will convert the whole country into workhouses, just as Commodore Trunnion would have arranged each parish on the system of a man-of-war. Another class has turned the system of Ethics out of doors, and discovers, on the exterior of the skull, the passions of which we used to look for the source within. One set of fanatics join to dethrone the Deity, another to set up Prince Hohenloe. The supporters of all find preachers, hearers, and zealots, and would find martyrs if persecuted. We are, at such a speculative period, obliged to be cautious in adopting measures which are supported only by speculative argument. Let men reason as ingeniously as they will, and we will listen to them, amused if we are not convinced. I have heard with great pleasure an ingenious person lecture on phrenology, and have been much interested in his process of reasoning. But should such a philosopher propose to saw off or file away any of the bumps on my skull, by way of improving the moral sense, I am afraid I should demur to the motion.

I have read, I think in Lucian, of two architects, who contended before the people at Athens which should be intrusted with the task of erecting a temple. The first made a luminous oration, showing that he was, in theory at least, master of his art, and spoke with such glibness in the hard terms of architecture, that the assembly could scarce be prevailed on to listen to his opponent, an old man of unpretending appearance. But when he obtained audience, he said in a few words, "All that this young man can talk of, I have done." The decision was unanimously in favour of Experience against Theory. This resembles exactly the question now tried before us.

Here stands Theory, a scroll in her hand, full of deep and mysterious combinations of figures, the least failure in any one of which may alter the result entirely, and which you must take on trust, for who is capable to go through and check them? *There* lies before you a practical System, successful for upwards of a century. The one allures you with promises, as the saying goes, of untold gold, — the other appeals to the miracles already wrought in your behalf. The one shows you provinces, the wealth of which has been tripled under her management, — the other a problem which has never been practically solved. Here you have a pamphlet — there a fishing town — here the long-continued prosperity of a whole nation — and there the opinion of a professor of Economics, that in such circumstances she ought not by true principles to have prospered at all. In short, good countrymen, if you are determined, like Æsop's dog, to snap at the shadow

and lose the substance, you had never such a gratuitous opportunity of exchanging food and wealth for moonshine in the water.

Adieu, sir. This is the last letter you will receive from,
Yours, *etc.*
Malachi Malagrowther.

LETTERS ON DEMONOLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT

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LETTERS ON DEMONOLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT

With An Introduction By Henry Morley Ll.d., Professor Of English
Literature At University College, London

Introduction

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Sir Walter Scott's "Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft" were his contribution to a series of books, published by John Murray, which appeared between the years 1829 and 1847, and formed a collection of eighty volumes known as "Murray's Family Library." The series was planned to secure a wide diffusion of good literature in cheap five-shilling volumes, and Scott's "Letters," written and published in 1830, formed one of the earlier books in the collection.

The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge had been founded in the autumn of 1826, and Charles Knight, who had then conceived a plan of a National Library, was entrusted, in July, 1827, with the superintendence of its publications. Its first treatises appeared in sixpenny numbers, once a fortnight. Its "British Almanac" and "Companion to the Almanac" first appeared at the beginning of 1829. Charles Knight started also in that year his own "Library of Entertaining Knowledge." John Murray's "Family Library" was then begun, and in the spring of 1832 — the year of the Reform Bill — the advance of civilization by the diffusion of good literature, through cheap journals as well as cheap books, was sought by the establishment of "Chambers's Edinburgh Journal" in the North, and in London of "The Penny Magazine."

In the autumn of that year, 1832, on the 21st of September, Sir Walter Scott died. The first warning of death had come to him in February, 1830, with a stroke of apoplexy. He had been visited by an old friend who brought him memoirs of her father, which he had promised to revise for the press. He seemed for half an hour to be bending over the papers at his desk, and reading them; then he rose, staggered into the drawingroom, and fell, remaining speechless until he had been bled. Dieted for weeks on pulse and water, he so far recovered that to friends outside his family but little change in him was visible. In that condition, in the month after his seizure, he was writing these Letters, and also a fourth series of the "Tales of a Grandfather." The slight softening of the brain found after death had then begun. But the old delight in anecdote and skill in story-telling that, at the beginning of his career, had caused a critic of his "Border Minstrelsy" to

say that it contained the germs of a hundred romances, yet survived. It gave to Scott's "Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft" what is for us now a pathetic charm. Here and there some slight confusion of thought or style represents the flickering of a light that flashes yet with its old brilliancy. There is not yet the manifest suggestion of the loss of power that we find presently afterwards in "Count Robert of Paris" and "Castle Dangerous," published in 1831 as the Fourth Series of "Tales of My Landlord," with which he closed his life's work at the age of sixty.

Milton has said that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem. Scott's life was a true poem, of which the music entered into all he wrote. If in his earlier days the consciousness of an unlimited productive power tempted him to make haste to be rich, that he might work out, as founder of a family, an ideal of life touched by his own genius of romance, there was not in his desire for gain one touch of sordid greed, and his ideal of life only brought him closer home to all its duties. Sir Walter Scott's good sense, as Lord Cockburn said, was a more wonderful gift than his genius. When the mistake of a trade connection with James Ballantyne brought ruin to him in 1826, he repudiated bankruptcy, took on himself the burden of a debt of £130,000, and sacrificed his life to the successful endeavour to pay off all. What was left unpaid at his death was cleared afterwards by the success of his annotated edition of his novels. No tale of physical strife in the battlefield could be as heroic as the story of the close of Scott's life, with five years of a death-struggle against adversity, animated by the truest sense of honour. When the ruin was impending he wrote in his diary, "If things go badly in London, the magic wand of the Unknown will be shivered in his grasp. The feast of fancy will be over with the feeling of independence. He shall no longer have the delight of waking in the morning with bright ideas in his mind, hasten to commit them to paper, and count them monthly, as the means of planting such scaurs and purchasing such wastes; replacing dreams of fiction by other prospective visions of walks by

> 'Fountain-heads, and pathless groves;
> Places which pale passion loves.'

This cannot be; but I may work substantial husbandry — *i.e.* write history, and such concerns." It was under pressure of calamity like this that Sir Walter Scott was compelled to make himself known as the author of

“Waverley.” Closely upon this followed the death of his wife, his thirty years’ companion. “I have been to her room,” he wrote in May, 1826; “there was no voice in it — no stirring; the pressure of the coffin was visible on the bed, but it had been removed elsewhere; all was neat as she loved it, but all was calm — calm as death. I remembered the last sight of her: she raised herself in bed, and tried to turn her eyes after me, and said with a sort of smile, ‘You have all such melancholy faces.’ These were the last words I ever heard her utter, and I hurried away, for she did not seem quite conscious of what she said; when I returned, immediately departing, she was in a deep sleep. It is deeper now. This was but seven days since. They are arranging the chamber of death — that which was long the apartment of connubial happiness, and of whose arrangement (better than in richer houses) she was so proud. They are treading fast and thick. For weeks you could have heard a footfall. Oh, my God!”

A few years yet of his own battle, while the shadows of night and death were gathering about him, and they were reunited. In these “Letters upon Demonology and Witchcraft,” addressed to his son-in-law, written under the first grasp of death, the old kindliness and good sense, joined to the old charm in story-telling, stand firm yet against every assault; and even in the decay that followed, when the powers were broken of the mind that had breathed, and is still breathing, its own health into the minds of tens of thousands of his countrymen, nothing could break the fine spirit of love and honour that was in him. When the end was very near, and the son-in-law to whom these Letters were addressed found him one morning entirely himself, though in the last extreme of feebleness: his eye was clear and calm — every trace of the wild fire of delirium was extinguished: “Lockhart,” he said, “I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man — be virtuous, be religious — be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.”

Another volume of this Library may give occasion to recall Scott in the noontide of his strength, companion of

> “The blameless Muse who trains her sons
> For hope and calm enjoyment.”

Here we remember only how from among dark clouds the last light of his genius shone on the path of those who were endeavouring to make the daily bread of intellectual life — good books — common to all.

H.M. February, 1884.

LETTERS ON DEMONOLOGY AND WITCHCRAFT

To J.G. LOCKHART, ESQ.

Letter I

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Origin of the general Opinions respecting Demonology among Mankind — The Belief in the Immortality of the Soul is the main inducement to credit its occasional reappearance — The Philosophical Objections to the Apparition of an Abstract Spirit little understood by the Vulgar and Ignorant — The situations of excited Passion incident to Humanity, which teach Men to wish or apprehend Supernatural Apparitions — They are often presented by the Sleeping Sense — Story of Somnambulism — The Influence of Credulity contagious, so that Individuals will trust the Evidence of others in despite of their own Senses — Examples from the “Historia Verdadera” of Bernal Dias del Castillo, and from the Works of Patrick Walker — The apparent Evidence of Intercourse with the Supernatural World is sometimes owing to a depraved State of the bodily Organs — Difference between this Disorder and Insanity, in which the Organs retain their tone, though that of the Mind is lost — Rebellion of the Senses of a Lunatic against the current of his Reveries — Narratives of a contrary Nature, in which the Evidence of the Eyes overbore the Conviction of the Understanding — Example of a London Man of Pleasure — Of Nicolai, the German Bookseller and Philosopher — Of a Patient of Dr. Gregory — Of an Eminent Scottish Lawyer, deceased — Of this same fallacious Disorder are other instances, which have but sudden and momentary endurance — Apparition of Maupertuis — Of a late illustrious modern Poet — The Cases quoted chiefly relating to false Impressions on the Visual Nerve, those upon the Ear next considered — Delusions of the Touch chiefly experienced in Sleep — Delusions of the Taste — And of the Smelling — Sum of the Argument.

You have asked of me, my dear friend, that I should assist the "Family Library" with the history of a dark chapter in human nature, which the increasing civilization of all well-instructed countries has now almost blotted out, though the subject attracted no ordinary degree of consideration in the older times of their history.

Among much reading of my earlier days, it is no doubt true that I travelled a good deal in the twilight regions of superstitious disquisitions. Many hours have I lost — "I would their debt were less!" — in examining old as well as more recent narratives of this character, and even in looking into some of the criminal trials so frequent in early days, upon a subject which our fathers considered as a matter of the last importance. And, of late years, the very curious extracts published by Mr. Pitcairn, from the Criminal Records of Scotland, are, besides their historical value, of a nature so much calculated to illustrate the credulity of our ancestors on such subjects, that, by perusing them, I have been induced more recently to recall what I had read and thought upon the subject at a former period.

As, however, my information is only miscellaneous, and I make no pretensions, either to combat the systems of those by whom I am anticipated in consideration of the subject, or to erect any new one of my own, my purpose is, after a general account of Demonology and Witchcraft, to confine myself to narratives of remarkable cases, and to the observations which naturally and easily arise out of them; — in the confidence that such a plan is, at the present time of day, more likely to suit the pages of a popular miscellany, than an attempt to reduce the contents of many hundred tomes, from the largest to the smallest size, into an abridgement, which, however compressed, must remain greatly too large for the reader's powers of patience.

A few general remarks on the nature of Demonology, and the original cause of the almost universal belief in communication betwixt mortals and beings of a power superior to themselves, and of a nature not to be comprehended by human organs, are a necessary introduction to the subject.

The general, or, it may be termed, the universal belief of the inhabitants of the earth, in the existence of spirits separated from the encumbrance and incapacities of the body, is grounded on the consciousness of the divinity that speaks in our bosoms, and demonstrates to all men, except the few who are hardened to the celestial voice, that there is within us a portion of the divine substance, which is not subject to the law of death and dissolution,

but which, when the body is no longer fit for its abode, shall seek its own place, as a sentinel dismissed from his post. Unaided by revelation, it cannot be hoped that mere earthly reason should be able to form any rational or precise conjecture concerning the destination of the soul when parted from the body; but the conviction that such an indestructible essence exists, the belief expressed by the poet in a different sense, *Non omnis moriar* must infer the existence of many millions of spirits who have not been annihilated, though they have become invisible to mortals who still see, hear, and perceive, only by means of the imperfect organs of humanity. Probability may lead some of the most reflecting to anticipate a state of future rewards and punishments; as those experienced in the education of the deaf and dumb find that their pupils, even while cut off from all instruction by ordinary means, have been able to form, out of their own unassisted conjectures, some ideas of the existence of a Deity, and of the distinction between the soul and body — a circumstance which proves how naturally these truths arise in the human mind. The principle that they do so arise, being taught or communicated, leads to further conclusions.

These spirits, in a state of separate existence, being admitted to exist, are not, it may be supposed, indifferent to the affairs of mortality, perhaps not incapable of influencing them. It is true that, in a more advanced state of society, the philosopher may challenge the possibility of a separate appearance of a disembodied spirit, unless in the case of a direct miracle, to which, being a suspension of the laws of nature, directly wrought by the Maker of these laws, for some express purpose, no bound or restraint can possibly be assigned. But under this necessary limitation and exception, philosophers might plausibly argue that, when the soul is divorced from the body, it loses all those qualities which made it, when clothed with a mortal shape, obvious to the organs of its fellow-men. The abstract idea of a spirit certainly implies that it has neither substance, form, shape, voice, or anything which can render its presence visible or sensible to human faculties. But these sceptic doubts of philosophers on the possibility of the appearance of such separated spirits, do not arise till a certain degree of information has dawned upon a country, and even then only reach a very small proportion of reflecting and better-informed members of society. To the multitude, the indubitable fact, that so many millions of spirits exist around and even amongst us, seems sufficient to support the belief that they are, in certain instances at least, by some means or other, able to

communicate with the world of humanity. The more numerous part of mankind cannot form in their mind the idea of the spirit of the deceased existing, without possessing or having the power to assume the appearance which their acquaintance bore during his life, and do not push their researches beyond this point.

Enthusiastic feelings of an impressive and solemn nature occur both in private and public life, which seem to add ocular testimony to an intercourse betwixt earth and the world beyond it. For example, the son who has been lately deprived of his father feels a sudden crisis approach, in which he is anxious to have recourse to his sagacious advice — or a bereaved husband earnestly desires again to behold the form of which the grave has deprived him for ever — or, to use a darker yet very common instance, the wretched man who has dipped his hand in his fellow-creature's blood, is haunted by the apprehension that the phantom of the slain stands by the bedside of his murderer. In all or any of these cases, who shall doubt that imagination, favoured by circumstances, has power to summon up to the organ of sight, spectres which only exist in the mind of those by whom their apparition seems to be witnessed?

If we add, that such a vision may take place in the course of one of those lively dreams in which the patient, except in respect to the single subject of one strong impression, is, or seems, sensible of the real particulars of the scene around him, a state of slumber which often occurs; if he is so far conscious, for example, as to know that he is lying on his own bed, and surrounded by his own familiar furniture at the time when the supposed apparition is manifested, it becomes almost in vain to argue with the visionary against the reality of his dream, since the spectre, though itself purely fanciful, is inserted amidst so many circumstances which he feels must be true beyond the reach of doubt or question. That which is undeniably certain becomes, in a manner, a warrant for the reality of the appearance to which doubt would have been otherwise attached. And if any event, such as the death of the person dreamt of, chances to take place, so as to correspond with the nature and the time of the apparition, the coincidence, though one which must be frequent, since our dreams usually refer to the accomplishment of that which haunts our minds when awake, and often presage the most probable events, seems perfect, and the chain of circumstances touching the evidence may not unreasonably be considered as complete. Such a concatenation, we repeat, must frequently take place,

when it is considered of what stuff dreams are made — how naturally they turn upon those who occupy our mind while awake, and, when a soldier is exposed to death in battle, when a sailor is incurring the dangers of the sea, when a beloved wife or relative is attacked by disease, how readily our sleeping imagination rushes to the very point of alarm, which when waking it had shuddered to anticipate. The number of instances in which such lively dreams have been quoted, and both asserted and received as spiritual communications, is very great at all periods; in ignorant times, where the natural cause of dreaming is misapprehended and confused with an idea of mysticism, it is much greater. Yet, perhaps, considering the many thousands of dreams which must, night after night, pass through the imagination of individuals, the number of coincidences between the vision and real event are fewer and less remarkable than a fair calculation of chances would warrant us to expect. But in countries where such presaging dreams are subjects of attention, the number of those which seemed to be coupled with the corresponding issue, is large enough to spread a very general belief of a positive communication betwixt the living and the dead.

Somnambulism and other nocturnal deceptions frequently lend their aid to the formation of such *phantasmata* as are formed in this middle state, betwixt sleeping and waking. A most respectable person, whose active life had been spent as master and part owner of a large merchant vessel in the Lisbon trade, gave the writer an account of such an instance which came under his observation. He was lying in the Tagus, when he was put to great anxiety and alarm by the following incident and its consequences. One of his crew was murdered by a Portuguese assassin, and a report arose that the ghost of the slain man haunted the vessel. Sailors are generally superstitious, and those of my friend's vessel became unwilling to remain on board the ship; and it was probable they might desert rather then return to England with the ghost for a passenger. To prevent so great a calamity, the captain determined to examine the story to the bottom. He soon found that, though all pretended to have seen lights and heard noises, and so forth, the weight of the evidence lay upon the statement of one of his own mates, an Irishman and a Catholic, which might increase his tendency to superstition, but in other respects a veracious, honest, and sensible person, whom Captain — — had no reason to suspect would wilfully deceive him. He affirmed to Captain S — — with the deepest obtestations, that the spectre of the murdered man appeared to him almost nightly, took him from

his place in the vessel, and, according to his own expression, worried his life out. He made these communications with a degree of horror which intimated the reality of his distress and apprehensions. The captain, without any argument at the time, privately resolved to watch the motions of the ghost-seer in the night; whether alone, or with a witness, I have forgotten. As the ship bell struck twelve, the sleeper started up, with a ghastly and disturbed countenance, and lighting a candle, proceeded to the galley or cook-room of the vessel. He sate down with his eyes open, staring before him as on some terrible object which he beheld with horror, yet from which he could not withhold his eyes. After a short space he arose, took up a tin can or decanter, filled it with water, muttering to himself all the while — mixed salt in the water, and sprinkled it about the galley. Finally, he sighed deeply, like one relieved from a heavy burden, and, returning to his hammock, slept soundly. In the next morning the haunted man told the usual precise story of his apparition, with the additional circumstances, that the ghost had led him to the galley, but that he had fortunately, he knew not how, obtained possession of some holy water, and succeeded in getting rid of his unwelcome visitor. The visionary was then informed of the real transactions of the night, with so many particulars as to satisfy him he had been the dupe of his imagination; he acquiesced in his commander's reasoning, and the dream, as often happens in these cases, returned no more after its imposture had been detected. In this case, we find the excited imagination acting upon the half-waking senses, which were intelligent enough for the purpose of making him sensible where he was, but not sufficiently so to judge truly of the objects before him.

But it is not only private life alone, or that tenor of thought which has been depressed into melancholy by gloomy anticipations respecting the future, which disposes the mind to mid-day fantasies, or to nightly apparitions — a state of eager anxiety, or excited exertion, is equally favourable to the indulgence of such supernatural communications. The anticipation of a dubious battle, with all the doubt and uncertainty of its event, and the conviction that it must involve his own fate and that of his country, was powerful enough to conjure up to the anxious eye of Brutus the spectre of his murdered friend Cæsar, respecting whose death he perhaps thought himself less justified than at the Ides of March, since, instead of having achieved the freedom of Rome, the event had only been the renewal of civil wars, and the issue might appear most likely to

conclude in the total subjection of liberty. It is not miraculous that the masculine spirit of Marcus Brutus, surrounded by darkness and solitude, distracted probably by recollection of the kindness and favour of the great individual whom he had put to death to avenge the wrongs of his country, though by the slaughter of his own friend, should at length place before his eyes in person the appearance which termed itself his evil genius, and promised again to meet him at Philippi. Brutus' own intentions, and his knowledge of the military art, had probably long since assured him that the decision of the civil war must take place at or near that place; and, allowing that his own imagination supplied that part of his dialogue with the spectre, there is nothing else which might not be fashioned in a vivid dream or a waking reverie, approaching, in absorbing and engrossing character, the usual matter of which dreams consist. That Brutus, well acquainted with the opinions of the Platonists, should be disposed to receive without doubt the idea that he had seen a real apparition, and was not likely to scrutinize very minutely the supposed vision, may be naturally conceived; and it is also natural to think, that although no one saw the figure but himself, his contemporaries were little disposed to examine the testimony of a man so eminent, by the strict rules of cross-examination and conflicting evidence, which they might have thought applicable to another person, and a less dignified occasion.

Even in the field of death, and amid the mortal tug of combat itself, strong belief has wrought the same wonder, which we have hitherto mentioned as occurring in solitude and amid darkness; and those who were themselves on the verge of the world of spirits, or employed in dispatching others to these gloomy regions, conceived they beheld the apparitions of those beings whom their national mythology associated with such scenes. In such moments of undecided battle, amid the violence, hurry, and confusion of ideas incident to the situation, the ancients supposed that they saw their deities, Castor and Pollux, fighting in the van for their encouragement; the heathen Scandinavian beheld the Choosers of the slain; and the Catholics were no less easily led to recognize the warlike Saint George or Saint James in the very front of the strife, showing them the way to conquest. Such apparitions being generally visible to a multitude, have in all times been supported by the greatest strength of testimony. When the common feeling of danger, and the animating burst of enthusiasm, act on the feelings of many men at once, their minds hold a natural correspondence with each

other, as it is said is the case with stringed instruments tuned to the same pitch, of which, when one is played, the chords of the others are supposed to vibrate in unison with the tones produced. If an artful or enthusiastic individual exclaims, in the heat of action, that he perceives an apparition of the romantic kind which has been intimated, his companions catch at the idea with emulation, and most are willing to sacrifice the conviction of their own senses, rather than allow that they did not witness the same favourable emblem, from which all draw confidence and hope. One warrior catches the idea from another; all are alike eager to acknowledge the present miracle, and the battle is won before the mistake is discovered. In such cases, the number of persons present, which would otherwise lead to detection of the fallacy, becomes the means of strengthening it.

Of this disposition, to see as much of the supernatural as is seen by others around, or, in other words, to trust to the eyes of others rather than to our own, we may take the liberty to quote two remarkable instances.

The first is from the "Historia Verdadera" of Don Bernal Dias del Castillo, one of the companions of the celebrated Cortez in his Mexican conquest. After having given an account of a great victory over extreme odds, he mentions the report inserted in the contemporary Chronicle of Gomara, that Saint Iago had appeared on a white horse in van of the combat, and led on his beloved Spaniards to victory. It is very curious to observe the Castilian cavalier's internal conviction that the rumour arose out of a mistake, the cause of which he explains from his own observation; whilst, at the same time, he does not venture to disown the miracle. The honest Conquestador owns that he himself did not see this animating vision; nay, that he beheld an individual cavalier, named Francisco de Morla, mounted on a chestnut horse, and fighting strenuously in the very place where Saint James is said to have appeared. But instead of proceeding to draw the necessary inference, the devout Conquestador exclaims — "Sinner that I am, what am I that I should have beheld the blessed apostle!"

The other instance of the infectious character of superstition occurs in a Scottish book, and there can be little doubt that it refers, in its first origin, to some uncommon appearance of the aurora borealis, or the northern lights, which do not appear to have been seen in Scotland so frequently as to be accounted a common and familiar atmospherical phenomenon, until the beginning of the eighteenth century. The passage is striking and curious, for the narrator, Peter Walker, though an enthusiast, was a man of credit, and

does not even affect to have seen the wonders, the reality of which he unscrupulously adopts on the testimony of others, to whose eyes he trusted rather than to his own. The conversion of the sceptical gentleman of whom he speaks is highly illustrative of popular credulity carried away into enthusiasm, or into imposture, by the evidence of those around, and at once shows the imperfection of such a general testimony, and the ease with which it is procured, since the general excitement of the moment impels even the more coldblooded and judicious persons present to catch up the ideas and echo the exclamations of the majority, who, from the first, had considered the heavenly phenomenon as a supernatural weapon-schaw, held for the purpose of a sign and warning of civil wars to come.

"In the year 1686, in the months of June and July," says the honest chronicler, "many yet alive can witness that about the Crossford Boat, two miles beneath Lanark, especially at the Mains, on the water of Clyde, many people gathered together for several afternoons, where there were showers of bonnets, hats, guns, and swords, which covered the trees and the ground; companies of men in arms marching in order upon the waterside; companies meeting companies, going all through other, and then all falling to the ground and disappearing; other companies immediately appeared, marching the same way. I went there three afternoons together, and, as I observed, there were twothirds of the people that were together saw, and a third that saw not; and, *though I could see nothing*, there was such a fright and trembling on those that did see, that was discernible to all from those that saw not. There was a gentleman standing next to me who spoke as too many gentlemen and others speak, who said, 'A pack of damned witches and warlocks that have the second sight! the devil ha't do I see;' and immediately there was a discernible change in his countenance. With as much fear and trembling as any woman I saw there, he called out, 'All you that do not see, say nothing; for I persuade you it is matter of fact, and discernible to all that is not stone-blind.' And those who did see told what works (*i.e.*, locks) the guns had, and their length and wideness, and what handles the swords had, whether small or three-barr'd, or Highland guards, and the closing knots of the bonnets, black or blue; and those who did see them there, whenever they went abroad, saw a bonnet and a sword drop in the way."

[Footnote 1: Walker's "Lives," Edinburgh, 1827, vol. i. p. xxxvi. It is evident that honest Peter believed in the apparition of this martial gear on the principle of Partridge's terror for the ghost of

Hamlet — not that he was afraid himself, but because Garrick showed such evident marks of terror.]

This singular phenomenon, in which a multitude believed, although only twothirds of them saw what must, if real, have been equally obvious to all, may be compared with the exploit of the humourist, who planted himself in an attitude of astonishment, with his eyes riveted on the wellknown bronze lion that graces the front of Northumberland House in the Strand, and having attracted the attention of those who looked at him by muttering, "By heaven it wags! it wags again!" contrived in a few minutes to blockade the whole street with an immense crowd, some conceiving that they had absolutely seen the lion of Percy wag his tail, others expecting' to witness the same phenomenon.

On such occasions as we have hitherto mentioned, we have supposed that the ghost-seer has been in full possession of his ordinary powers of perception, unless in the case of dreamers, in whom they may have been obscured by temporary slumber, and the possibility of correcting vagaries of the imagination rendered more difficult by want of the ordinary appeal to the evidence of the bodily senses. In other respects their blood beat temperately, they possessed the ordinary capacity of ascertaining the truth or discerning the falsehood of external appearances by an appeal to the organ of sight. Unfortunately, however, as is now universally known and admitted, there certainly exists more than one disorder known to professional men of which one important symptom is a disposition to see apparitions.

This frightful disorder is not properly insanity, although it is somewhat allied to that most horrible of maladies, and may, in many constitutions, be the means of bringing it on, and although such hallucinations are proper to both. The difference I conceive to be that, in cases of insanity, the mind of the patient is principally affected, while the senses, or organic system, offer in vain to the lunatic their decided testimony against the fantasy of a deranged imagination. Perhaps the nature of this collision — between a disturbed imagination and organs of sense possessed of their usual accuracy — cannot be better described than in the embarrassment expressed by an insane patient confined in the Infirmary of Edinburgh. The poor man's malady had taken a gay turn. The house, in his idea, was his own, and he contrived to account for all that seemed inconsistent with his imaginary right of property — there were many patients in it, but that was owing to the benevolence of his nature, which made him love to see the relief of

distress. He went little, or rather never abroad — but then his habits were of a domestic and rather sedentary character. He did not see much company — but he daily received visits from the first characters in the renowned medical school of this city, and he could not therefore be much in want of society. With so many supposed comforts around him — with so many visions of wealth and splendour — one thing alone disturbed the peace of the poor optimist, and would indeed have confounded most *bons vivants*. "He was curious," he said, "in his table, choice in his selection of cooks, had every day a dinner of three regular courses and a dessert; and yet, somehow or other, everything he eat *tasted of porridge*." This dilemma could be no great wonder to the friend to whom the poor patient communicated it, who knew the lunatic eat nothing but this simple aliment at any of his meals. The case was obvious. The disease lay in the extreme vivacity of the patient's imagination, deluded in other instances, yet not absolutely powerful enough to contend with the honest evidence of his stomach and palate, which, like Lord Peter's brethren in "The Tale of a Tub," were indignant at the attempt to impose boiled oatmeal upon them, instead of such a banquet as Ude would have displayed when peers were to partake of it. Here, therefore, is one instance of actual insanity, in which the sense of taste controlled and attempted to restrain the ideal hypothesis adopted by a deranged imagination. But the disorder to which I previously alluded is entirely of a bodily character, and consists principally in a disease of the visual organs, which present to the patient a set of spectres or appearances which have no actual existence. It is a disease of the same nature which renders many men incapable of distinguishing colours; only the patients go a step further, and pervert the external form of objects. In their case, therefore, contrary to that of the maniac, it is not the mind, or rather the imagination, which imposes upon and overpowers the evidence of the senses, but the sense of seeing (or hearing) which betrays its duty and conveys false ideas to a sane intellect.

More than one learned physician, who have given their attestations to the existence of this most distressing complaint, have agreed that it actually occurs, and is occasioned by different causes. The most frequent source of the malady is in the dissipated and intemperate habits of those who, by a continued series of intoxication, become subject to what is popularly called the Blue Devils, instances of which mental disorder may be known to most who have lived for any period of their lives in society where hard drinking

was a common vice. The joyous visions suggested by intoxication when the habit is first acquired, in time disappear, and are supplied by frightful impressions and scenes, which destroy the tranquillity of the unhappy debauchee. Apparitions of the most unpleasant appearance are his companions in solitude, and intrude even upon his hours of society: and when by an alteration of habits, the mind is cleared of these frightful ideas, it requires but the slightest renewal of the association to bring back the full tide of misery upon the repentant libertine.

Of this the following instance was told to the author by a gentleman connected with the sufferer. A young man of fortune, who had led what is called so gay a life as considerably to injure both his health and fortune, was at length obliged to consult the physician upon the means of restoring, at least, the former. One of his principal complaints was the frequent presence of a set of apparitions, resembling a band of figures dressed in green, who performed in his drawingroom a singular dance, to which he was compelled to bear witness, though he knew, to his great annoyance, that the whole *corps de ballet* existed only in his own imagination. His physician immediately informed him that he had lived upon town too long and too fast not to require an exchange to a more healthy and natural course of life. He therefore prescribed a gentle course of medicine, but earnestly recommended to his patient to retire to his own house in the country, observe a temperate diet and early hours, practising regular exercise, on the same principle avoiding fatigue, and assured him that by doing so he might bid adieu to black spirits and white, blue, green, and grey, with all their trumpery. The patient observed the advice, and prospered. His physician, after the interval of a month, received a grateful letter from him, acknowledging the success of his regimen. The greens goblins had disappeared, and with them the unpleasant train of emotions to which their visits had given rise, and the patient had ordered his townhouse to be disfurnished and sold, while the furniture was to be sent down to his residence in the country, where he was determined in future to spend his life, without exposing himself to the temptations of town. One would have supposed this a well-devised scheme for health. But, alas! no sooner had the furniture of the London drawingroom been placed in order in the gallery of the old manor-house, than the former delusion returned in full force: the green *figurantés*, whom the patient's depraved imagination had so long associated with these moveables, came capering and frisking to accompany

them, exclaiming with great glee, as if the sufferer should have been rejoiced to see them, “Here we all are — here we all are!” The visionary, if I recollect right, was so much shocked at their appearance, that he retired abroad, in despair that any part of Britain could shelter him from the daily persecution of this domestic ballet.

There is reason to believe that such cases are numerous, and that they may perhaps arise not only from the debility of stomach brought on by excess in wine or spirits, which derangement often sensibly affects the eyes and sense of sight, but also because the mind becomes habitually predominated over by a train of fantastic visions, the consequence of frequent intoxication; and is thus, like a dislocated joint, apt again to go wrong, even when a different cause occasions the derangement.

It is easy to be supposed that habitual excitement by means of any other intoxicating drug, as opium, or its various substitutes, must expose those who practise the dangerous custom to the same inconvenience. Very frequent use of the nitrous oxide which affects the senses so strongly, and produces a short but singular state of ecstasy, would probably be found to occasion this species of disorder. But there are many other causes which medical men find attended with the same symptom, of embodying before the eyes of a patient imaginary illusions which are visible to no one else. This persecution of spectral deceptions is also found to exist when no excesses of the patient can be alleged as the cause, owing, doubtless, to a deranged state of the blood or nervous system.

The learned and acute Dr. Ferriar of Manchester was the first who brought before the English public the leading case, as it may be called, in this department, namely, that of *Mons.* Nicolai, the celebrated bookseller of Berlin. This gentleman was not a man merely of books, but of letters, and had the moral courage to lay before the Philosophical Society of Berlin an account of his own sufferings, from having been, by disease, subjected to a series of spectral illusions. The leading circumstances of this case may be stated very shortly, as it has been repeatedly before the public, and is insisted on by Dr. Ferriar, Dr. Hibbert, and others who have assumed Demonology as a subject. Nicolai traces his illness remotely to a series of disagreeable incidents which had happened to him in the beginning of the year 1791. The depression of spirits which was occasioned by these unpleasant occurrences, was aided by the consequences of neglecting a course of periodical bleeding which he had been accustomed to observe.

This state of health brought on the disposition to see *phantasmata*, who visited, or it may be more properly said frequented, the apartments of the learned bookseller, presenting crowds of persons who moved and acted before him, nay, even spoke to and addressed him. These phantoms afforded nothing unpleasant to the imagination of the visionary either in sight or expression, and the patient was possessed of too much firmness to be otherwise affected by their presence than with a species of curiosity, as he remained convinced from the beginning to the end of the disorder, that these singular effects were merely symptoms of the state of his health, and did not in any other respect regard them as a subject of apprehension. After a certain time, and some use of medicine, the phantoms became less distinct in their outline, less vivid in their colouring, faded, as it were, on the eye of the patient, and at length totally disappeared.

The case of Nicolai has unquestionably been that of many whose love of science has not been able to overcome their natural reluctance to communicate to the public the particulars attending the visitation of a disease so peculiar. That such illnesses have been experienced, and have ended fatally, there can be no doubt; though it is by no means to be inferred, that the symptom of importance to our present discussion has, on all occasions, been produced from the same identical cause.

Dr. Hibbert, who has most ingeniously, as well as philosophically, handled this subject, has treated it also in a medical point of view, with science to which we make no pretence, and a precision of detail to which our superficial investigation affords us no room for extending ourselves.

The visitation of spectral phenomena is described by this learned gentleman as incidental to sundry complaints; and he mentions, in particular, that the symptom occurs not only in plethora, as in the case of the learned Prussian we have just mentioned, but is a frequent hectic symptom — often an associate of febrile and inflammatory disorders — frequently accompanying inflammation of the brain — a concomitant also of highly excited nervous irritability — equally connected with hypochondria — and finally united in some cases with gout, and in others with the effects of excitation produced by several gases. In all these cases there seems to be a morbid degree of sensibility, with which this symptom is ready to ally itself, and which, though inaccurate as a medical definition, may be held sufficiently descriptive of one character of the various kinds of disorder with which this painful symptom may be found allied.

A very singular and interesting illustration of such combinations as Dr. Hibbert has recorded of the spectral illusion with an actual disorder, and that of a dangerous kind, was frequently related in society by the late learned and accomplished Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh, and sometimes, I believe, quoted by him in his lectures. The narrative, to the author's best recollection, was as follows: — A patient of Dr. Gregory, a person, it is understood, of some rank, having requested the doctor's advice, made the following extraordinary statement of his complaint. "I am in the habit," he said, "of dining at five, and exactly as the hour of six arrives I am subjected to the following painful visitation. The door of the room, even when I have been weak enough to bolt it, which I have sometimes done, flies wide open; an old hag, like one of those who haunted the heath of Forres, enters with a frowning and incensed countenance, comes straight up to me with every demonstration of spite and indignation which could characterize her who haunted the merchant Abudah in the Oriental tale; she rushes upon me, says something, but so hastily that I cannot discover the purport, and then strikes me a severe blow with her staff. I fall from my chair in a swoon, which is of longer or shorter endurance. To the recurrence of this apparition I am daily subjected. And such is my new and singular complaint." The doctor immediately asked whether his patient had invited any one to sit with him when he expected such a visitation. He was answered in the negative. The nature of the complaint, he said, was so singular, it was so likely to be imputed to fancy, or even to mental derangement, that he had shrunk from communicating the circumstance to any one. "Then," said the doctor, "with your permission, I will dine with you to-day, *téte-à-téte*, and we will see if your malignant old woman will venture to join our company." The patient accepted the proposal with hope and gratitude, for he had expected ridicule rather than sympathy. They met at dinner, and Dr. Gregory, who suspected some nervous disorder, exerted his powers of conversation, well known to be of the most varied and brilliant character, to keep the attention of his host engaged, and prevent him from thinking on the approach of the fated hour, to which he was accustomed to look forward with so much terror. He succeeded in his purpose better than he had hoped. The hour of six came almost unnoticed, and it was hoped might pass away without any evil consequence; but it was scarce a moment struck when the owner of the house exclaimed, in an alarmed voice, "The hag comes again!" and dropped back in his chair in a swoon, in the way he had himself described. The

physician caused him to be let blood, and satisfied himself that the periodical shocks of which his patient complained arose from a tendency to apoplexy.

The phantom with the crutch was only a species of machinery, such as that with which fancy is found to supply the disorder called *Ephialtes*, or nightmare, or indeed any other external impression upon our organs in sleep, which the patient's morbid imagination may introduce into the dream preceding the swoon. In the nightmare an oppression and suffocation is felt, and our fancy instantly conjures up a spectre to lie on our bosom. In like manner it may be remarked, that any sudden noise which the slumberer hears, without being actually awakened by it — any casual touch of his person occurring in the same manner — becomes instantly adopted in his dream, and accommodated to the tenor of the current train of thought, whatever that may happen to be; and nothing is more remarkable than the rapidity with which imagination supplies a complete explanation of the interruption, according to the previous train of ideas expressed in the dream, even when scarce a moment of time is allowed for that purpose. In dreaming, for example, of a duel, the external sound becomes, in the twinkling of an eye, the discharge of the combatants' pistols; — is an orator haranguing in his sleep, the sound becomes the applause of his supposed audience; — is the dreamer wandering among supposed ruins, the noise is that of the fall of some part of the mass. In short, an explanatory system is adopted during sleep with such extreme rapidity, that supposing the intruding alarm to have been the first call of some person to awaken the slumberer, the explanation, though requiring some process of argument or deduction, is usually formed and perfect before the second effort of the speaker has restored the dreamer to the waking world and its realities. So rapid and intuitive is the succession of ideas in sleep, as to remind us of the vision of the prophet Mahommed, in which he saw the whole wonders of heaven and hell, though the jar of water which fell when his ecstasy commenced, had not spilled its contents when he returned to ordinary existence.

A second, and equally remarkable instance, was communicated to the author by the medical man under whose observation it fell, but who was, of course, desirous to keep private the name of the hero of so singular a history. Of the friend by whom the facts were attested I can only say, that if I found myself at liberty to name him, the rank which he holds in his

profession, as well as his attainments in science and philosophy, form an undisputed claim to the most implicit credit.

It was the fortune of this gentleman to be called in to attend the illness of a person now long deceased, who in his lifetime stood, as I understand, high in a particular department of the law, which often placed the property of others at his discretion and control, and whose conduct, therefore, being open to public observation, he had for many years borne the character of a man of unusual steadiness, good sense, and integrity. He was, at the time of my friend's visits, confined principally to his sick-room, sometimes to bed, yet occasionally attending to business, and exerting his mind, apparently with all its usual strength and energy, to the conduct of important affairs intrusted to him; nor did there, to a superficial observer, appear anything in his conduct, while so engaged, that could argue vacillation of intellect, or depression of mind. His outward symptoms of malady argued no acute or alarming disease. But slowness of pulse, absence of appetite, difficulty of digestion, and constant depression of spirits, seemed to draw their origin from some hidden cause, which the patient was determined to conceal. The deep gloom of the unfortunate gentleman — the embarrassment, which he could not conceal from his friendly physician — the briefness and obvious constraint with which he answered the interrogations of his medical adviser, induced my friend to take other methods for prosecuting his inquiries. He applied to the sufferer's family, to learn, if possible, the source of that secret grief which was gnawing the heart and sucking the lifeblood of his unfortunate patient. The persons applied to, after conversing together previously, denied all knowledge of any cause for the burden which obviously affected their relative. So far as they knew — and they thought they could hardly be deceived — his worldly affairs were prosperous; no family loss had occurred which could be followed with such persevering distress; no entanglements of affection could be supposed to apply to his age, and no sensation of severe remorse could be consistent with his character. The medical gentleman had finally recourse to serious argument with the invalid himself, and urged to him the folly of devoting himself to a lingering and melancholy death, rather than tell the subject of affliction which was thus wasting him. He specially pressed upon him the injury which he was doing to his own character, by suffering it to be inferred that the secret cause of his dejection and its consequences was something too scandalous or flagitious to be made known, bequeathing in this manner to

his family a suspected and dishonoured name, and leaving a memory with which might be associated the idea of guilt, which the criminal had died without confessing. The patient, more moved by this species of appeal than by any which had yet been urged, expressed his desire to speak out frankly to Dr. — — . Every one else was removed, and the door of the sick-room made secure, when he began his confession in the following manner: —

"You cannot, my dear friend, be more conscious than I, that I am in the course of dying under the oppression of the fatal disease which consumes my vital powers; but neither can you understand the nature of my complaint, and manner in which it acts upon me, nor, if you did, I fear, could your zeal and skill avail to rid me of it." — "It is possible," said the physician, "that my skill may not equal my wish of serving you; yet medical science has many resources, of which those unacquainted with its powers never can form an estimate. But until you plainly tell me your symptoms of complaint, it is impossible for either of us to say what may or may not be in my power, or within that of medicine." — "I may answer you," replied the patient, "that my case is not a singular one, since we read of it in the famous novel of Le Sage. You remember, doubtless, the disease of which the Duke d'Olivarez is there stated to have died?" — "Of the idea," answered the medical gentleman, "that he was haunted by an apparition, to the actual existence of which he gave no credit, but died, nevertheless, because he was overcome and heart-broken by its imaginary presence." — "I, my dearest doctor," said the sick man, "am in that very case; and so painful and abhorrent is the presence of the persecuting vision, that my reason is totally inadequate to combat the effects of my morbid imagination, and I am sensible I am dying, a wasted victim to an imaginary disease." The medical gentleman listened with anxiety to his patient's statement, and for the present judiciously avoiding any contradiction of the sick man's preconceived fancy, contented himself with more minute inquiry into the nature of the apparition with which he conceived himself haunted, and into the history of the mode by which so singular a disease had made itself master of his imagination, secured, as it seemed, by strong powers of the understanding, against an attack so irregular. The sick person replied by stating that its advances were gradual, and at first not of a terrible or even disagreeable character. To illustrate this, he gave the following account of the progress of his disease: —

"My visions," he said, "commenced two or three years since, when I found myself from time to time embarrassed by the presence of a large cat, which came and disappeared I could not exactly tell how, till the truth was finally forced upon me, and I was compelled to regard it as no domestic household cat, but as a bubble of the elements, which had no existence save in my deranged visual organs or depraved imagination. Still I had not that positive objection to the animal entertained by a late gallant Highland chieftain, who has been seen to change to all the colours of his own plaid if a cat by accident happened to be in the room with him, even though he did not see it. On the contrary, I am rather a friend to cats, and endured with so much equanimity the presence of my imaginary attendant, that it had become almost indifferent to me; when, within the course of a few months, it gave place to, or was succeeded by, a spectre of a more important sort, or which at least had a more imposing appearance. This was no other than the apparition of a gentleman-usher, dressed as if to wait upon a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, a Lord High Commissioner of the Kirk, or any other who bears on his brow the rank and stamp of delegated sovereignty.

"This personage, arrayed in a court dress, with bag and sword, tamboured waistcoat, and chapeau-bras, glided beside me like the ghost of Beau Nash; and, whether in my own house or in another, ascended the stairs before me, as if to announce me in the drawingroom, and at sometimes appeared to mingle with the company, though it was sufficiently evident that they were not aware of his presence, and that I alone was sensible of the visionary honours which this imaginary being seemed desirous to render me. This freak of the fancy did not produce much impression on me, though it led me to entertain doubts on the nature of my disorder and alarm for the effect it might produce on my intellects. But that modification of my disease also had its appointed duration. After a few months the phantom of the gentleman-usher was seen no more, but was succeeded by one horrible to the sight and distressing to the imagination, being no other than the image of death itself — the apparition of a *skeleton*. Alone or in company," said the unfortunate invalid, "the presence of this last phantom never quits me. I in vain tell myself a hundred times over that it is no reality, but merely an image summoned up by the morbid acuteness of my own excited imagination and deranged organs of sight. But what avail such reflections, while the emblem at once and presage of mortality is before my eyes, and while I feel myself, though in fancy only, the companion of a phantom

representing a ghastly inhabitant of the grave, even while I yet breathe on the earth? Science, philosophy, even religion, has no cure for such a disorder; and I feel too surely that I shall die the victim to so melancholy a disease, although I have no belief whatever in the reality of the phantom which it places before me."

The physician was distressed to perceive, from these details, how strongly this visionary apparition was fixed in the imagination of his patient. He ingeniously urged the sick man, who was then in bed, with questions concerning the circumstances of the phantom's appearance, trusting he might lead him, as a sensible man, into such contradictions and inconsistencies as might bring his common-sense, which seemed to be unimpaired, so strongly into the field as might combat successfully the fantastic disorder which produced such fatal effects. "This skeleton, then," said the doctor, "seems to you to be always present to your eyes?" "It is my fate, unhappily," answered the invalid, "always to see it." "Then I understand," continued the physician, "it is now present to your imagination?" "To my imagination it certainly is so," replied the sick man. "And in what part of the chamber do you now conceive the apparition to appear?" the physician inquired. "Immediately at the foot of my bed. When the curtains are left a little open," answered the invalid, "the skeleton, to my thinking, is placed between them, and fills the vacant space." "You say you are sensible of the delusion," said his friend; "have you firmness to convince yourself of the truth of this? Can you take courage enough to rise and place yourself in the spot so seeming to be occupied, and convince yourself of the illusion?" The poor man sighed, and shook his head negatively. "Well," said the doctor, "we will try the experiment otherwise." Accordingly, he rose from his chair by the bedside, and placing himself between the two half-drawn curtains at the foot of the bed, indicated as the place occupied by the apparition, asked if the spectre was still visible? "Not entirely so," replied the patient, "because your person is betwixt him and me; but I observe his skull peering above your shoulder."

It is alleged the man of science started on the instant, despite philosophy, on receiving an answer ascertaining, with such minuteness, that the ideal spectre was close to his own person. He resorted to other means of investigation and cure, but with equally indifferent success. The patient sunk into deeper and deeper dejection, and died in the same distress of mind in which he had spent the latter months of his life; and his case remains a

melancholy instance of the power of imagination to kill the body, even when its fantastic terrors cannot overcome the intellect, of the unfortunate persons who suffer under them. The patient, in the present case, sunk under his malady; and the circumstances of his singular disorder remaining concealed, he did not, by his death and last illness, lose any of his well-merited reputation for prudence and sagacity which had attended him during the whole course of his life.

Having added these two remarkable instances to the general train of similar facts quoted by Ferriar, Hibbert, and other writers who have more recently considered the subject, there can, we think, be little doubt of the proposition, that the external organs may, from various causes, become so much deranged as to make false representations to the mind; and that, in such cases, men, in the literal sense, really *see* the empty and false forms and *hear* the ideal sounds which, in a more primitive state of society, are naturally enough referred to the action of demons or disembodied spirits. In such unhappy cases the patient is intellectually in the condition of a general whose spies have been bribed by the enemy, and who must engage himself in the difficult and delicate task of examining and correcting, by his own powers of argument, the probability of the reports which are too inconsistent to be trusted to.

But there is a corollary to this proposition, which is worthy of notice. The same species of organic derangement which, as a continued habit of his deranged vision, presented the subject of our last tale with the successive apparitions of his cat, his gentleman-usher, and the fatal skeleton, may occupy, for a brief or almost momentary space, the vision of men who are otherwise perfectly clearsighted. Transitory deceptions are thus presented to the organs which, when they occur to men of strength of mind and of education, give way to scrutiny, and their character being once investigated, the true takes the place of the unreal representation. But in ignorant times those instances in which any object is misrepresented, whether through the action of the senses, or of the imagination, or the combined influence of both, for however short a space of time, may be admitted as direct evidence of a supernatural apparition; a proof the more difficult to be disputed if the phantom has been personally witnessed by a man of sense and estimation, who, perhaps satisfied in the general as to the actual existence of apparitions, has not taken time or trouble to correct his first impressions. This species of deception is so frequent that one of the greatest poets of the

present time answered a lady who asked him if he believed in ghosts: — ”No, madam; I have seen too many myself.” I may mention one or two instances of the kind, to which no doubt can be attached.

The first shall be the apparition of Maupertuis to a brother professor in the Royal Society of Berlin.

This extraordinary circumstance appeared in the Transactions of the Society, but is thus stated by M. Thiebault in his “Recollections of Frederick the Great and the Court of Berlin.” It is necessary to premise that M. Gleditsch, to whom the circumstance happened, was a botanist of eminence, holding the professorship of natural philosophy at Berlin, and respected as a man of an habitually serious, simple, and tranquil character.

A short time after the death of Maupertuis, M. Gleditsch being obliged to traverse the hall in which the Academy held its sittings, having some arrangements to make in the cabinet of natural history, which was under his charge, and being willing to complete them on the Thursday before the meeting, he perceived, on entering the hall, the apparition of M. de Maupertuis, upright and stationary, in the first angle on his left hand, having his eyes fixed on him. This was about three o’clock, afternoon. The professor of natural philosophy was too well acquainted with physical science to suppose that his late president, who had died at Bâle, in the family of Messrs. Bernoullie, could have found his way back to Berlin in person. He regarded the apparition in no other light than as a phantom produced by some derangement of his own proper organs. M. Gleditsch went to his own business, without stopping longer than to ascertain exactly the appearance of that object. But he related the vision to his brethren, and assured them that it was as defined and perfect as the actual person of Maupertuis could have presented. When it is recollected that Maupertuis died at a distance from Berlin, once the scene of his triumphs — overwhelmed by the petulant ridicule of Voltaire, and out of favour with Frederick, with whom to be ridiculous was to be worthless — we can hardly wonder at the imagination even of a man of physical science calling up his Eidolon in the hall of his former greatness.

[Footnote 2: Long the president of the Berlin Academy, and much favoured by Frederick II., till he was overwhelmed by the ridicule of Voltaire. He retired, in a species of disgrace, to his native country of Switzerland, and died there shortly afterwards.]

The sober-minded professor did not, however, push his investigation to the point to which it was carried by a gallant soldier, from whose mouth a particular friend of the author received the following circumstances of a similar story.

Captain C — — was a native of Britain, but bred in the Irish Brigade. He was a man of the most dauntless courage, which he displayed in some uncommonly desperate adventures during the first years of the French Revolution, being repeatedly employed by the royal family in very dangerous commissions. After the King's death he came over to England, and it was then the following circumstance took place.

Captain C — — was a Catholic, and, in his hour of adversity at least, sincerely attached to the duties of his religion. His confessor was a clergyman who was residing as chaplain to a man of rank in the west of England, about four miles from the place where Captain C — — lived. On riding over one morning to see this gentleman, his penitent had the misfortune to find him very ill from a dangerous complaint. He retired in great distress and apprehension of his friend's life, and the feeling brought back upon him many other painful and disagreeable recollections. These occupied him till the hour of retiring to bed, when, to his great astonishment, he saw in the room the figure of the absent confessor. He addressed it, but received no answer — the eyes alone were impressed by the appearance. Determined to push the matter to the end, Captain C — — advanced on the phantom, which appeared to retreat gradually before him. In this manner he followed it round the bed, when it seemed to sink down on an elbow-chair, and remain there in a sitting posture. To ascertain positively the nature of the apparition, the soldier himself sate down on the same chair, ascertaining thus, beyond question, that the whole was illusion; yet he owned that, had his friend died about the same time, he would not well have known what name to give to his vision. But as the confessor recovered, and, in Dr. Johnson's phrase, "nothing came of it," the incident was only remarkable as showing that men of the strongest nerves are not exempted from such delusions.

Another illusion of the same nature we have the best reason for vouching as a fact, though, for certain reasons, we do not give the names of the parties. Not long after the death of a late illustrious poet, who had filled, while living, a great station in the eye of the public, a literary friend, to whom the deceased had been well known, was engaged, during the

darkening twilight of an autumn evening, in perusing one of the publications which professed to detail the habits and opinions of the distinguished individual who was now no more. As the reader had enjoyed the intimacy of the deceased to a considerable degree, he was deeply interested in the publication, which contained some particulars relating to himself and other friends. A visitor was sitting in the apartment, who was also engaged in reading. Their sitting-room opened into an entrance-hall, rather fantastically fitted up with articles of armour, skins of wild animals, and the like. It was when laying down his book, and passing into this hall, through which the moon was beginning to shine, that the individual of whom I speak saw, right before him, and in a standing posture, the exact representation of his departed friend, whose recollection had been so strongly brought to his imagination. He stopped for a single moment, so as to notice the wonderful accuracy with which fancy had impressed upon the bodily eye the peculiarities of dress and posture of the illustrious poet. Sensible, however, of the delusion, he felt no sentiment save that of wonder at the extraordinary accuracy of the resemblance, and stepped onwards towards the figure, which resolved itself, as he approached, into the various materials of which it was composed. These were merely a screen, occupied by greatcoats, shawls, plaids, and such other articles as usually are found in a country entrance-hall. The spectator returned to the spot from which he had seen the illusion, and endeavoured, with all his power, to recall the image which had been so singularly vivid. But this was beyond his capacity; and the person who had witnessed the apparition, or, more properly, whose excited state had been the means of raising it, had only to return into the apartment, and tell his young friend under what a striking hallucination he had for a moment laboured.

There is every reason to believe that instances of this kind are frequent among persons of a certain temperament, and when such occur in an early period of society, they are almost certain to be considered as real supernatural appearances. They differ from those of Nicolai, and others formerly noticed, as being of short duration, and constituting no habitual or constitutional derangement of the system. The apparition of Maupertuis to Monsieur Gleditsch, that of the Catholic clergyman to Captain C — — , that of a late poet to his friend, are of the latter character. They bear to the former the analogy, as we may say, which a sudden and temporary fever-fit has to a serious feverish illness. But, even for this very reason, it is more

difficult to bring such momentary impressions back to their real sphere of optical illusions, since they accord much better with our idea of glimpses of the future world than those in which the vision is continued or repeated for hours, days, and months, affording opportunities of discovering, from other circumstances, that the symptom originates in deranged health.

Before concluding these observations upon the deceptions of the senses, we must remark that the eye is the organ most essential to the purpose of realizing to our mind the appearance of external objects, and that when the visual organ becomes depraved for a greater or less time, and to a farther or more limited extent, its misrepresentation of the objects of sight is peculiarly apt to terminate in such hallucinations as those we have been detailing. Yet the other senses or organs, in their turn, and to the extent of their power, are as ready, in their various departments, as the sight itself, to retain false or doubtful impressions, which mislead, instead of informing, the party to whom they are addressed.

Thus, in regard to the ear, the next organ in importance to the eye, we are repeatedly deceived by such sounds as are imperfectly gathered up and erroneously apprehended. From the false impressions received from this organ also arise consequences similar to those derived from erroneous reports made by the organs of sight. A whole class of superstitious observances arise, and are grounded upon inaccurate and imperfect hearing. To the excited and imperfect state of the ear we owe the existence of what Milton sublimely calls —

> The airy tongues that syllable men's names,
> On shores, in desert sands, and wildernesses.

These also appear such natural causes of alarm, that we do not sympathize more readily with Robinson Crusoe's apprehensions when he witnesses the print of the savage's foot in the sand, than in those which arise from his being waked from sleep by some one calling his name in the solitary island, where there existed no man but the shipwrecked mariner himself. Amidst the train of superstitions deduced from the imperfections of the ear, we may quote that visionary summons which the natives of the Hebrides acknowledged as one sure sign of approaching fate. The voice of some absent, or probably some deceased, relative was, in such cases, heard as repeating the party's name. Sometimes the aerial summoner intimated his own death, and at others it was no uncommon circumstance that the person

who fancied himself so called, died in consequence; — for the same reason that the negro pines to death who is laid under the ban of an Obi woman, or the Cambro-Briton, whose name is put into the famous cursing well, with the usual ceremonies, devoting him to the infernal gods, wastes away and dies, as one doomed to do so. It may be remarked also, that Dr. Johnson retained a deep impression that, while he was opening the door of his college chambers, he heard the voice of his mother, then at many miles' distance, call him by his name; and it appears he was rather disappointed that no event of consequence followed a summons sounding so decidedly supernatural. It is unnecessary to dwell on this sort of auricular deception, of which most men's recollection will supply instances. The following may he stated as one serving to show by what slender accidents the human ear may be imposed upon. The author was walking, about two years since, in a wild and solitary scene with a young friend, who laboured under the infirmity of a severe deafness, when he heard what he conceived to be the cry of a distant pack of hounds, sounding intermittedly. As the season was summer, this, on a moment's reflection, satisfied the hearer that it could not be the clamour of an actual chase, and yet his ears repeatedly brought back the supposed cry. He called upon his own dogs, of which two or three were with the walking party. They came in quietly, and obviously had no accession to the sounds which had caught the author's attention, so that he could not help saying to his companion, "I am doubly sorry for your infirmity at this moment, for I could otherwise have let you hear the cry of the Wild Huntsman." As the young gentleman used a hearing tube, he turned when spoken to, and, in doing so, the cause of the phenomenon became apparent. The supposed distant sound was in fact a nigh one, being the singing of the wind in the instrument which the young gentleman was obliged to use, but which, from various circumstances, had never occurred to his elder friend as likely to produce the sounds he had heard.

It is scarce necessary to add, that the highly imaginative superstition of the Wild Huntsman in Germany seems to have had its origin in strong fancy, operating upon the auricular deceptions, respecting the numerous sounds likely to occur in the dark recesses of pathless forests. The same clew may be found to the kindred Scottish belief, so finely embodied by the nameless author of "Albania:" —

"There, since of old the haughty Thanes of Ross
Were wont, with clans and ready vassals thronged,
To wake the bounding stag, or guilty wolf;
There oft is heard at midnight or at noon,
Beginning faint, but rising still more loud,
And louder, voice of hunters, and of hounds,
And horns hoarse-winded, blowing far and keen.
Forthwith the hubbub multiplies, the air
Labours with louder shouts and rifer din
Of close pursuit, the broken cry of deer
Mangled by throttling dogs, the shouts of men,
And hoofs, thick-beating on the hollow hill:
Sudden the grazing heifer in the vale
Starts at the tumult, and the herdsman's ears
Tingle with inward dread. Aghast he eyes
The upland ridge, and every mountain round,
But not one trace of living wight discerns,
Nor knows, o'erawed and trembling as he stands,
To what or whom he owes his idle fear —
To ghost, to witch, to fairy, or to fiend,
But wonders, and no end of wondering finds."

It must also be remembered, that to the auricular deceptions practised by the means of ventriloquism or otherwise, may be traced many of the most successful impostures which credulity has received as supernatural communications.

[Footnote 3: The poem of "Albania" is, in its original folio edition, so extremely scarce that I have only seen a copy belonging to the amiable and ingenious Dr. Beattie, besides the one which I myself possess, printed in the earlier part of last century. It was reprinted by my late friend Dr. Leyden in a small volume entitled "Scottish Descriptive Poems." "Albania" contains the above, and many other poetical passages of the highest merit.]

The sense of touch seems less liable to perversion than either that of sight or smell, nor are there many cases in which it can become accessary to such false intelligence as the eye and ear, collecting their objects from a greater distance and by less accurate enquiry, are but too ready to convey. Yet there is one circumstance in which the sense of touch as well as others is very apt to betray its possessor into inaccuracy, in respect to the circumstances

which it impresses on its owner. The case occurs during sleep, when the dreamer touches with his hand some other part of his own person. He is clearly, in this case, both the actor and patient, both the proprietor of the member touching, and of that which is touched; while, to increase the complication, the hand is both toucher of the limb on which it rests, and receives an impression of touch from it; and the same is the case with the limb, which at one and the same time receives an impression from the hand, and conveys to the mind a report respecting the size, substance, and the like, of the member touching. Now, as during sleep the patient is unconscious that both limbs are his own identical property, his mind is apt to be much disturbed by the complication of sensations arising from two parts of his person being at once acted upon, and from their reciprocal action; and false impressions are thus received, which, accurately enquired into, would afford a clew to many puzzling phenomena in the theory of dreams. This peculiarity of the organ of touch, as also that it is confined to no particular organ, but is diffused over the whole person of the man, is noticed by Lucretius: —

> "Ut si forte manu, quam vis jam corporis, ipse
> Tute tibi partem ferias, reque experiare."

A remarkable instance of such an illusion was told me by a late nobleman. He had fallen asleep, with some uneasy feelings arising from indigestion. They operated in their usual course of visionary terrors. At length they were all summed up in the apprehension that the phantom of a dead man held the sleeper by the wrist, and endeavoured to drag him out of bed. He awaked in horror, and still felt the cold dead grasp of a corpse's hand on his right wrist. It was a minute before he discovered that his own left hand was in a state of numbness, and with it he had accidentally encircled his right arm.

The taste and the smell, like the touch, convey more direct intelligence than the eye and the ear, and are less likely than those senses to aid in misleading the imagination. We have seen the palate, in the case of the porridge-fed lunatic, enter its protest against the acquiescence of eyes, ears, and touch, in the gay visions which gilded the patient's confinement. The palate, however, is subject to imposition as well as the other senses. The best and most acute *bon vivant* loses his power of discriminating betwixt different kinds of wine, if he is prevented from assisting his palate by the aid of his eyes, — that is, if the glasses of each are administered

indiscriminately while he is blindfolded. Nay, we are authorized to believe that individuals have died in consequence of having supposed themselves to have taken poison, when, in reality, the draught they had swallowed as such was of an innoxious or restorative quality. The delusions of the stomach can seldom bear upon our present subject, and are not otherwise connected with supernatural appearances, than as a good dinner and its accompaniments are essential in fitting out a daring Tam of Shanter, who is fittest to encounter them when the poet's observation is not unlikely to apply —

> "Inspiring bauld John Barleycorn,
> What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
> Wi' tippenny we fear nae evil,
> Wi' usquebae we'll face the devil.
> The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
> Fair play, he caredna deils a bodle!"

Neither has the sense of smell, in its ordinary state, much connexion with our present subject. Mr. Aubrey tells us, indeed, of an apparition which disappeared with a curious perfume as well as a most melodious twang; and popular belief ascribes to the presence of infernal spirits a strong relish of the sulphureous element of which they are inhabitants. Such accompaniments, therefore, are usually united with other materials for imposture. If, as a general opinion assures us, which is not positively discountenanced by Dr. Hibbert, by the inhalation of certain gases or poisonous herbs, necromancers can dispose a person to believe he sees phantoms, it is likely that the nostrils are made to inhale such suffumigation as well as the mouth.

[Footnote 4: Most ancient authors, who pretend to treat of the wonders of natural magic, give receipts for calling up phantoms. The lighting lamps fed by peculiar kinds of medicated oil, and the use of suffumigations of strong and deleterious herbs, are the means recommended. From these authorities, perhaps, a professor of legerdemain assured Dr. Alderson of Hull, that he could compose a preparation of antimony, sulphur, and other drugs, which, when burnt in a confined room, would have the effect of causing the patient to suppose he saw phantoms. — See "Hibbert on Apparitions," p. 120.]

I have now arrived, by a devious path, at the conclusion of this letter, the object of which is to show from what attributes of our nature, whether mental or corporeal, arises that predisposition to believe in supernatural occurrences. It is, I think, conclusive that mankind, from a very early

period, have their minds prepared for such events by the consciousness of the existence of a spiritual world, inferring in the general proposition the undeniable truth that each man, from the monarch to the beggar, who has once acted his part on the stage, continues to exist, and may again, even in a disembodied state, if such is the pleasure of Heaven, for aught that we know to the contrary, be permitted or ordained to mingle amongst those who yet remain in the body. The abstract possibility of apparitions must be admitted by every one who believes in a Deity, and His superintending omnipotence. But imagination is apt to intrude its explanations and inferences founded on inadequate evidence. Sometimes our violent and inordinate passions, originating in sorrow for our friends, remorse for our crimes, our eagerness of patriotism, or our deep sense of devotion — these or other violent excitements of a moral character, in the visions of night, or the rapt ecstasy of the day, persuade us that we witness, with our eyes and ears, an actual instance of that supernatural communication, the possibility of which cannot be denied. At other times the corporeal organs impose upon the mind, while the eye and the ear, diseased, deranged, or misled, convey false impressions to the patient. Very often both the mental delusion and the physical deception exist at the same time, and men's belief of the phenomena presented to them, however erroneously, by the senses, is the firmer and more readily granted, that the physical impression corresponded with the mental excitement.

So many causes acting thus upon each other in various degrees, or sometimes separately, it must happen early in the infancy of every society that there should occur many apparently well-authenticated instances of supernatural intercourse, satisfactory enough to authenticate peculiar examples of the general proposition which is impressed upon us by belief of the immortality of the soul. These examples of undeniable apparitions (for they are apprehended to be incontrovertible), fall like the seed of the husbandman into fertile and prepared soil, and are usually followed by a plentiful crop of superstitious figments, which derive their sources from circumstances and enactments in sacred and profane history, hastily adopted, and perverted from their genuine reading. This shall be the subject of my next letter.

Letter II

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What degree of communication might have existed between the human race and the inhabitants of the other world had our first parents kept the commands of the Creator, can only be subject of unavailing speculation. We do not, perhaps, presume too much when we suppose, with Milton, that one necessary consequence of eating the “fruit of that forbidden tree” was removing to a wider distance from celestial essences the beings who, although originally but a little lower than the angels, had, by their own crime, forfeited the gift of immortality, and degraded themselves into an inferior rank of creation.

Some communication between the spiritual world, by the union of those termed in Scripture “sons of God” and the daughters of Adam, still continued after the Fall, though their inter-alliance was not approved of by the Ruler of mankind. We are given to understand — darkly, indeed, but with as much certainty as we can be entitled to require — that the mixture between the two species of created beings was sinful on the part of both, and displeasing to the Almighty. It is probable, also, that the extreme longevity of the antediluvian mortals prevented their feeling sufficiently that they had brought themselves under the banner of Azrael, the angel of

death, and removed to too great a distance the period between their crime and its punishment. The date of the avenging Flood gave birth to a race whose life was gradually shortened, and who, being admitted to slighter and rarer intimacy with beings who possessed a higher rank in creation, assumed, as of course, a lower position in the scale. Accordingly, after this period we hear no more of those unnatural alliances which preceded the Flood, and are given to understand that mankind, dispersing into different parts of the world, separated from each other, and began, in various places, and under separate auspices, to pursue the work of replenishing the world, which had been imposed upon them as an end of their creation. In the meantime, while the Deity was pleased to continue his manifestations to those who were destined to be the fathers of his elect people, we are made to understand that wicked men — it may be by the assistance of fallen angels — were enabled to assert rank with, and attempt to match, the prophets of the God of Israel. The matter must remain uncertain whether it was by sorcery or legerdemain that the wizards of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, contended with Moses, in the face of the prince and people, changed their rods into serpents, and imitated several of the plagues denounced against the devoted kingdom. Those powers of the Magi, however, whether obtained by supernatural communications, or arising from knowledge of legerdemain and its kindred accomplishments, were openly exhibited; and who can doubt that — though we may be left in some darkness both respecting the extent of their skill and the source from which it was drawn — we are told all which it can be important for us to know? We arrive here at the period when the Almighty chose to take upon himself directly to legislate for his chosen people, without having obtained any accurate knowledge whether the crime of witchcraft, or the intercourse between the spiritual world and embodied beings, for evil purposes, either existed after the Flood, or was visited with any open marks of Divine displeasure.

But in the law of Moses, dictated by the Divinity himself, was announced a text, which, as interpreted literally, having been inserted into the criminal code of all Christian nations, has occasioned much cruelty and bloodshed, either from its tenor being misunderstood, or that, being exclusively calculated for the Israelites, it made part of the judicial Mosaic dispensation, and was abrogated, like the greater part of that law, by the more benign and clement dispensation of the Gospel.

The text alluded to is that verse of the twentysecond chapter of Exodus bearing, “men shall not suffer a witch to live.” Many learned men have affirmed that in this remarkable passage the Hebrew word CHASAPH means nothing more than poisoner, although, like the word *veneficus*, by which it is rendered in the Latin version of the Septuagint, other learned men contend that it hath the meaning of a witch also, and may be understood as denoting a person who pretended to hurt his or her neighbours in life, limb, or goods, either by noxious potions, by charms, or similar mystical means. In this particular the witches of Scripture had probably some resemblance to those of ancient Europe, who, although their skill and power might be safely despised, as long as they confined themselves to their charms and spells, were very apt to eke out their capacity of mischief by the use of actual poison, so that the epithet of sorceress and poisoner were almost synonymous. This is known to have been the case in many of those darker iniquities which bear as their characteristic something connected with hidden and prohibited arts. Such was the statement in the indictment of those concerned in the famous murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, when the arts of Forman and other sorcerers having been found insufficient to touch the victim’s life, practice by poison was at length successfully resorted to; and numerous similar instances might be quoted. But supposing that the Hebrew witch proceeded only by charms, invocations, or such means as might be innoxious, save for the assistance of demons or familiars, the connexion between the conjurer and the demon must have been of a very different character under the law of Moses, from that which was conceived in latter days to constitute witchcraft. There was no contract of subjection to a diabolic power, no infernal stamp or sign of such a fatal league, no revellings of Satan and his hags, and no infliction of disease or misfortune upon good men. At least there is not a word in Scripture authorizing us to believe that such a system existed. On the contrary, we are told (how far literally, how far metaphorically, it is not for us to determine) that, when the Enemy of mankind desired to probe the virtue of Job to the bottom, he applied for permission to the Supreme Governor of the world, who granted him liberty to try his faithful servant with a storm of disasters, for the more brilliant exhibition of the faith which he reposed in his Maker. In all this, had the scene occurred after the manner of the like events in latter days, witchcraft, sorceries, and charms would have been introduced, and the Devil, instead of

his own permitted agency, would have employed his servant the witch as the necessary instrument of the Man of Uzz's afflictions. In like manner, Satan desired to have Peter, that he might sift him like wheat. But neither is there here the agency of any sorcerer or witch. Luke xxii. 31.

Supposing the powers of the witch to be limited, in the time of Moses, to enquiries at some pretended deity or real evil spirit concerning future events, in what respect, may it be said, did such a crime deserve the severe punishment of death? To answer this question, we must reflect that the object of the Mosaic dispensation being to preserve the knowledge of the True Deity within the breasts of a selected and separated people, the God of Jacob necessarily showed himself a jealous God to all who, straying from the path of direct worship of Jehovah, had recourse to other deities, whether idols or evil spirits, the gods of the neighbouring heathen. The swerving from their allegiance to the true Divinity, to the extent of praying to senseless stocks and stones which could return them no answer, was, by the Jewish law, an act of rebellion to their own Lord God, and as such most fit to be punished capitally. Thus the prophets of Baal were deservedly put to death, not on account of any success which they might obtain by their intercessions and invocations (which, though enhanced with all their vehemence, to the extent of cutting and wounding themselves, proved so utterly unavailing as to incur the ridicule of the prophet), but because they were guilty of apostasy from the real Deity, while they worshipped, and encouraged others to worship, the false divinity Baal. The Hebrew witch, therefore, or she who communicated, or attempted to communicate, with an evil spirit, was justly punished with death, though her communication with the spiritual world might either not exist at all, or be of a nature much less intimate than has been ascribed to the witches of later days; nor does the existence of this law, against the witches of the Old Testament sanction, in any respect, the severity of similar enactments subsequent to the Christian revelation, against a different class of persons, accused of a very different species of crime.

In another passage, the practices of those persons termed witches in the Holy Scriptures are again alluded to; and again it is made manifest that the sorcery or witchcraft of the Old Testament resolves itself into a trafficking with idols, and asking counsel of false deities; in other words, into idolatry, which, notwithstanding repeated prohibitions, examples, and judgments, was still the prevailing crime of the Israelites. The passage alluded to is in

Deuteronomy xviii. 10, ii — ”There shall not be found among you anyone that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.” Similar denunciations occur in the nineteenth and twentieth chapters of Leviticus. In like manner, it is a charge against Manasses (2 Chronicles xxxviii.) that he caused his children to pass through the fire, observed times, used enchantments and witchcraft, and dealt with familiar spirits and with wizards. These passages seem to concur with the former, in classing witchcraft among other desertions of the prophets of the Deity, in order to obtain responses by the superstitious practices of the pagan nations around them. To understand the texts otherwise seems to confound the modern system of witchcraft, with all its unnatural and improbable outrages on common sense, with the crime of the person who, in classical days, consulted the oracle of Apollo — a capital offence in a Jew, but surely a venial sin in an ignorant and deluded pagan.

To illustrate the nature of the Hebrew witch and her prohibited criminal traffic, those who have written on this subject have naturally dwelt upon the interview between Saul and the Witch of Endor, the only detailed and particular account of such a transaction which is to be found in the Bible; a fact, by the way, which proves that the crime of witchcraft (capitally punished as it was when discovered) was not frequent among the chosen people, who enjoyed such peculiar manifestations of the Almighty’s presence. The Scriptures seem only to have conveyed to us the general fact (being what is chiefly edifying) of the interview between the witch and the King of Israel. They inform us that Saul, disheartened and discouraged by the general defection of his subjects, and the consciousness of his own unworthy and ungrateful disobedience, despairing of obtaining an answer from the offended Deity, who had previously communicated with him through his prophets, at length resolved, in his desperation, to go to a divining woman, by which course he involved himself in the crime of the person whom he thus consulted, against whom the law denounced death — a sentence which had been often executed by Saul himself on similar offenders. Scripture proceeds to give us the general information that the king directed the witch to call up the Spirit of Samuel, and that the female exclaimed that gods had arisen out of the earth — that Saul, more particularly requiring a description of the apparition (whom, consequently,

he did not himself see), she described it as the figure of an old man with a mantle. In this figure the king acknowledges the resemblance of Samuel, and sinking on his face, hears from the apparition, speaking in the character of the prophet, the melancholy prediction of his own defeat and death.

In this description, though all is told which is necessary to convey to us an awful moral lesson, yet we are left ignorant of the minutiæ attending the apparition, which perhaps we ought to accept as a sure sign that there was no utility in our being made acquainted with them. It is impossible, for instance, to know with certainty whether Saul was present when the woman used her conjuration, or whether he himself personally ever saw the appearance which the Pythoness described to him. It is left still more doubtful whether anything supernatural was actually evoked, or whether the Pythoness and her assistant meant to practise a mere deception, taking their chance to prophesy the defeat and death of the broken-spirited king as an event which the circumstances in which he was placed rendered highly probable, since he was surrounded by a superior army of Philistines, and his character as a soldier rendered it likely that he would not survive a defeat which must involve the loss of his kingdom. On the other hand, admitting that the apparition had really a supernatural character, it remains equally uncertain what was its nature or by what power it was compelled to an appearance, unpleasing, as it intimated, since the supposed spirit of Samuel asks wherefore he was disquieted in the grave. Was the power of the witch over the invisible world so great that, like the Erictho of the heathen poet, she could disturb the sleep of the just, and especially that of a prophet so important as Samuel; and are we to suppose that he, upon whom the Spirit of the Lord was wont to descend, even while he was clothed with frail mortality, should be subject to be disquieted in his grave at the voice of a vile witch, and the command of an apostate prince? Did the true Deity refuse Saul the response of his prophets, and could a witch compel the actual spirit of Samuel to make answer notwithstanding?

Embarrassed by such difficulties, another course of explanation has been resorted to, which, freed from some of the objections which attend the two extreme suppositions, is yet liable to others. It has been supposed that something took place upon this remarkable occasion similar to that which disturbed the preconcerted purpose of the prophet Balaam, and compelled him to exchange his premeditated curses for blessings. According to this hypothesis, the divining woman of Endor was preparing to practise upon

Saul those tricks of legerdemain or jugglery by which she imposed upon meaner clients who resorted to her oracle. Or we may conceive that in those days, when the laws of Nature were frequently suspended by manifestations of the Divine Power, some degree of juggling might be permitted between mortals and the spirits of lesser note; in which case we must suppose that the woman really expected or hoped to call up some supernatural appearance. But in either case, this second solution of the story supposes that the will of the Almighty substituted, on that memorable occasion, for the phantasmagoria intended by the witch, the spirit of Samuel in his earthly resemblance — or, if the reader may think this more likely, some good being, the messenger of the Divine pleasure, in the likeness of the departed prophet — and, to the surprise of the Pythoness herself, exchanged the juggling farce: of sheer deceit or petty sorcery which she had intended to produce, for a deep tragedy, capable of appalling the heart of the hardened tyrant, and furnishing an awful lesson to future times.

This exposition has the advantage of explaining the surprise expressed by the witch at the unexpected consequences of her own invocation, while it removes the objection of supposing the spirit of Samuel subject to her influence. It does not apply so well to the complaint of Samuel that he was *disquieted*, since neither the prophet, nor any good angel wearing his likeness, could be supposed to complain of an apparition which took place in obedience to the direct command of the Deity. If, however, the phrase is understood, not as a murmuring against the pleasure of Providence, but as a reproach to the prophet's former friend Saul, that his sins and discontents, which were the ultimate cause of Samuel's appearance, had withdrawn the prophet for a space from the enjoyment and repose of Heaven, to review this miserable spot of mortality, guilt, grief, and misfortune, the words may, according to that interpretation, wear no stronger sense of complaint than might become the spirit of a just man made perfect, or any benevolent angel by whom he might be represented. It may be observed that in Ecclesiasticus (xlvi. 19, 20), the opinion of Samuel's actual appearance is adopted, since it is said of this man of God, that *after death he prophesied, and showed the king his latter end*.

Leaving the further discussion of this dark and difficult question to those whose studies have qualified them to give judgment on so obscure a subject, it so far appears clear that the Witch of Endor, was not a being such as those believed in by our ancestors, who could transform themselves and

others into the appearance of the lower animals, raise and allay tempests, frequent the company and join the revels of evil spirits, and, by their counsel and assistance, destroy human lives, and waste the fruits of the earth, or perform feats of such magnitude as to alter the face of Nature. The Witch of Endor was a mere fortune-teller, to whom, in despair of all aid or answer from the Almighty, the unfortunate King of Israel had recourse in his despair, and by whom, in some way or other, he obtained the awful certainty of his own defeat and death. She was liable, indeed, deservedly to the punishment of death for intruding herself upon the task of the real prophets, by whom the will of God was at that time regularly made known. But her existence and her crimes can go no length to prove the possibility that another class of witches, no otherwise resembling her than as called by the same name, either existed at a more recent period, or were liable to the same capital punishment, for a very different and much more doubtful class of offences, which, however odious, are nevertheless to be proved possible before they can be received as a criminal charge.

Whatever may be thought of other occasional expressions in the Old Testament, it cannot be said that, in any part of that sacred volume, a text occurs indicating the existence of a system of witchcraft, under the Jewish dispensation, in any respect similar to that against which the law-books of so many European nations have, till very lately, denounced punishment; far less under the Christian dispensation — a system under which the emancipation of the human race from the Levitical law was happily and miraculously perfected. This latter crime is supposed to infer a compact implying reverence and adoration on the part of the witch who comes under the fatal bond, and patronage, support, and assistance on the part of the diabolical patron. Indeed, in the four Gospels, the word, under any sense, does not occur; although, had the possibility of so enormous a sin been admitted, it was not likely to escape the warning censure of the Divine Person who came to take away the sins of the world. Saint Paul, indeed, mentions the sin of witchcraft, in a cursory manner, as superior in guilt to that of ingratitude; and in the offences of the flesh it is ranked immediately after idolatry, which juxtaposition inclines us to believe that the witchcraft mentioned by the Apostle must have been analogous to that of the Old Testament, and equivalent to resorting to the assistance of soothsayers, or similar forbidden arts, to acquire knowledge of toturity. Sorcerers are also joined with other criminals, in the Book of Revelations, as excluded from

the city of God And with these occasional notices, which indicate that there was a transgression so called, but leave us ignorant of us exact nature, the writers upon witchcraft attempt to wring out of the New Testament proofs of a crime in itself so disgustingly improbable. Neither do the exploits of Elymas, called the Sorcerer, or Simon, called Magus or the Magician, entitle them to rank above the class of impostors who assumed a character to which they had no real title, and put their own mystical and ridiculous pretensions to supernatural power in competition with those who had been conferred on purpose to diffuse the gospel, and facilitate its reception by the exhibition of genuine miracles. It is clear that, from his presumptuous and profane proposal to acquire, by purchase, a portion of those powers which were directly derived from inspiration, Simon Magus displayed a degree of profane and brutal ignorance inconsistent with his possessing even the intelligence of a skilful impostor; and it is plain that a leagued vassal of hell — should we pronounce him such — would have better known his own rank and condition, compared to that of the apostles, than to have made such a fruitless and unavailing proposal, by which he could only expose his own impudence and ignorance.

With this observation we may conclude our brief remarks upon *witchcraft*, as the word occurs in the Scripture; and it now only remains to mention the nature of the *demonology*, which, as gathered from the sacred volumes, every Christian believer is bound to receive as a thing declared and proved to be true.

And in the first place, no man can read the Bible, or call himself a Christian, without believing that, during the course of time comprehended by the Divine writers, the Deity, to confirm the faith of the Jews, and to overcome and confound the pride of the heathens, wrought in the land many great miracles, using either good spirits, the instruments of his pleasure, or fallen angels, the permitted agents of such evil as it was his will should be inflicted upon, or suffered by, the children of men. This proposition comprehends, of course, the acknowledgment of the truth of miracles during this early period, by which the ordinary laws of nature were occasionally suspended, and recognises the existence in the spiritual world of the two grand divisions of angels and devils, severally exercising their powers according to the commission or permission of the Ruler of the universe.

Secondly, wise men have thought and argued that the idols of the heathen were actually fiends, or, rather, that these enemies of mankind had power to assume the shape and appearance of those feeble deities, and to give a certain degree of countenance to the faith of the worshippers, by working seeming miracles, and returning, by their priests or their oracles, responses which "palter'd in a double sense" with the deluded persons who consulted them. Most of the fathers of the Christian Church have intimated such an opinion. This doctrine has the advantage of affording, to a certain extent, a confirmation of many miracles related in pagan or classical history, which are thus ascribed to the agency of evil spirits. It corresponds also with the texts of Scripture which declare that the gods of the heathen are all devils and evil spirits; and the idols of Egypt are classed, as in Isaiah, chap. xix. ver. 2, with charmers, those who have familiar spirits, and with wizards. But whatever license it may be supposed was permitted to the evil spirits of that period — and although, undoubtedly, men owned the sway of deities who were, in fact, but personifications of certain evil passions of humanity, as, for example, in their sacrifices to Venus, to Bacchus, to Mars, &c., and therefore might be said, in one sense, to worship evil spirits — we cannot, in reason, suppose that every one, or the thousandth part of the innumerable idols worshipped among the heathen, was endowed with supernatural power; it is clear that the greater number fell under the description applied to them in another passage of Scripture, in which the part of the tree burned in the fire for domestic purposes is treated as of the same power and estimation as that carved into an image, and preferred for Gentile homage. This striking passage, in which the impotence of the senseless block, and the brutish ignorance of the worshipper, whose object of adoration is the work of his own hands, occurs in the 44th chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah, verse 10 *et seq*. The precise words of the text, as well as common sense, forbid us to believe that the images so constructed by common artisans became the habitation or resting-place of demons, or possessed any manifestation of strength or power, whether through demoniacal influence or otherwise. The whole system of doubt, delusion, and trick exhibited by the oracles, savours of the mean juggling of impostors, rather than the audacious intervention of demons. Whatever degree of power the false gods of heathendom, or devils in their name, might be permitted occasionally to exert, was unquestionably under the general restraint and limitation of providence; and though, on the one hand,

we cannot deny the possibility of such permission being granted in cases unknown to us, it is certain, on the other, that the Scriptures mention no one specific instance of such influence expressly recommended to our belief.

Thirdly, as the backsliders among the Jews repeatedly fell off to the worship of the idols of the neighbouring heathens, so they also resorted to the use of charms and enchantments, founded on a superstitious perversion of their own Levitical ritual, in which they endeavoured by sortilege, by Teraphim, by observation of augury, or the flight of birds, which they called *Nahas*, by the means of Urim and Thummim, to find as it were a byroad to the secrets of futurity. But for the same reason that withholds us from delivering any opinion upon the degree to which the devil and his angels might be allowed to countenance the impositions of the heathen priesthood, it is impossible for us conclusively to pronounce what effect might be permitted by supreme Providence to the ministry of such evil spirits as presided over, and, so far as they had liberty, directed, these sinful enquiries among the Jews themselves. We are indeed assured from the sacred writings, that the promise of the Deity to his chosen people, if they conducted themselves agreeably to the law which he had given, was, that the communication with the invisible world would be enlarged, so that in the fulness of his time he would pour out his spirit upon all flesh, when their sons and daughters should prophesy, their old men see visions, and their young men dream dreams. Such were the promises delivered to the Israelites by Joel, Ezekiel, and other holy seers, of which St. Peter, in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, hails the fulfilment in the mission of our Saviour. And on the other hand, it is no less evident that the Almighty, to punish the disobedience of the Jews, abandoned them to their own fallacious desires, and suffered them to be deceived by the lying oracles, to which, in flagrant violation of his commands, they had recourse. Of this the punishment arising from the Deity abandoning Ahab to his own devices, and suffering him to be deceived by a lying spirit, forms a striking instance.

Fourthly, and on the other hand, abstaining with reverence from accounting ourselves judges of the actions of Omnipotence, we may safely conclude that it was not his pleasure to employ in the execution of his judgments the consequences of any such species of league or compact betwixt devils and deluded mortals, as that denounced in the laws of our own ancestors under the name of *witchcraft*. What has been translated by

that word seems little more than the art of a medicator of poisons, combined with that of a Pythoness or false prophetess; a crime, however, of a capital nature, by the Levitical law, since, in the first capacity, it implied great enmity to mankind, and in the second, direct treason to the divine Legislator. The book of Tobit contains, indeed, a passage resembling more an incident in an Arabian tale or Gothic romance, than a part of inspired writing. In this, the fumes produced by broiling the liver of a certain fish are described as having power to drive away an evil genius who guards the nuptial chamber of an Assyrian princess, and who has strangled seven bridegrooms in succession, as they approached the nuptial couch. But the romantic and fabulous strain of this legend has induced the fathers of all Protestant churches to deny it a place amongst the writings sanctioned by divine origin, and we may therefore be excused from entering into discussion on such imperfect evidence.

Lastly, in considering the incalculable change which took place upon the Advent of our Saviour and the announcement of his law, we may observe that, according to many wise and learned men, his mere appearance upon earth, without awaiting the fulfilment of his mission, operated as an act of banishment of such heathen deities as had hitherto been suffered to deliver oracles, and ape in some degree the attributes of the Deity. Milton has, in the "Paradise Lost," it may be upon conviction of its truth, embraced the theory which identifies the followers of Satan with the gods of the heathen; and, in a tone of poetry almost unequalled, even in his own splendid writings, he thus describes, in one of his earlier pieces, the departure of these pretended deities on the eve of the blessed Nativity: —

> "The oracles are dumb,
> No voice or hideous hum
> Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving;
> Apollo from his shrine
> Can no more divine,
> With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving;
> No nightly trance or breathed spell
> Inspires the pale-eyed priests from the prophetic cell.
>
> "The lonely mountains o'er,
> And the resounding shore,
> A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;

From haunted spring and dale,
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn,
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

"In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

"Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-battered god of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn;
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

"And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of darkest hue;
In vain with cymbals ring,
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis and Orus, and the Dog Anubis, haste."

The quotation is a long one, but it is scarcely possible to shorten what is so beautiful and interesting a description of the heathen deities, whether in the classic personifications of Greece, the horrible shapes worshipped by mere barbarians, or the hieroglyphical enormities of the Egyptian Mythology. The idea of identifying the pagan deities, especially the most distinguished

of them, with the manifestation of demoniac power, and concluding that the descent of our Saviour struck them with silence, so nobly expressed in the poetry of Milton, is not certainly to be lightly rejected. It has been asserted, in simple prose, by authorities of no mean weight; nor does there appear anything inconsistent in the faith of those who, believing that, in the elder time, fiends and demons were permitted an enlarged degree of power in uttering predictions, may also give credit to the proposition, that at the Divine Advent that power was restrained, the oracles silenced, and those demons who had aped the Divinity of the place were driven from their abode on earth, honoured as it was by a guest so awful.

It must be noticed, however, that this great event had not the same effect on that peculiar class of fiends who were permitted to vex mortals by the alienation of their minds, and the abuse of their persons, in the case of what is called Demoniacal possession. In what exact sense we should understand this word *possession* it is impossible to discover; but we feel it impossible to doubt (notwithstanding learned authorities to the contrary) that it was a dreadful disorder, of a kind not merely natural; and may be pretty well assured that it was suffered to continue after the Incarnation, because the miracles effected by our Saviour and his apostles, in curing those tormented in this way, afforded the most direct proofs of his divine mission, even out of the very mouths of those ejected fiends, the most malignant enemies of a power to which they dared not refuse homage and obedience. And here is an additional proof that witchcraft, in its ordinary and popular sense, was unknown at that period; although cases of possession are repeatedly mentioned in the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, yet in no one instance do the devils ejected mention a witch or sorcerer, or plead the commands of such a person, as the cause of occupying or tormenting the victim; — whereas, in a great proportion of those melancholy cases of witchcraft with which the records of later times abound, the stress of the evidence is rested on the declaration of the possessed, or the demon within him, that some old man or woman in the neighbourhood had compelled the fiend to be the instrument of evil.

It must also be admitted that in another most remarkable respect, the power of the Enemy of mankind was rather enlarged than bridled or restrained, in consequence of the Saviour coming upon earth. It is indisputable that, in order that Jesus might have his share in every species of delusion and persecution which the fallen race of Adam is heir to, he

personally suffered the temptation in the wilderness at the hand of Satan, whom, without resorting to his divine power, he drove, confuted, silenced, and shamed, from his presence. But it appears, that although Satan was allowed, upon this memorable occasion, to come on earth with great power, the permission was given expressly because his time was short.

The indulgence which was then granted to him in a case so unique and peculiar soon passed over and was utterly restrained. It is evident that, after the lapse of the period during which it pleased the Almighty to establish His own Church by miraculous displays of power, it could not consist with his kindness and wisdom to leave the enemy in the possession of the privilege of deluding men by imaginary miracles calculated for the perversion of that faith which real miracles were no longer present to support. There would, we presume to say, be a shocking inconsistency in supposing that false and deceitful prophecies and portents should be freely circulated by any demoniacal influence, deceiving men's bodily organs, abusing their minds, and perverting their faith, while the true religion was left by its great Author devoid of every supernatural sign and token which, in the time of its Founder and His immediate disciples, attested and celebrated their inappreciable mission. Such a permission on the part of the Supreme Being would be (to speak under the deepest reverence) an abandonment of His chosen people, ransomed at such a price, to the snares of an enemy from whom the worst evils were to be apprehended. Nor would it consist with the remarkable promise in holy writ, that "God will not suffer His people to be tempted above what they are able to bear." I Cor. X. 13. The Fathers of the Faith are not strictly agreed at what period the miraculous power was withdrawn from the Church; but few Protestants are disposed to bring it down beneath the accession of Constantine, when the Christian religion was fully established in supremacy. The Roman Catholics, indeed, boldly affirm that the power of miraculous interference with the course of Nature is still in being; but the enlightened even of this faith, though they dare not deny a fundamental tenet of their church, will hardly assent to any particular case, without nearly the same evidence which might conquer the incredulity of their neighbours the Protestants. It is alike inconsistent with the common sense of either that fiends should be permitted to work marvels which are no longer exhibited on the part of Heaven, or in behalf of religion.

It will be observed that we have not been anxious to decide upon the limits of probability on this question. It is not necessary for us to ascertain

in what degree the power of Satan was at liberty to display itself during the Jewish dispensation, or down to what precise period in the history of the Christian Church cures of demoniacal possession or similar displays of miraculous power may have occurred. We have avoided controversy on that head, because it comprehends questions not more doubtful than unedifying. Little benefit could arise from attaining the exact knowledge of the manner in which the apostate Jews practised unlawful charms or auguries. After their conquest and dispersion they were remarked among the Romans for such superstitious practices; and the like, for What we know, may continue to linger among the benighted wanderers of their race at the present day. But all these things are extraneous to our enquiry, the purpose of which was to discover whether any real evidence could be derived from sacred history to prove the early existence of that branch of demonology which has been the object, in comparatively modern times, of criminal prosecution and capital punishment. We have already alluded to this as the contract of witchcraft, in which, as the term was understood in the Middle Ages, the demon and the witch or wizard combined their various powers of doing harm to inflict calamities upon the person and property, the fortune and the fame, of innocent human beings, imposing the most horrible diseases, and death itself, as marks of their slightest illwill; transforming their own persons and those of others at their pleasure; raising tempests to ravage the crops of their enemies, or carrying them home to their own garners; annihilating or transferring to their own dairies the produce of herds; spreading pestilence among cattle, infecting and blighting children; and, in a word, doing more evil than the heart of man might be supposed capable of conceiving, by means far beyond mere human power to accomplish. If it could be supposed that such unnatural leagues existed, and that there were wretches wicked enough, merely for the gratification of malignant spite or the enjoyment of some beastly revelry, to become the wretched slaves of infernal spirits, most just and equitable would be those laws which cut them off from the midst of every Christian commonwealth. But it is still more just and equitable, before punishment be inflicted for any crime, to prove that there is a possibility of that crime being committed. We have therefore advanced an important step in our enquiry when we have ascertained that the *witch* of the Old Testament was not capable of anything beyond the administration of baleful drugs or the practising of paltry imposture; in other words, that she did not hold the character ascribed to a modern

sorceress. We have thus removed out of the argument the startling objection that, in denying the existence of witchcraft, we deny the possibility of a crime which was declared capital in the Mosaic law, and are left at full liberty to adopt the opinion, that the more modern system of witchcraft was a part, and by no means the least gross, of that mass of errors which appeared among the members of the Christian Church when their religion, becoming gradually corrupted by the devices of men and the barbarism of those nations among whom it was spread showed, a light indeed, but one deeply tinged with the remains of that very pagan ignorance which its Divine Founder came to dispel.

We will, in a future part of this enquiry, endeavour to show that many of the particular articles of the popular belief respecting magic and witchcraft were derived from the opinions which the ancient heathens entertained as part of their religion. To recommend them, however, they had principles lying deep in the human mind and heart of all times; the tendency to belief in supernatural agencies is natural, and indeed seems connected with and deduced from the invaluable conviction of the certainty of a future state. Moreover, it is very possible that particular stories of this class may have seemed undeniable in the dark ages, though our better instructed period can explain them in a satisfactory manner by the excited temperament of spectators, or the influence of delusions produced by derangement of the intellect or imperfect reports of the external senses. They obtained, however, universal faith and credit; and the churchmen, either from craft or from ignorance, favoured the progress of a belief which certainly contributed in a most powerful manner to extend their own authority over the human mind.

To pass from the pagans of antiquity — the Mahommedans, though their profession of faith is exclusively unitarian, were accounted worshippers of evil spirits, who were supposed to aid them in their continual warfare against the Christians, or to protect and defend them in the Holy Land, where their abode gave so much scandal and offence to the devout. Romance, and even history, combined in representing all who were out of the pale of the Church as the personal vassals of Satan, who played his deceptions openly amongst them; and Mahound, Termagaunt, and *Apollo* were, in the opinion of the Western Crusaders, only so many names of the archfiend and his principal angels. The most enormous fictions spread abroad and believed through Christendom attested the fact, that there

were open displays of supernatural aid afforded by the evil spirits to the Turks and Saracens; and fictitious reports were not less liberal in assigning to the Christians extraordinary means of defence through the direct protection of blessed saints and angels, or of holy men yet in the flesh, but already anticipating the privileges proper to a state of beatitude and glory, and possessing the power to work miracles.

To show the extreme grossness of these legends, we may give an example from the romance of "Richard Coeur de Lion," premising at the same time that, like other romances, it was written in what the author designed to be the style of true history, and was addressed to hearers and readers, not as a tale of fiction, but a real narrative of facts, so that the legend is a proof of what the age esteemed credible and were disposed to believe as much as if had been extracted from a graver chronicle.

The renowned Saladin, it is said, had dispatched an embassy to King Richard, with the present of a colt recommended as a gallant warhorse, challenging Coeur de Lion to meet him in single combat between the armies, for the purpose of deciding at once their pretensions to the land of Palestine, and the theological question whether the God of the Christians, or Jupiter, the deity of the Saracens, should be the future object of adoration by the subjects of both monarchs. Now, under this seemingly chivalrous defiance was concealed a most unknightly stratagem, and which we may at the same time call a very clumsy trick for the devil to be concerned in. A Saracen clerk had conjured two devils into a mare and her colt, with the instruction, that whenever the mare neighed, the foal, which was a brute of uncommon size, should kneel down to suck his dam. The enchanted foal was sent to King Richard in the belief that the foal, obeying the signal of its dam as usual, the Soldan who mounted the mare might get an easy advantage over him.

But the English king was warned by an angel in a dream of the intended stratagem, and the colt was, by the celestial mandate, previously to the combat, conjured in the holy name to be obedient to his rider during the encounter. The fiend-horse intimated his submission by drooping his head, but his word was not entirely credited. His ears were stopped with wax. In this condition, Richard, armed at all points and with various marks of his religious faith displayed on his weapons, rode forth to meet Saladin, and the Soldan, confident of his stratagem, encountered him boldly. The mare neighed till she shook the ground for miles around; but the sucking devil,

whom the wax prevented from hearing the summons, could not obey the signal. Saladin was dismounted, and narrowly escaped death, while his army were cut to pieces by the Christians. It is but an awkward tale of wonder where a demon is worsted by a trick which could hardly have cheated a common horse-jockey; but by such legends our ancestors were amused and interested, till their belief respecting the demons of the Holy Land seems to have been not very far different from that expressed in the title of Ben Jonson's play, "The Devil is an Ass."

One of the earliest maps ever published, which appeared at Rome in the sixteenth century, intimates a similar belief in the connexion of the heathen nations of the north of Europe with the demons of the spiritual world. In Esthonia, Lithuania, Courland, and such districts, the chart, for want, it may be supposed, of an accurate account of the country, exhibits rude cuts of the fur-clad natives paying homage at the shrines of demons, who make themselves visibly present to them; while at other places they are displayed as doing battle with the Teutonic knights, or other military associations formed for the conversion or expulsion of the heathens in these parts. Amid the pagans, armed with scimitars and dressed in caftans, the fiends are painted as assisting them, pourtrayed in all the modern horrors of the cloven foot, or, as the Germans term it, horse's foot, bat wings, saucer eyes, locks like serpents, and tail like a dragon. These attributes, it may be cursorily noticed, themselves intimate the connexion of modern demonology with the mythology of the ancients. The cloven foot is the attribute of Pan — to whose talents for inspiring terror we owe the word *panic* — the snaky tresses are borrowed from the shield of Minerva, and the dragon train alone seems to be connected with the Scriptural history.

[Footnote 5: The chart alluded to is one of the *jac-similes* of an ancient planisphere, engraved in bronze about the end of the 15th century, and called the Borgian Table, from its possessor, Cardinal Stephen Borgia, and preserved in his museum at Veletri.]

Other heathen nations, whose creeds could not have directly contributed to the system of demonology, because their manners and even their very existence was unknown when it was adopted, were nevertheless involved, so soon as Europeans became acquainted with them, in the same charge of witchcraft and worship of demons brought by the Christians of the Middle Ages against the heathens of northern Europe and the Mahommedans of the East. We learn from the information of a Portuguese voyager that even the native Christians (called those of St. Thomas), whom the discoverers found

in India when they first arrived there, fell under suspicion of diabolical practices. It was almost in vain that the priests of one of their chapels produced to the Portuguese officers and soldiers a holy image, and called on them, as good Christians, to adore the Blessed Virgin. The sculptor had been so little acquainted with his art, and the hideous form which he had produced resembled an inhabitant of the infernal regions so much more than Our Lady of Grace, that one of the European officers, while, like his companions, he dropped on his knees, added the loud protest, that if the image represented the Devil, he paid his homage to the Holy Virgin.

In South America the Spaniards justified the unrelenting cruelties exercised on the unhappy natives by reiterating, in all their accounts of the countries which they discovered and conquered, that the Indians, in their idol worship, were favoured by the demons with a direct intercourse, and that their priests inculcated doctrines and rites the foulest and most abhorrent to Christian ears. The great snake-god of Mexico, and other idols worshipped with human sacrifices and bathed in the gore of their prisoners, gave but too much probability to this accusation; and if the images themselves were not actually tenanted by evil spirits, the worship which the Mexicans paid to them was founded upon such deadly cruelty and dark superstition as might easily be believed to have been breathed into mortals by the agency of hell.

Even in North America, the first settlers in New England and other parts of that immense continent uniformly agreed that they detected among the inhabitants traces of an intimate connexion with Satan. It is scarce necessary to remark that this opinion was founded exclusively upon the tricks practised by the native powahs, or cunning men, to raise themselves to influence among the chiefs, and to obtain esteem with the people, which, possessed as they were professionally of some skill in jugglery and the knowledge of some medical herbs and secrets, the understanding of the colonists was unable to trace to their real source — legerdemain and imposture. By the account, however, of the Reverend Cotton Mather, in his *Magnalia*, book vi., he does not ascribe to these Indian conjurers any skill greatly superior to a maker of almanacks or common fortune-teller. “They,” says the Doctor, “universally acknowledged and worshipped many gods, and therefore highly esteemed and reverenced their priests, powahs, or wizards, who were esteemed as having immediate converse with the gods. To them, therefore, they addressed themselves in all difficult cases: yet

could not all that desired that dignity, as they esteemed it, obtain familiarity with the infernal spirits. Nor were all powahs alike successful in their addresses; but they became such, either by immediate revelation, or in the use of certain rites and ceremonies, which tradition had left as conducing to that end. In so much, that parents, out of zeal, often dedicated their children to the gods, and educated them accordingly, observing a certain diet, debarring sleep, &c.: yet of the many designed, but few obtained their desire. Supposing that where the practice of witchcraft has been highly esteemed, there must be given the plainest demonstration of mortals having familiarity with infernal spirits, I am willing to let my reader know, that, not many years since, here died one of the powahs, who never pretended to astrological knowledge, yet could precisely inform such who desired his assistance, from whence goods stolen from them were gone, and whither carried, with many things of the like nature; nor was he ever known to endeavour to conceal his knowledge to be immediately *from a god subservient to him that the English worship*. This powah, being by an Englishman worthy of credit (who lately informed me of the same), desired to advise him who had taken certain goods which had been stolen, having formerly been an eyewitness of his ability, the powah, after a little pausing, demanded why he requested that from him, since himself served another God? that therefore he could not help him; but added, '*If you can believe that my god may help you, I will try what I can do*; which diverted the man from further enquiry. I must a little digress, and tell my reader, that this powah's wife was accounted a godly woman, and lived in the practice and profession of the Christian religion, not only by the approbation, but encouragement of her husband. She constantly prayed in the family, and attended the public worship on the Lord's days. He declared that he could not blame her, for that she served a god that was above his; but that as to himself, his god's continued kindness obliged him not to forsake his service." It appears, from the above and similar passages, that Dr. Cotton Mather, an honest and devout, but sufficiently credulous man, had mistaken the purpose of the tolerant powah. The latter only desired to elude the necessity of his practices being brought under the observant eye of an European, while he found an ingenious apology in the admitted superiority which he naturally conceded to the Deity of a people, advanced, as he might well conceive, so far above his own in power and attainments, as might

reasonably infer a corresponding superiority in the nature and objects of their worship.

[Footnote 6: “On Remarkable Mercies of Divine Providence.”]

From another narrative we are entitled to infer that the European wizard was held superior to the native sorcerer of North America. Among the numberless extravagances of the Scottish Dissenters of the 17th century, now canonized in a lump by those who view them in the general light of enemies to Prelacy, was a certain shipmaster, called, from his size, Meikle John Gibb. This man, a person called Jamie, and one or two other men, besides twenty or thirty females who adhered to them, went the wildest lengths of enthusiasm. Gibb headed a party, who followed him into the moorlands, and at the Ford Moss, between Airth and Stirling, burned their Bibles, as an act of solemn adherence to their new faith. They were apprehended in consequence, and committed to prison; and the rest of the Dissenters, however differently they were affected by the persecution of Government, when it applied to themselves, were nevertheless much offended that these poor mad people were not brought to capital punishment for their blasphemous extravagances; and imputed it as a fresh crime to the Duke of York that, though he could not be often accused of toleration, he considered the discipline of the house of correction as more likely to bring the unfortunate Gibbites to their senses than the more dignified severities of a public trial and the gallows. The Cameronians, however, did their best to correct this scandalous lenity. As Meikle John Gibb, who was their comrade in captivity, used to disturb their worship in jail by his maniac howling, two of them took turn about to hold him down by force, and silence him by a napkin thrust into his mouth. This mode of quieting the unlucky heretic, though sufficiently emphatic, being deemed ineffectual or inconvenient, George Jackson, a Cameronian, who afterwards suffered at the gallows, dashed the maniac with his feet and hands against the wall, and beat him so severely that the rest were afraid that he had killed him outright. After which specimen of fraternal chastisement, the lunatic, to avoid the repetition of the discipline, whenever the prisoners began worship, ran behind the door, and there, with his own napkin crammed into his mouth, sat howling like a chastised cur. But on being finally transported to America, John Gibb, we are assured, was much admired by the heathen for his familiar converse with the devil bodily, and offering sacrifices to him.

“He died there,” says Walker, “about the year 1720.” We must necessarily infer that the pretensions of the natives to supernatural communication could not be of a high class, since we find them honouring this poor madman as their superior; and, in general, that the magic, or powahing, of the North American Indians was not of a nature to be much apprehended by the British colonists, since the natives themselves gave honour and precedence to those Europeans who came among them with the character of possessing intercourse with the spirits whom they themselves professed to worship.

[Footnote 7: See Patrick Walker’s “Biographia Presbyteriana,” vol. ii. p. 23; also “God’s Judgment upon Persecutors,” and Wodrow’s “History,” upon the article John Gibb.]

Notwithstanding this inferiority on the part of the powahs, it occurred to the settlers that the heathen Indians and Roman Catholic Frenchmen were particularly favoured by the demons, who sometimes adopted their appearance, and showed themselves in their likeness, to the great annoyance of the colonists. Thus, in the year 1692, a party of real or imaginary French and Indians exhibited themselves occasionally to the colonists of the town of Gloucester, in the county of Essex, New England, alarmed the country around very greatly, skirmished repeatedly with the English, and caused the raising of two regiments, and the dispatching a strong reinforcement to the assistance of the settlement. But as these visitants, by whom they were plagued more than a fortnight, though they exchanged fire with the settlers, never killed or scalped any one, the English became convinced that they were not real Indians and Frenchmen, but that the devil and his agents had assumed such an appearance, although seemingly not enabled effectually to support it, for the molestation of the colony.

[Footnote 8: “Magnalia,” book vii. article xviii. The fact is also alleged in the “Life of Sir William Phipps.”]

It appears, then, that the ideas of superstition which the more ignorant converts to the Christian faith borrowed from the wreck of the classic mythology, were so rooted in the minds of their successors, that these found corroboration of their faith in demonology in the practice of every pagan nation whose destiny it was to encounter them as enemies, and that as well within the limits of Europe as in every other part of the globe to which their arms were carried. In a word, it may be safely laid down, that the

commonly received doctrine of demonology, presenting the same general outlines, though varied according to the fancy of particular nations, existed through all Europe. It seems to have been founded originally on feelings incident to the human heart, or diseases to which the human frame is liable — to have been largely augmented by what classic superstitions survived the ruins of paganism — and to have received new contributions from the opinions collected among the barbarous nations, whether of the east or of the west. It is now necessary to enter more minutely into the question, and endeavour to trace from what especial sources the people of the Middle Ages derived those notions which gradually assumed the shape of a regular system of demonology.

Letter III

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The creed of Zoroaster, which naturally occurs to unassisted reason as a mode of accounting for the mingled existence of good and evil in the visible world — that belief which, in one modification or another, supposes the coexistence of a benevolent and malevolent principle, which contend

together without either being able decisively to prevail over his antagonist, leads the fear and awe deeply impressed on the human mind to the worship as well of the author of evil, so tremendous in all the effects of which credulity accounts him the primary cause, as to that of his great opponent, who is loved and adored as the father of all that is good and bountiful. Nay, such is the timid servility of human nature that the worshippers will neglect the altars of the Author of good rather than that of Arimanes, trusting with indifference to the wellknown mercy of the one, while they shrink from the idea of irritating the vengeful jealousy of the awful father of evil.

The Celtic tribes, by whom, under various denominations, Europe seems to have been originally peopled, possessed, in common with other savages, a natural tendency to the worship of the evil principle. They did not, perhaps, adore Arimanes under one sole name, or consider the malignant divinities as sufficiently powerful to undertake a direct struggle with the more benevolent gods; yet they thought it worth while to propitiate them by various expiatory rites and prayers, that they, and the elementary tempests which they conceived to be under their direct command, might be merciful to suppliants who had acknowledged their power, and deprecated their vengeance.

Remains of these superstitions might be traced till past the middle of the last century, though fast becoming obsolete, or passing into mere popular customs of the country, which the peasantry observe without thinking of their origin. About 1769, when Mr. Pennant made his tour, the ceremony of the Baaltein, Beltane, or First of May, though varying in different districts of the Highlands, was yet in strict observance, and the cake, which was then baken with scrupulous attention to certain rites and forms, was divided into fragments, which were formally dedicated to birds or beasts of prey that they, or rather the being whose agents they were, might spare the flocks and herds.

[Footnote 9: See Tennant's "Scottish Tour," vol. i. p. III. The traveller mentions that some festival of the same kind was in his time observed in Gloucestershire.]

Another custom of similar origin lingered late among us. In many parishes of Scotland there was suffered to exist a certain portion of land, called *the gudeman's croft*, which was never ploughed or cultivated, but suffered to remain waste, like the TEMENOS of a pagan temple, Though it was not expressly avowed, no one doubted that "the goodman's croft" was set apart

for some evil being; in fact, that it was the portion of the archfiend himself, whom our ancestors distinguished by a name which, while it was generally understood, could not, it was supposed, be offensive to the stern inhabitant of the regions of despair. This was so general a custom that the Church published an ordinance against it as an impious and blasphemous usage.

This singular custom sunk before the efforts of the clergy in the seventeenth century; but there must still be many alive who, in childhood, have been taught to look with wonder on knolls and patches of ground left uncultivated, because, whenever a ploughshare entered the soil, the elementary spirits were supposed to testify their displeasure by storm and thunder. Within our own memory, many such places, sanctified to barrenness by some favourite popular superstition, existed, both in Wales and Ireland, as well as in Scotland; but the high price of agricultural produce during the late war renders it doubtful if a veneration for greybearded superstition has suffered any one of them to remain undesecrated. For the same reason the mounts called Sith Bhruaith were respected, and it was deemed unlawful and dangerous to cut wood, dig earth and stones, or otherwise disturb them.

[Footnote 10: See "Essay on the Subterranean Commonwealth," by Mr. Robert Kirke, minister of Aberfoyle.]

Now, it may at first sight seem strange that the Christian religion should have permitted the existence of such gross and impious relics of heathenism, in a land where its doctrines had obtained universal credence. But this will not appear so wonderful when it is recollected that the original Christians under the heathen emperors were called to conversion by the voice of apostles and saints, invested for the purpose with miraculous powers, as well of language, for communicating their doctrine to the Gentiles, as of cures, for the purpose of authenticating their mission. These converts must have been in general such elect persons as were effectually called to make part of the infant church; and when hypocrites ventured, like Ananias and Sapphira, to intrude themselves into so select an association, they were liable, at the Divine pleasure, to be detected and punished. On the contrary, the nations who were converted after Christianity had become the religion of the empire were not brought within the pale upon such a principle of selection, as when the church consisted of a few individuals, who had, upon conviction, exchanged the errors of the pagan religion for

the dangers and duties incurred by those who embraced a faith inferring the self-denial of its votaries, and at the same time exposing them to persecution. When the cross became triumphant, and its cause no longer required the direction of inspired men, or the evidence of miracles, to compel reluctant belief, it is evident that the converts who thronged into the fold must have, many of them, entered because Christianity was the prevailing faith — many because it was the church, the members of which rose most readily to promotion — many, finally, who, though content to resign the worship of pagan divinities, could not at once clear their minds of heathen ritual and heathen observances, which they inconsistently laboured to unite with the more simple and majestic faith that disdained such impure union. If this was the case, even in the Roman empire, where the converts to the Christian faith must have found, among the earlier members of the church, the readiest and the soundest instruction, how much more imperfectly could those foreign and barbarous tribes receive the necessary religious information from some zealous and enthusiastic preacher, who christened them by hundreds in one day? Still less could we imagine them to have acquired a knowledge of Christianity, in the genuine and perfect sense of the word, when, as was frequently the case, they only assumed the profession of the religion that had become the choice of some favoured chief, whose example they followed in mere love and loyalty, without, perhaps, attaching more consequence to a change of religion than to a change of garments. Such hasty converts, professing themselves Christians, but neither weaned from their old belief, nor instructed in their new one, entered the sanctuary without laying aside the superstitions with which their young minds had been imbued; and accustomed to a plurality of deities, some of them, who bestowed unusual thought on the matter, might be of opinion that, in adopting the God of the Christians, they had not renounced the service of every inferior power.

If, indeed, the laws of the empire could have been supposed to have had any influence over those fierce barbarians, who conceived that the empire itself lay before them as a spoil, they might have been told that Constantine, taking the offence of alleged magicians and sorcerers in the same light in which it was viewed in the law of Moses, had denounced death against any who used these unlawful enquiries into futurity. “Let the unlawful curiosity of prying into futurity,” says the law, “be silent in every one henceforth and

for ever. For, subjected to the avenging sword of the law, he shall be punished capitally who disobeys our commands in this matter."

[Footnote 11: "Codex," lib. ix. tit. 18, cap. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8.]

If, however, we look more closely into this enactment, we shall be led to conclude that the civil law does not found upon the prohibitions and penalties in Scripture; although it condemns the *ars mathematica* (for the most mystic and uncertain of all sciences, real or pretended, at that time held the title which now distinguishes the most exact) as a damnable art, and utterly interdicted, and declares that the practitioners therein should die by fire, as enemies of the human race — yet the reason of this severe treatment seems to be different from that acted upon in the Mosaical institutions. The weight of the crime among the Jews was placed on the blasphemy of the diviners, and their treason against the theocracy instituted by Jehovah. The Roman legislators were, on the other hand, moved chiefly by the danger arising to the person of the prince and the quiet of the state, so apt to be unsettled by every pretence or encouragement to innovation. The reigning emperors, therefore, were desirous to place a check upon the mathematics (as they termed the art of divination), much more for a political than a religious cause, since we observe, in the history of the empire, how often the dethronement or death of the sovereign was produced by conspiracies or mutinies which took their rise from pretended prophecies. In this mode of viewing the crime, the lawyers of the lower empire acted upon the example of those who had compiled the laws of the twelve tables. The mistaken and misplaced devotion which Horace recommends to the rural nymph, Phidyle, would have been a crime of a deep dye in a Christian convert, and must have subjected him to excommunication, as one relapsed to the rites of paganism; but he might indulge his superstition by supposing that though he must not worship Pan or Ceres as gods, he was at liberty to fear them in their new capacity of fiends. Some compromise between the fear and the conscience of the new converts, at a time when the church no longer consisted exclusively of saints, martyrs, and confessors, the disciples of inspired Apostles, led them, and even their priestly guides, subject like themselves to human passions and errors, to resort as a charm, if not as an act of worship, to those sacrifices, words, and ritual, by which the heathen, whom they had succeeded, pretended to arrest evil or procure benefits.

[Footnote 12: By this more ancient code, the punishment of death was indeed denounced against those who destroyed crops, awakened storms, or brought over to their barns and garners the fruits of the earth; but, by good fortune, it left the agriculturists of the period at liberty to use the means they thought most proper to render their fields fertile and plentiful. Pliny informs us that one Caius Furius Cresinus, a Roman of mean estate, raised larger crops from a small field than his neighbours could obtain from more ample possessions. He was brought before the judge upon a charge averring that he conjured the fruits of the earth, produced by his neighbours' farms, into his own possession. Cresinus appeared, and, having proved the return of his farm to be the produce of his own hard and unremitting labour, as well as superior skill, was dismissed with the highest honours.]

When such belief in a hostile principle and its imaginations was become general in the Roman empire, the ignorance of its conquerors, those wild nations, Franks, Goths, Vandals, Huns, and similar classes of unrefined humanity, made them prone to an error which there were few judicious preachers to warn them against; and we ought rather to wonder and admire the Divine clemency, which imparted to so rude nations the light of the Gospel, and disposed them to receive a religion so repugnant to their warlike habits, than that they should, at the same time, have adopted many gross superstitions, borrowed from the pagans, or retained numbers of those which had made part of their own national forms of heathenism.

Thus, though the thrones of Jupiter and the superior deities of the heathen Pantheon were totally overthrown and broken to pieces, fragments of their worship and many of their rites survived the conversion to Christianity — nay, are in existence even at this late and enlightened period, although those by whom they are practised have not preserved the least memory of their original purpose. We may hastily mention one or two customs of classical origin, in addition to the Beltane and those already noticed, which remain as examples that the manners of the Romans once gave the tone to the greater part of the island of Britain, and at least to the whole which was to the south of the wall of Severus.

The following customs still linger in the south of Scotland, and belong to this class: The bride, when she enters the house of her husband, is lifted over the threshold, and to step on it or over it voluntarily is reckoned a bad omen. This custom was universal in Rome, where it was observed as keeping in memory the rape of the Sabines, and that it was by a show of violence towards the females that the object of peopling the city was attained. On the same occasion a sweet cake, baked for the purpose, is broken above the head of the bride; which is also a rite of classic antiquity.

In like manner, the Scottish, even of the better rank, avoid contracting marriage in the month of May, which genial season of flowers and breezes

might, in other respects, appear so peculiarly favourable for that purpose. It was specially objected to the marriage of Mary with the profligate Earl of Bothwell, that the union was formed within this interdicted month. This prejudice was so rooted among the Scots that, in 1684, a set of enthusiasts, called Gibbites, proposed to renounce it, among a long list of stated festivals, fast-days, popish relics, not forgetting the profane names of the days of the week, names of the months, and all sorts of idle and silly practices which their tender consciences took an exception to. This objection to solemnize marriage in the merry month of May, however fit a season for courtship, is also borrowed from the Roman pagans, which, had these fanatics been aware of it, would have been an additional reason for their anathema against the practice. The ancients have given us as a maxim, that it is only bad women who marry in that month.

[Footnote 13: “Malæ nubent Maia.”]

The custom of saying God bless you, when a person in company sneezes, is, in like manner, derived from sternutation being considered as a crisis of the plague at Athens, and the hope that, when it was attained the patient had a chance of recovery.

But besides these, and many other customs which the various nations of Europe received from the classical times, and which it is not our object to investigate, they derived from thence a shoal of superstitious beliefs, which, blended and mingled with those which they brought with them out of their own country, fostered and formed the materials of a demonological creed which has descended down almost to our own times. Nixas, or Nicksa, a river or ocean god, worshipped on the shores of the Baltic, seems to have taken uncontested possession of the attributes of Neptune. Amid the twilight winters and overpowering tempests of these gloomy regions, he had been not unnaturally chosen as the power most adverse to man, and the supernatural character with which he was invested has descended to our time under two different aspects. The Nixa of the Germans is one of those fascinating and lovely fays whom the ancients termed Naiads; and unless her pride is insulted or her jealousy awakened by an inconstant lover, her temper is generally mild and her actions beneficent. The Old Nick known in England is an equally genuine descendant of the northern sea-god, and possesses a larger portion of his powers and terrors The British sailor, who fears nothing else, confesses his terror for this terrible being, and believes

him the author of almost all the various calamities to which the precarious life of a seaman is so continually exposed.

The Bhar-guest, or Bhargeist, by which name it is generally acknowledged through various country parts of England, and particularly in Yorkshire, also called a Dobie — a local spectre which haunts a particular spot under various forms — is a deity, as his name implies, of Teutonic descent; and if it be true, as the author has been informed, that some families bearing the name of Dobie carry a phantom or spectre, passant, in their armorial bearings, it plainly implies that, however the word may have been selected for a proper name, its original derivation had not then been forgotten.

[Footnote 14: A similar bearing has been ascribed, for the same reason, to those of the name of Fantome, who carried of old a goblin, or phantom, in a shroud sable passant, on a field azure. Both bearings are founded on what is called canting heraldry, a species of art disowned by the writers on the science, yet universally made use of by those who practice the art of blazonry.]

The classic mythology presented numerous points in which it readily coalesced with that of the Germans, Danes, and Northmen of a later period. They recognized the power of Erictho, Canidia, and other sorceresses, whose spell could perplex the course of the elements, intercept the influence of the sun, and prevent his beneficial operation upon the fruits of the earth, call down the moon from her appointed sphere, and disturb the original and destined course of Nature by their words and charms and the power of the evil spirits whom they invoked. They were also professionally implicated in all such mystic and secret rites and ceremonies as were used to conciliate the favour of the infernal powers, whose dispositions were supposed as dark and wayward as their realms were gloomy and dismal. Such hags were frequent agents in the violation of unburied bodies, and it was believed, by the vulgar at least, that it was dangerous to leave corpses unguarded lest they should be mangled by the witches, who took from them the most choice ingredients composing their charms. Above all, it must not be forgotten that these frightful sorceresses possessed the power of transforming themselves and others into animals, which are used in their degree of quadrupeds, or in whatever other laborious occupation belongs to the transformed state. The poets of the heathens, with authors of fiction, such as Lucian and Apuleius, ascribe all these powers to the witches of the pagan world, combining them with the art of poisoning, and of making magical philtres to seduce the affections of the young and beautiful; and

such were the characteristics which, in greater or less extent, the people of the Middle Ages ascribed to the witches of their day.

But in thus adopting the superstitions of the ancients, the conquerors of the Roman Empire combined them with similar articles of belief which they had brought with them from their original settlements in the North, where the existence of hags of the same character formed a great feature in their Sagas and their Chronicles. It requires but a slight acquaintance with these compositions to enable the reader to recognize in the Galdrakinna of the Scalds the *Stryga* or witch-woman of more classical climates. In the northern ideas of witches there was no irreligion concerned with their lore. On the contrary, the possession of magical knowledge was an especial attribute of Odin himself; and to intrude themselves upon a deity, and compel him to instruct them in what they desired to know, was accounted not an act of impiety, but of gallantry and high courage, among those sons of the sword and the spear. Their matrons possessed a high reputation for magic, for prophetic powers, for creating illusions; and, if not capable of transformations of the human body, they were at least able to impose such fascination on the sight of their enemies as to conceal for a period the objects of which they were in search.

There is a remarkable story in the Eyrbiggia Saga ("Historia Eyranorum"), giving the result of such a controversy between two of these gifted women, one of whom was determined on discovering and putting to death the son of the other, named Katla, who in a brawl had cut off the hand of the daughter-in-law of Geirada. A party detached to avenge this wrong, by putting Oddo to death, returned deceived by the skill of his mother. They had found only Katla, they said, spinning flax from a large distaff. "Fools," said Geirada, "that distaff was the man you sought." They returned, seized the distaff, and burnt it. But this second time, the witch disguised her son under the appearance of a tame kid. A third time he was a hog, which grovelled among the ashes. The party returned yet again; augmented as one of Katla's maidens, who kept watch, informed her mistress, by one in a blue mantle. "Alas!" said Katla, "it is the sorceress Geirada, against whom spells avail not." Accordingly, the hostile party, entering for the fourth time, seized on the object of their animosity, and put him to death. This species of witchcraft is well known in Scotland as the *glamour,* or *deceptio visus*, and was supposed to be a special attribute of the race of Gipsies.

[Footnote 15: Eyrbiggia Saga, in "Northern Antiquities."]

Neither are those prophetesses to be forgotten, so much honoured among the German tribes, that, as we are assured by Tacitus, they rose to the highest rank in their councils, by their supposed supernatural knowledge, and even obtained a share in the direction of their armies. This peculiarity in the habits of the North was so general, that it was no unusual thing to see females, from respect to their supposed views into futurity, and the degree of divine inspiration which was vouchsafed to them, arise to the degree of HAXA, or chief priestess, from which comes the word *Hexe*, now universally used for a witch; a circumstance which plainly shows that the mythological system of the ancient natives of the North had given to the modern language an appropriate word for distinguishing those females who had intercourse with the spiritual world.

[Footnote 16: It may be worth while to notice that the word Haxa is still used in Scotland in its sense of a druidess, or chief priestess, to distinguish the places where such females exercised their ritual. There is a species of small intrenchment on the western descent of the Eildon hills, which Mr. Milne, in his account of the parish of Melrose, drawn up about eighty years ago, says, was denominated *Bourjo*, a word of unknown derivation, by which the place is still known. Here an universal and subsisting tradition bore that human sacrifices were of yore offered, while the people assisting could behold the ceremony from the elevation of the glacis which slopes inward. With this place of sacrifice communicated a path, still discernible, called the *Haxell-gate*, leading to a small glen or narrow valley called the *Haxellcleuch* — both which words are probably derived from the Haxa or chief priestess of the pagans.]

It is undeniable that these Pythonesses were held in high respect while the pagan religion lasted; but for that very reason they became odious so soon as the tribe was converted to Christianity. They were, of course, if they pretended to retain their influence, either despised as impostors or feared as sorceresses; and the more that, in particular instances, they became dreaded for their power, the more they were detested, under the conviction that they derived it from the enemy of man. The deities of the northern heathens underwent a similar metamorphosis, resembling that proposed by Drawcansir in the “Rehearsal,” who threatens “to make a god subscribe himself a devil.”

The warriors of the North received this new impression concerning the influence of their deities, and the source from which it was derived, with the more indifference, as their worship, when their mythology was most generally established, was never of a very reverential or devotional character. Their idea of their own merely human prowess was so high, that the champions made it their boast, as we have already hinted, they would

not give way in fight even to the immortal gods themselves. Such, we learn from Cæsar, was the idea of the Germans concerning the Suevi, or Swabians, a tribe to whom the others yielded the palm of valour; and many individual stories are told in the Sagas concerning bold champions, who had fought, not only with the sorcerers, but with the demigods of the system, and come off unharmed, if not victorious, in the contest. Hother, for example, encountered the god Thor in battle, as Diomede, in the Iliad, engages with Mars, and with like success. Bartholsine gives us repeated examples of the same kind. "Know this," said Kiartan to Olaus Trigguasen, "that I believe neither in idols nor demons. I have travelled through various strange countries, and have encountered many giants and monsters, and have never been conquered by them; I therefore put my sole trust in my own strength of body and courage of soul." Another yet more broad answer was made to St. Olaus, King of Norway, by Gaukater. "I am neither Pagan nor Christian. My comrades and I profess no other religion than a perfect confidence in our own strength and invincibility in battle." Such chieftains were of the sect of Mezentius —

> "Dextra mihi Deus, et telum, quod missile libro,
> Nunc adsint!"

And we cannot wonder that champions of such a character, careless of their gods while yet acknowledged as such, readily regarded them as demons after their conversion to Christianity.

[Footnote 17: "De causis contemptæ necis," lib. i. cap 6.]

[Footnote 18: "Æneid," lib. x. line 773.]

To incur the highest extremity of danger became accounted a proof of that insuperable valour for which every Northman desired to be famed, and their annals afford numerous instances of encounters with ghosts, witches, furies, and fiends, whom the Kiempé, or champions, compelled to submit to their mere mortal strength, and yield to their service the weapons or other treasures which they guarded in their tombs.

The Norsemen were the more prone to these superstitions, because it was a favourite fancy of theirs that, in many instances, the change from life to death altered the temper of the human spirit from benignant to malevolent; or perhaps, that when the soul left the body, its departure was

occasionally supplied by a wicked demon, who took the opportunity to enter and occupy its late habitation.

Upon such a supposition the wild fiction that follows is probably grounded; which, extravagant as it is, possesses something striking to the imagination. Saxo Grammaticus tells us of the fame of two Norse princes or chiefs, who had formed what was called a brotherhood in arms, implying not only the firmest friendship and constant support during all the adventures which they should undertake in life, but binding them by a solemn compact, that after the death of either, the survivor should descend alive into the sepulchre of his brother-in-arms, and consent to be buried alongst with him. The task of fulfilling this dreadful compact fell upon Asmund, his companion, Assueit, having been slain in battle. The tomb was formed after the ancient northern custom in what was called the age of hills, that is, when it was usual to bury persons of distinguished merit or rank on some conspicuous spot, which was crowned with a mound. With this purpose a deep narrow vault was constructed, to be the apartment of the future tomb over which the sepulchral heap was to be piled. Here they deposited arms, trophies, poured forth, perhaps, the blood of victims, introduced into the tomb the warhorses of the champions, and when these rites had been duly paid, the body of Assueit was placed in the dark and narrow house, while his faithful brother-in-arms entered and sat down by the corpse, without a word or look which testified regret or unwillingness to fulfil his fearful engagement. The soldiers who had witnessed this singular interment of the dead and living, rolled a huge stone to the mouth of the tomb, and piled so much earth and stones above the spot as made a mound visible from a great distance, and then, with loud lamentation for the loss of such undaunted leaders, they dispersed themselves like a flock which has lost its shepherd.

Years passed away after years, and a century had elapsed ere a noble Swedish rover, bound upon some high adventure and supported by a gallant band of followers, arrived in the valley which took its name from the tomb of the brethren-in-arms. The story was told to the strangers, whose leader determined on opening the sepulchre, partly because, as already hinted, it was reckoned a heroic action to brave the anger of departed heroes by violating their tombs; partly to attain the arms and swords of proof with which the deceased had done their great actions. He set his soldiers to work, and soon removed the earth and stones from one side of the mound, and laid

bare the entrance. But the stoutest of the rovers started back when, instead of the silence of a tomb, they heard within horrid cries, the clash of swords, the clang of armour, and all the noise of a mortal combat between two furious champions. A young warrior was let down into the profound tomb by a cord, which was drawn up shortly after, in hopes of news from beneath. But when the adventurer descended, some one threw him from the cord, and took his place in the noose. When the rope was pulled up, the soldiers, instead of their companion, beheld Asmund, the survivor of the brethren-in-arms. He rushed into the open air, his sword drawn in his hand, his armour half torn from his body, the left side of his face almost scratched off, as by the talons of some wild beast. He had no sooner appeared in the light of day, than, with the improvisatory poetic talent, which these champions often united with heroic strength and bravery, he poured forth a string of verses containing the history of his hundred years' conflict within the tomb. It seems that no sooner was the sepulchre closed than the corpse of the slain Assueit arose from the ground, inspired by some ravenous goule, and having first torn to pieces and devoured the horses which had been entombed with them, threw himself upon the companion who had just given him such a sign of devoted friendship, in order to treat him in the same manner. The hero, no way discountenanced by the horrors of his situation, took to his arms, and defended himself manfully against Assueit, or rather against the evil demon who tenanted that champion's body. In this manner the living brother waged a preternatural combat, which had endured during a whole century, when Asmund, at last obtaining the victory, prostrated his enemy, and by driving, as he boasted, a stake through his body, had finally reduced him to the state of quiet becoming a tenant of the tomb. Having chanted the triumphant account of his contest and victory, this mangled conqueror fell dead before them. The body of Assueit was taken out of the tomb, burnt, and the ashes dispersed to heaven; whilst that of the victor, now lifeless and without a companion, was deposited there, so that it was hoped his slumbers might remain undisturbed. The precautions taken against Assueit's reviving a second time, remind us of those adopted in the Greek islands and in the Turkish provinces against the vampire. It affords also a derivation of the ancient English law in case of suicide, when a stake was driven through the body, originally to keep it secure in the tomb.

[Footnote 19: See Saxo Grammaticus, "Hist. Dan.," lib. v.]

The Northern people also acknowledged a kind of ghosts, who, when they had obtained possession of a building, or the right of haunting it, did not defend themselves against mortals on the knightly principle of duel, like Assueit, nor were amenable to the prayers of the priest or the spells of the sorcerer, but became tractable when properly convened in a legal process. The Eyrbiggia Saga acquaints us, that the mansion of a respectable landholder in Iceland was, soon after the settlement of that island, exposed to a persecution of this kind. The molestation was produced by the concurrence of certain mystical and spectral phenomena, calculated to introduce such persecution. About the commencement of winter, with that slight exchange of darkness and twilight which constitutes night and day in these latitudes, a contagious disease arose in a family of consequence and in the neighbourhood, which, sweeping off several members of the family at different times, seemed to threaten them all with death. But the death of these persons was attended with the singular consequence that their spectres were seen to wander in the neighbourhood of the mansion-house, terrifying, and even assaulting, those of the living family who ventured abroad. As the number of the dead members of the devoted household seemed to increase in proportion to that of the survivors, the ghosts took it upon them to enter the house, and produce their aërial forms and wasted physiognomy, even in the stove where the fire was maintained for the general use of the inhabitants, and which, in an Iceland winter, is the only comfortable place of assembling the family. But the remaining inhabitants of the place, terrified by the intrusion of these spectres, chose rather to withdraw to the other extremity of the house, and abandon their warm seats, than to endure the neighbourhood of the phantoms. Complaints were at length made to a pontiff of the god Thor, named Snorro, who exercised considerable influence in the island. By his counsel, the young proprietor of the haunted mansion assembled a jury, or inquest, of his neighbours, constituted in the usual judicial form, as if to judge an ordinary civil matter, and proceeded, in their presence, to cite individually the various phantoms and resemblances of the deceased members of the family, to show by what warrant they disputed with him and his servants the quiet possession of his property, and what defence they could plead for thus interfering with and incommoding the living. The spectres of the dead, by name, and in order as summoned, appeared on their being called, and muttering some regrets at being obliged to abandon their dwelling, departed, or vanished, from the astonished

inquest. Judgment then went against the ghosts by default; and the trial by jury, of which we here can trace the origin, obtained a triumph unknown to any of the great writers who have made it the subject of eulogy.

[Footnote 20: Eyrbiggia Saga. See "Northern Antiquities."]

It was not only with the spirits of the dead that the warlike people of the North made war without timidity, and successfully entered into suits of ejectment. These daring champions often braved the indignation even of the superior deities of their mythology, rather than allow that there existed any being before whom their boldness could quail. Such is the singular story how a young man of high courage, in crossing a desolate ridge of mountains, met with a huge waggon, in which the goddess, Freya (*i.e.*, a gigantic idol formed to represent her), together with her shrine, and the wealthy offerings attached to it, was travelling from one district of the country to another. The shrine, or sanctuary of the idol, was, like a modern caravan travelling with a show, screened by boards and curtains from the public gaze, and the equipage was under the immediate guidance of the priestess of Freya, a young, good-looking, and attractive woman. The traveller naturally associated himself with the priestess, who, as she walked on foot, apparently was in no degree displeased with the company of a powerful and handsome young man, as a guide and companion on the journey. It chanced, however, that the presence of the champion, and his discourse with the priestess, was less satisfactory to the goddess than to the parties principally concerned. By a certain signal the divinity summoned the priestess to the sanctuary, who presently returned, with tears in her eyes and terror in her countenance, to inform her companion that it was the will of Freya that he should depart, and no longer travel in their company. "You must have mistaken the meaning of the goddess," said the champion; "Freya cannot have formed a wish so unreasonable as to desire I should abandon the straight and good road, which leads me directly on my journey, to choose precipitous paths and byroads, where I may break my neck." "Nevertheless," said the priestess, "the goddess will be highly offended if you disobey her commands, nor can I conceal from you that she may personally assault you." "It will be at her own peril if she should be so audacious," said the champion, "for I will try the power of this axe against the strength of beams and boards." The priestess chid him for his impiety; but being unable to compel him to obey the goddess's mandate, they again

relapsed into familiarity, which advanced to such a point that a clattering noise within the tabernacle, as of machinery put in motion, intimated to the travellers that Freya, who perhaps had some qualities in common with the classical Vesta, thought a personal interruption of this tête-à-tête ought to be deferred no longer. The curtains flew open, and the massive and awkward idol, who, we may suppose, resembled in form the giant created by Frankenstein, leapt lumbering from the carriage, and, rushing on the intrusive traveller, dealt him, with its wooden hands and arms, such tremendous blows, as were equally difficult to parry or to endure. But the champion was armed with a double-edged Danish axe, with which he bestirred himself with so much strength and activity, that at length he split the head of the image, and with a severe blow hewed off its left leg. The image of Freya then fell motionless to the ground, and the demon which had animated it fled yelling from the battered tenement. The champion was now victor; and, according to the law of arms, took possession of the female and the baggage. The priestess, the divinity of whose patroness had been by the event of the combat sorely lessened in her eyes, was now easily induced to become the associate and concubine of the conqueror. She accompanied him to the district whither he was travelling, and there displayed the shrine of Freya, taking care to hide the injuries which the goddess had received in the brawl. The champion came in for a share of a gainful trade driven by the priestess, besides appropriating to himself most of the treasures which the sanctuary had formerly contained. Neither does it appear that Freya, having, perhaps, a sensible recollection of the power of the axe, ever again ventured to appear in person for the purpose of calling her false stewards to account.

The national estimation of deities, concerning whom such stories could be told and believed, was, of course, of no deep or respectful character. The Icelanders abandoned Odin, Freya, Thor, and their whole pagan mythology, in consideration of a single disputation between the heathen priests and the Christian missionaries. The priests threatened the island with a desolating eruption of the volcano called Hecla, as the necessary consequence of the vengeance of their deities. Snorro, the same who advised the inquest against the ghosts, had become a convert to the Christian religion, and was present on the occasion, and as the conference was held on the surface of what had been a stream of lava, now covered with vegetable substances, he answered the priests with much readiness, “To what was the indignation of the gods owing when the substance on which we stand was fluid and scorching?

Believe me, men of Iceland, the eruption of the volcano depends on natural circumstances now as it did then, and is not the engine of vengeance intrusted to Thor and Odin." It is evident that men who reasoned with so much accuracy concerning the imbecility of Odin and Thor were well prepared, on abandoning their worship, to consider their former deities, of whom they believed so much that was impious, in the light of evil demons.

But there were some particulars of the Northern creed in which it corresponded so exactly with that of the classics as leaves room to doubt whether the original Asæ, or Asiatics, the founders of the Scandinavian system, had, before their migration from Asia, derived them from some common source with those of the Greeks and Romans; or whether, on the other hand, the same proneness of the human mind to superstition has caused that similar ideas are adopted in different regions, as the same plants are found in distant countries without the one, as far as can be discovered, having obtained the seed from the others.

The classical fiction, for example, of the satyrs and other subordinate deities of wood and wild, whose power is rather delusive than formidable, and whose supernatural pranks intimate rather a wish to inflict terror than to do hurt, was received among the Northern people, and perhaps transferred by them to the Celtic tribes. It is an idea which seems common to many nations. The existence of a satyr, in the silvan form, is even pretended to be proved by the evidence of Saint Anthony, to whom one is said to have appeared in the desert. The Scottish Gael have an idea of the same kind, respecting a goblin called *Ourisk*, whose form is like that of Pan, and his attendants something between a man and a goat, the nether extremities being in the latter form. A species of cavern, or rather hole, in the rock, affords to the wildest retreat in the romantic neighbourhood of Loch Katrine a name taken from classical superstition. It is not the least curious circumstance that from this silvan deity the modern nations of Europe have borrowed the degrading and unsuitable emblems of the goat's visage and form, the horns, hoofs, and tail, with which they have depicted the author of evil when it pleased him to show himself on earth. So that the alteration of a single word would render Pope's wellknown line more truly adapted to the fact, should we venture to read —

"And Pan to *Satan* lends his heathen horn."

We cannot attribute the transferrence of the attributes of the Northern satyr, or Celtic ourisk, to the archfiend, to any particular resemblance

between the character of these deities and that of Satan. On the contrary, the ourisk of the Celts was a creature by no means peculiarly malevolent or formidably powerful, but rather a melancholy spirit, which dwelt in wildernesses far removed from men. If we are to identify him with the Brown Dwarf of the Border moors, the ourisk has a mortal term of life and a hope of salvation, as indeed the same high claim was made by the satyr who appeared to St. Anthony. Moreover, the Highland ourisk was a species of lubber fiend, and capable of being overreached by those who understood philology. It is related of one of these goblins which frequented a mill near the foot of Loch Lomond, that the miller, desiring to get rid of this meddling spirit, who injured the machinery by setting the water on the wheel when there was no grain to be grinded, contrived to have a meeting with the goblin by watching in his mill till night. The ourisk then entered, and demanded the miller's name, and was informed that he was called *Myself*; on which is founded a story almost exactly like that of OUTIS in the "Odyssey," a tale which, though classic, is by no means an elegant or ingenious fiction, but which we are astonished to find in an obscure district, and in the Celtic tongue, seeming to argue some connexion or communication between these remote Highlands of Scotland and the readers of Homer in former days, which we cannot account for. After all, perhaps, some Churchman more learned than his brethren may have transferred the legend from Sicily to Duncrune, from the shores of the Mediterranean to those of Loch Lomond. I have heard it also told that the celebrated freebooter, Rob Roy, once gained a victory by disguising a part of his men with goatskins, so as to resemble the *ourisk* or Highland satyr.

There was an individual satyr called, I think, Meming, belonging to the Scandinavian mythology, of a character different from the ourisk, though similar in shape, whom it was the boast of the highest champions to seek out in the solitudes which he inhabited. He was an armourer of extreme dexterity, and the weapons which he forged were of the highest value. But as club-law pervaded the ancient system of Scandinavia, Meming had the humour of refusing to work for any customer save such as compelled him to it with force of arms. He may be, perhaps, identified with the recusant smith who fled before Fingal from Ireland to the Orkneys, and being there overtaken, was compelled to forge the sword which Fingal afterwards wore in all his battles, and which was called the Son of the dark brown Luno, from the name of the armourer who forged it.

[Footnote 21: The weapon is often mentioned in Mr. MacPherson's paraphrases; but the Irish ballad, which gives a spirited account of the debate between the champion and the armourer, is nowhere introduced.]

From this it will appear that there were originals enough in the mythology of the Goths, as well as Celts, to furnish the modern attributes ascribed to Satan in later times, when the object of painter or poet was to display him in his true form and with all his terrors. Even the genius of Guido and of Tasso have been unable to surmount this prejudice, the more rooted, perhaps, that the wicked are described as goats in Scripture, and that the devil is called the old dragon. In Raffael's famous painting of the archangel Michael binding Satan, the dignity, power, and angelic character expressed by the seraph form an extraordinary contrast to the poor conception of a being who ought not, even in that lowest degradation, to have seemed so unworthy an antagonist. Neither has Tasso been more happy, where he represents the divan of darkness in the enchanted forest as presided over by a monarch having a huge tail, hoofs, and all the usual accompaniments of popular diablerie. The genius of Milton alone could discard all these vulgar puerilities, and assign to the author of evil the terrible dignity of one who should seem not "less than archangel ruined." This species of degradation is yet grosser when we take into consideration the changes which popular opinions have wrought respecting the taste, habits, powers, modes of tempting, and habits of tormenting, which are such as might rather be ascribed to some stupid superannuated and doting ogre of a fairy tale, than to the powerful-minded demon who fell through pride and rebellion, not through folly or incapacity.

Having, however, adopted our present ideas of the devil as they are expressed by his nearest acquaintances, the witches, from the accounts of satyrs, which seem to have been articles of faith both among the Celtic and Gothic tribes, we must next notice another fruitful fountain of demonological fancies. But as this source of the mythology of the Middle Ages must necessarily comprehend some account of the fairy folk, to whom much of it must be referred, it is necessary to make a pause before we enter upon the mystic and marvellous connexion supposed to exist between the impenitent kingdom of Satan and those merry dancers by moonlight.

Letter IV

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We may premise by observing, that the classics had not forgotten to enrol in their mythology a certain species of subordinate deities, resembling the modern elves in their habits. Good old Mr. Gibb, of the Advocates' Library (whom all lawyers whose youth he assisted in their studies, by his knowledge of that noble collection, are bound to name with gratitude), used to point out, amongst the ancient altars under his charge, one which is consecrated, *Diis campestribus,* and usually added, with a wink, "The fairies, ye ken." This relic of antiquity was discovered near Roxburgh Castle, and a vicinity more delightfully appropriate to the abode of the silvan deities can hardly be found.

[Footnote 22: Another altar of elegant form and perfectly preserved, was, within these few weeks, dug up near the junction of the Leader and the Tweed, in the neighbourhood of the village of Newstead, to the east of Melrose. It was inscribed by Carrius Domitianus, the prefect of the twentieth legion, to the god Sylvanus, forming another instance how much the wild and silvan character of the country disposed the feelings of the Romans to acknowledge the presence of the rural deities. The altar is preserved at Drygrange, the seat of Mr. Tod.]

Two rivers of considerable size, made yet more remarkable by the fame which has rendered them in some sort classical, unite their streams beneath the vestiges of an extensive castle, renowned in the wars with England, and for the valiant, noble, and even royal blood, which has been shed around and before it — a landscape ornamented with the distant village and huge abbey tower of Kelso, arising out of groves of aged trees — the modern mansion of Fleurs, with its terrace, its woods, and its extensive lawn — form altogether a kingdom for Oberon and Titania to reign in, or any spirit who, before their time, might love scenery, of which the majesty, and even the beauty, impress the mind with a sense of awe mingled with pleasure. These silvans, satyrs, and fauns with whom superstition peopled the lofty banks and tangled copses of this romantic country, were obliged to give place to deities very nearly resembling themselves in character, who probably derive some of their attributes from their classic predecessors, although more immediately allied to the barbarian conquerors. We allude to the fairies, which, as received into the popular creed, and as described by the poets who have made use of them as machinery, are certainly among the most pleasing legacies of fancy.

Dr. Leyden, who exhausted on this subject, as upon most others, a profusion of learning, found the first idea of the elfin people in the Northern opinions concerning the duergar, or dwarfs. These were, however, it must be owned, spirits of a coarser sort, more laborious vocation, and more malignant temper, and in all respects less propitious to humanity, than the fairies (properly so called), which were the invention of the Celtic people, and displayed that superiority of taste and fancy which, with the love of music and poetry, has been generally ascribed to their race, through its various classes and modifications.

[Footnote 23: See the essay on the Fairy Superstition, in the “Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border,” of which many of the materials were contributed by Dr. Leyden, and the whole brought into its present form by the author.]

In fact, there seems reason to conclude that these duergar were originally nothing else than the diminutive natives of the Lappish, Lettish, and Finnish nations, who, flying before the conquering weapons of the Asæ, sought the most retired regions of the North, and there endeavoured to hide themselves from their Eastern invaders. They were a little, diminutive race, but possessed of some skill probably in mining or smelting minerals, with which the country abounds. Perhaps also they might, from their

acquaintance with the changes of the clouds, or meteorological phenomena, be judges of weather, and so enjoy another title to supernatural skill. At any rate, it has been plausibly supposed that these poor people, who sought caverns and hidingplaces from the persecution of the Asæ, were in some respects compensated for inferiority in strength and stature by the art and power with which the superstition of the enemy invested them. These oppressed yet dreaded fugitives obtained, naturally enough, the character of the German spirits called Kobold, from which the English goblin and the Scottish bogle, by some inversion and alteration of pronunciation, are evidently derived.

The Kobolds were a species of gnomes, who haunted the dark and solitary places, and were often seen in the mines, where they seemed to imitate the labours of the miners, and sometimes took pleasure in frustrating their objects and rendering their toil unfruitful. Sometimes they were malignant, especially if neglected or insulted; but sometimes also they were indulgent to individuals whom they took under their protection. When a miner, therefore, hit upon a rich vein of ore, the inference commonly was, not that he possessed more skill, industry, or even luck, than his fellow-workmen, but that the spirits of the mine had directed him to the treasure. The employment and apparent occupation of these subterranean gnomes or fiends, led very naturally to identify the Fin, or Laplander, with the Kobold; but it was a bolder stretch of the imagination which confounded this reserved and sullen race with the livelier and gayer spirit which bears correspondence with the British fairy. Neither can we be surprised that the duergar, ascribed by many persons to this source, should exhibit a darker and more malignant character than the elves that revel by moonlight in more southern climates.

According to the old Norse belief, these dwarfs form the current machinery of the Northern Sagas, and their inferiority in size is represented as compensated by skill and wisdom superior to those of ordinary mortals. In the “Niebelungen-Lied,” one of the oldest romances of Germany, and compiled, it would seem, not long after the time of Attila, Theodorick of Bern, or of Verona, figures among a cycle of champions over whom he presides, like the Charlemagne of France or Arthur of England. Among others vanquished by him is the Elf King, or Dwarf Laurin, whose dwelling was in an enchanted garden of roses, and who had a bodyguard of giants, a sort of persons seldom supposed to be themselves conjurers. He becomes a

formidable opponent to Theodorick and his chivalry; but as he attempted by treachery to attain the victory, he is, when overcome, condemned to fill the dishonourable yet appropriate office of buffoon and juggler at the Court of Verona.

[Footnote 24: See an abstract, by the late learned Henry Weber, of "A Lay on this subject of King Laurin," complied by Henry of Osterdingen. "Northern Antiquities," Edinburgh, 1814.]

Such possession of supernatural wisdom is still imputed by the natives of the Orkney and Zetland Islands to the people called *Drows*, being a corruption of duergar or *dwarfs*, and who may, in most other respects, be identified with the Caledonian fairies. Lucas Jacobson Debes, who dates his description of Feroe from his Pathmos, in Thorshaven, March 12, 1670, dedicates a long chapter to the spectres who disturbed his congregation, and sometimes carried off his hearers. The actors in these disturbances he states to be the *Skow*, or *Biergen-Trold — i.e.*, the spirits of the woods and mountains, sometimes called subterranean people, and adds, they appeared in deep caverns and among horrid rocks; as also, that they haunted the places where murders or other deeds of mortal sin had been acted. They appear to have been the genuine northern dwarfs, or Trows, another pronunciation of Trollds, and are considered by the reverend author as something very little better than actual fiends.

But it is not only, or even chiefly, to the Gothic race that we must trace the opinions concerning the elves of the middle ages; these, as already hinted, were deeply blended with the attributes which the Celtic tribes had, from the remotest ages, ascribed to their deities of rocks, valleys, and forests. We have already observed, what indeed makes a great feature of their national character, that the power of the imagination is peculiarly active among the Celts, and leads to an enthusiasm concerning national music and dancing, national poetry and song, the departments in which fancy most readily indulges herself. The Irish, the Welsh, the Gael, or Scottish Highlander, all tribes of Celtic descent, assigned to the Men of Peace, Good Neighbours, or by whatever other names they called these sylvan pigmies, more social habits, and a course of existence far more gay, than the sullen and heavy toils of the more saturnine Duergar. Their elves did not avoid the society of men, though they behaved to those who associated with them with caprice, which rendered it dangerous to displease

them; and although their gifts were sometimes valuable, they were usually wantonly given and unexpectedly resumed.

The employment, the benefits, the amusements of the Fairy court, resembled the aerial people themselves. Their government was always represented as monarchical. A King, more frequently a Queen of Fairies, was acknowledged; and sometimes both held their court together. Their pageants and court entertainments comprehended all that the imagination could conceive of what was, by that age, accounted gallant and splendid. At their processions they paraded more beautiful steeds than those of mere earthly parentage — the hawks and hounds which they employed in their chase were of the first race. At their daily banquets, the board was set forth with a splendour which the proudest kings of the earth dared not aspire to; and the hall of their dancers echoed to the most exquisite music. But when viewed by the eye of a seer the illusion vanished. The young knights and beautiful ladies showed themselves as wrinkled carles and odious hags — their wealth turned into slate-stones — their splendid plate into pieces of clay fantastically twisted — and their victuals, unsavoured by salt (prohibited to them, we are told, because an emblem of eternity), became tasteless and insipid — the stately halls were turned into miserable damp caverns — all the delights of the Elfin Elysium vanished at once. In a word, their pleasures were showy, but totally unsubstantial — their activity unceasing, but fruitless and unavailing — and their condemnation appears to have consisted in the necessity of maintaining the appearance of constant industry or enjoyment, though their toil was fruitless and their pleasures shadowy and unsubstantial. Hence poets have designed them as "*the crew that never rest*." Besides the unceasing and useless bustle in which these spirits seemed to live, they had propensities unfavourable and distressing to mortals.

One injury of a very serious nature was supposed to be constantly practised by the fairies against "the human mortals," that of carrying off their children, and breeding them as beings of their race. Unchristened infants were chiefly exposed to this calamity; but adults were also liable to be abstracted from earthly commerce, notwithstanding it was their natural sphere. With respect to the first, it may be easily conceived that the want of the sacred ceremony of introduction into the Christian church rendered them the more obnoxious to the power of those creatures, who, if not to be in all respects considered as fiends, had nevertheless, considering their

constant round of idle occupation, little right to rank themselves among good spirits, and were accounted by most divines as belonging to a very different class. An adult, on the other hand, must have been engaged in some action which exposed him to the power of the spirits, and so, as the legal phrase went, "taken in the manner." Sleeping on a fairy mount, within which the Fairy court happened to be held for the time, was a very ready mode of obtaining a pass for Elfland. It was well for the individual if the irate elves were contented, on such occasions, with transporting him through the air to a city at some forty miles' distance, and leaving, perhaps, his hat or bonnet on some steeple between, to mark the direct line of his course. Others, when engaged in some unlawful action, or in the act of giving way to some headlong and sinful passion, exposed themselves also to become inmates of Fairyland.

The same belief on these points obtained in Ireland. Glanville, in his "Eighteenth Relation," tells us of the butler of a gentleman, a neighbour of the Earl of Orrery, who was sent to purchase cards. In crossing the fields, he saw a table surrounded by people apparently feasting and making merry. They rose to salute him, and invited him to join in their revel; but a friendly voice from the party whispered in his ear, "Do nothing which this company invite you to." Accordingly, when he refused to join in feasting, the table vanished, and the company began to dance and play on musical instruments; but the butler would not take part in these recreations. They then left off dancing, and betook themselves to work; but neither in this would the mortal join them. He was then left alone for the present; but in spite of the exertions of my Lord Orrery, in spite of two bishops who were his guests at the time, in spite of the celebrated Mr. Greatrix, it was all they could do to prevent the butler from being carried off bodily from amongst them by the fairies, who considered him as their lawful prey. They raised him in the air above the heads of the mortals, who could only run beneath, to break his fall when they pleased to let him go. The spectre which formerly advised the poor man continued to haunt him, and at length discovered himself to be the ghost of an acquaintance who had been dead for seven years. "You know," added he, "I lived a loose life, and ever since have I been hurried up and down in a restless condition, with the company you saw, and shall be till the day of judgment." He added, "that if the butler had acknowledged God in all his ways, he had not suffered so much by their means; he reminded him that he had not prayed to God in the morning

before he met with this company in the field, and, moreover, that he was then going on an unlawful business."

It is pretended that Lord Orrery confirmed the whole of this story, even to having seen the butler raised into the air by the invisible beings who strove to carry him off. Only he did not bear witness to the passage which seems to call the purchase of cards an unlawful errand.

[Footnote 25: "Sadducismus Triumphatus," by Joseph Glanville, p. 131. Edinburgh, 1790.]

Individuals, whose lives had been engaged in intrigues of politics or stratagems of war, were sometimes surreptitiously carried off to Fairyland; as Alison Pearson, the sorceress who cured Archbishop Adamson, averred that she had recognised in the Fairy court the celebrated Secretary Lethington and the old Knight of Buccleuch, the one of whom had been the most busy politician, the other one of the most unwearied partisans of Queen Mary, during the reign of that unfortunate queen. Upon the whole, persons carried off by sudden death were usually suspected of having fallen into the hands of the fairies, and unless redeemed from their power, which it was not always safe to attempt, were doomed to conclude their lives with them. We must not omit to state that those who had an intimate communication with these spirits, while they were yet inhabitants of middle earth, were most apt to be seized upon and carried off to Elfland before their death.

The reason assigned for this kidnapping of the human race, so peculiar to the elfin people, is said to be that they were under a necessity of paying to the infernal regions a yearly tribute out of their population, which they were willing to defray by delivering up to the prince of these regions the children of the human race, rather than their own. From this it must be inferred, that they have offspring among themselves, as it is said by some authorities, and particularly by Mr. Kirke, the minister of Aberfoyle. He indeed adds that, after a certain length of life, these spirits are subject to the universal lot of mortality — a position, however, which has been controverted, and is scarcely reconcilable to that which holds them amenable to pay a tax to hell, which infers existence as eternal as the fire which is not quenched. The opinions on the subject of the fairy people here expressed, are such as are entertained in the Highlands and some remote quarters of the Lowlands of Scotland. We know, from the lively and

entertaining legends published by Mr. Crofton Croker — which, though in most cases told with the wit of the editor and the humour of his country, contain points of curious antiquarian information — that the opinions of the Irish are conformable to the account we have given of the general creed of the Celtic nations respecting elves. If the Irish elves are anywise distinguished from those of Britain, it seems to be by their disposition to divide into factions and fight among themselves — a pugnacity characteristic of the Green Isle. The Welsh fairies, according to John Lewis, barrister-at-law, agree in the same general attributes with those of Ireland and Britain. We must not omit the creed of the Manxmen, since we find, from the ingenious researches of Mr. Waldron, that the Isle of Man, beyond other places in Britain, was a peculiar depository of the fairy traditions, which, on the island being conquered by the Norse, became, in all probability, chequered with those of Scandinavia from a source peculiar and more direct than that by which they reached Scotland or Ireland.

Such as it was, the popular system of the Celts easily received the northern admixture of Drows and Duergar, which gave the belief, perhaps, a darker colouring than originally belonged to the British fairyland. It was from the same source also, in all probability, that additional legends were obtained of a gigantic and malignant female, the Hecate of this mythology, who rode on the storm and marshalled the rambling host of wanderers under her grim banner. This hag (in all respects the reverse of the Mab or Titania of the Celtic creed) was called Nicneven in that later system which blended the faith of the Celts and of the Goths on this subject. The great Scottish poet Dunbar has made a spirited description of this Hecate riding at the head of witches and good neighbours (fairies, namely), sorceresses and elves, indifferently, upon the ghostly eve of All-Hallow Mass. In Italy we hear of the hags arraying themselves under the orders of Diana (in her triple character of Hecate, doubtless) and Herodias, who were the joint leaders of their choir. But we return to the more simple fairy belief, as entertained by the Celts before they were conquered by the Saxons.

[Footnote 26: See “Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy.”]

Of these early times we can know little; but it is singular to remark what light the traditions of Scotland throw upon the poetry of the Britons of Cumberland, then called Reged. Merlin Wyllt, or the wild, is mentioned by both; and that renowned wizard, the son of an elf or fairy, with King Arthur,

the dubious champion of Britain at that early period, were both said by tradition to have been abstracted by the fairies, and to have vanished without having suffered death, just at the time when it was supposed that the magic of the wizard and the celebrated sword of the monarch, which had done so much to preserve British independence, could no longer avert the impending ruin. It may be conjectured that there was a desire on the part of Arthur or his surviving champions to conceal his having received a mortal wound in the fatal battle of Camlan; and to that we owe the wild and beautiful incident so finely versified by Bishop Percy, in which, in token of his renouncing in future the use of arms, the monarch sends his attendant, sole survivor of the field, to throw his sword Excalibar into the lake hard by. Twice eluding the request, the esquire at last complied, and threw the far-famed weapon into the lonely mere. A hand and arm arose from the water and caught Excalibar by the hilt, flourished it thrice, and then sank into the lake. The astonished messenger returned to his master to tell him the marvels he had seen, but he only saw a boat at a distance push from the land, and heard shrieks of females in agony: —

> "And whether the king was there or not
> He never knew, he never colde
> For never since that doleful day
> Was British Arthur seen on molde."

[Footnote 27: See "Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry."]

The circumstances attending the disappearance of Merlin would probably be found as imaginative as those of Arthur's removal, but they cannot be recovered; and what is singular enough, circumstances which originally belonged to the history of this famous bard, said to be the son of the Demon himself, have been transferred to a later poet, and surely one of scarce inferior name, Thomas of Erceldoune. The legend was supposed to be only preserved among the inhabitants of his native valleys, but a copy as old as the reign of Henry VII. has been recovered. The story is interesting and beautifully told, and, as one of the oldest fairy legends, may well be quoted in this place.

Thomas of Erceldoune, in Lauderdale, called the Rhymer, on account of his producing a poetical romance on the subject of Tristrem and Yseult, which is curious as the earliest specimen of English verse known to exist, flourished in the reign of Alexander III. of Scotland. Like other men of

talent of the period, Thomas was suspected of magic. He was said also to have the gift of prophecy, which was accounted for in the following peculiar manner, referring entirely to the elfin superstition: — As True Thomas (we give him the epithet by anticipation) lay on Huntly Bank, a place on the descent of the Eildon Hills, which raise their triple crest above the celebrated Monastery of Melrose, he saw a lady so extremely beautiful that he imagined it must be the Virgin Mary herself. Her appointments, however, were rather those of an Amazon or goddess of the woods. Her steed was of the highest beauty and spirit, and at his mane hung thirty silver bells and nine, which made music to the wind as she paced along. Her saddle was of *royal bone* (ivory), laid over with *orfeverie — i.e.*, goldsmith's work. Her stirrups, her dress, all corresponded with her extreme beauty and the magnificence of her array. The fair huntress had her bow in her hand, and her arrows at her belt. She led three greyhounds in a leash, and three raches, or hounds of scent, followed her closely. She rejected and disclaimed the homage which Thomas desired to pay to her; so that, passing from one extremity to the other, Thomas became as bold as he had at first been humble. The lady warns him that he must become her slave if he should prosecute his suit towards her in the manner he proposes. Before their interview terminates, the appearance of the beautiful lady is changed into that of the most hideous hag in existence. One side is blighted and wasted, as if by palsy; one eye drops from her head; her colour, as clear as the virgin silver, is now of a dun leaden hue. A witch from the spital or almshouse would have been a goddess in comparison to the late beautiful huntress. Hideous as she was, Thomas's irregular desires had placed him under the control of this hag, and when she bade him take leave of sun, and of the leaf that grew on tree, he felt himself under the necessity of obeying her. A cavern received them, in which, following his frightful guide, he for three days travelled in darkness, sometimes hearing the booming of a distant ocean, sometimes walking through rivers of blood, which crossed their subterranean path. At length they emerged into daylight, in a most beautiful orchard. Thomas, almost fainting for want of food, stretches out his hand towards the goodly fruit which hangs around him, but is forbidden by his conductress, who informs him these are the fatal apples which were the cause of the fall of man. He perceives also that his guide had no sooner entered this mysterious ground, and breathed its magic air, than she was revived in beauty, equipage, and splendour, as fair, or fairer, than he had

first seen her on the mountain. She then commands him to lay his head upon her knee, and proceeds to explain to him the character of the country. "Yonder righthand path," she says, "conveys the spirits of the blessed to Paradise; yon downward and wellworn way leads sinful souls to the place of everlasting punishment; the third road, by yonder dark brake, conducts to the milder place of pain from which prayer and mass may release offenders. But see you yet a fourth road, sweeping along the plain to yonder splendid castle? Yonder is the road to Elfland, to which we are now bound. The lord of the castle is king of the country, and I am his queen. But, Thomas, I would rather be drawn with wild horses, than he should know what hath passed between you and me. Therefore, when we enter yonder castle, observe strict silence, and answer no question that is asked at you, and I will account for your silence by saying I took your speech when I brought you from middle earth."

Having thus instructed her lover, they journeyed on to the castle, and entering by the kitchen, found themselves in the midst of such a festive scene as might become the mansion of a great feudal lord or prince. Thirty carcases of deer were lying on the massive kitchen board, under the hands of numerous cooks, who toiled to cut them up and dress them, while the gigantic greyhounds which had taken the spoil lay lapping the blood, and enjoying the sight of the slain game. They came next to the royal hall, where the king received his loving consort without censure or suspicion. Knights and ladies, dancing by threes (reels perhaps), occupied the floor of the hall, and Thomas, the fatigues of his journey from the Eildon hills forgotten, went forward and joined in the revelry. After a period, however, which seemed to him a very short one, the queen spoke with him apart, and bade him prepare to return to his own country. "Now," said the queen, "how long think you that you have been here?" "Certes, fair lady," answered Thomas, "not above these seven days." "You are deceived," answered the queen, "you have been seven *years* in this castle; and it is full time you were gone. Know, Thomas, that the fiend of hell will come to this castle tomorrow to demand his tribute, and so handsome a man as you will attract his eye. For all the world would I not suffer you to be betrayed to such a fate; therefore up, and let us be going." These terrible news reconciled Thomas to his departure from Elfin land, and the queen was not long in placing him upon Huntly bank, where the birds were singing. She took a tender leave of him, and to ensure his reputation, bestowed on him the

tongue which *could not lie*. Thomas in vain objected to this inconvenient and involuntary adhesion to veracity, which would make him, as he thought, unfit for church or for market, for king's court or for lady's bower. But all his remonstrances were disregarded by the lady, and Thomas the Rhymer, whenever the discourse turned on the future, gained the credit of a prophet whether he would or not; for he could say nothing but what was sure to come to pass. It is plain that had Thomas been a legislator instead of a poet, we have here the story of Numa and Egeria. Thomas remained several years in his own tower near Erceldoune, and enjoyed the fame of his predictions, several of which are current among the country people to this day. At length, as the prophet was entertaining the Earl of March in his dwelling, a cry of astonishment arose in the village, on the appearance of a hart and hind, which left the forest and, contrary to their shy nature, came quietly onward, traversing the village towards the dwelling of Thomas. The prophet instantly rose from the board; and, acknowledging the prodigy as the summons of his fate, he accompanied the hart and hind into the forest, and though occasionally seen by individuals to whom he has chosen to show himself, has never again mixed familiarly with mankind.

[Footnote 28: This last circumstance seems imitated from a passage in the "Life of Merlin," by Jeffrey of Monmouth. See Ellis's "Ancient Romances," vol. i. p. 73.]

Thomas of Erceldoune, during his retirement, has been supposed, from time to time, to be levying forces to take the field in some crisis of his country's fate. The story has often been told of a daring horse-jockey having sold a black horse to a man of venerable and antique appearance, who appointed the remarkable hillock upon Eildon hills, called the Lucken-hare, as the place where, at twelve o'clock at night, he should receive the price. He came, his money was paid in ancient coin, and he was invited by his customer to view his residence. The trader in horses followed his guide in the deepest astonishment through several long ranges of stalls, in each of which a horse stood motionless, while an armed warrior lay equally still at the charger's feet. "All these men," said the wizard in a whisper, "will awaken at the battle of Sheriffmoor." At the extremity of this extraordinary depot hung a sword and a horn, which the prophet pointed out to the horse-dealer as containing the means of dissolving the spell. The man in confusion took the horn, and attempted to wind it. The horses instantly started in their stalls, stamped, and shook their bridles, the men arose and

clashed their armour, and the mortal, terrified at the tumult he had excited, dropped the horn from his hand. A voice like that of a giant, louder even than the tumult around, pronounced these words: —

> "Woe to the coward that ever he was born,
> That did not draw the sword before he blew the horn!"

A whirlwind expelled the horse-dealer from the cavern, the entrance to which he could never again find. A moral might be perhaps extracted from the legend — namely, that it is best to be armed against danger before bidding it defiance. But it is a circumstance worth notice, that although this edition of the tale is limited to the year 1715, by the very mention of the Sheriffmoor, yet a similar story appears to have been current during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which is given by Reginald Scot. The narrative is edifying as peculiarly illustrative of the mode of marring a curious tale in telling it, which was one of the virtues professed by Caius when he hired himself to King Lear. Reginald Scot, incredulous on the subject of witchcraft, seems to have given some weight to the belief of those who thought that the spirits of famous men do, after death, take up some particular habitations near cities, towns, and countries, and act as tutelary and guardian spirits to the places which they loved while in the flesh.

"But more particularly to illustrate this conjecture," says he, "I could name a person who hath lately appeared thrice since his decease, at least some ghostly being or other that calls itself by the name of such a person who was dead above a hundred years ago, and was in his lifetime accounted as a prophet or predicter by the assistance of sublunary spirits; and now, at his appearance, did also give strange predictions respecting famine and plenty, war and bloodshed, and the end of the world. By the information of the person that had communication with him, the last of his appearances was in the following manner: — "I had been," said he, "to sell a horse at the next market town, but not attaining my price, as I returned home by the way I met this man, who began to be familiar with me, asking what news, and how affairs moved through the country. I answered as I thought fit; withal, I told him of my horse, whom he began to cheapen, and proceeded with me so far that the price was agreed upon. So he turned back with me, and told me that if I would go along with him I should receive my money. On our way we went, I upon my horse, and he on another milk-white beast After much travel I asked him where he dwelt and what his name was. He told me

that his dwelling was a mile off, at a place called *Farran*, of which place I had never heard, though I knew all the country round about. He also told me that he himself was that person of the family of Learmonths so much spoken of as a prophet. At which I began to be somewhat fearful, perceiving we were on a road which I never had been on before, which increased my fear and amazement more. Well, on we went till he brought me under ground, I knew not how, into the presence of a beautiful woman, who paid the money without a word speaking. He conducted me out again through a large and long entry, where I saw above six hundred men in armour laid prostrate on the ground as if asleep. At last I found myself in the open field by the help of the moonlight, in the very place where I first met him, and made a shift to get home by three in the morning. But the money I had received was just double of what I esteemed it when the woman paid me, of which at this instant I have several pieces to show, consisting of ninepennies, thirteen pence-halfpennies," &c.

[Footnote 29: In this the author is in the same ignorance as his namesake Reginald, though having at least as many opportunities of information.]

[Footnote 30: In popular tradition, the name of Thomas the Rhymer was always averred to be Learmonth. though he neither uses it himself, nor is described by his son other than Le Rymour. The Learmonths of Dairsie, in Fife, claimed descent from the prophet.]

[Footnote 31: "Discourse of Devils and Spirits appended to the Discovery of Witchcraft," by Reginald Scot, Esq., book ii. chap. 3, sec. 10.]

It is a great pity that this horse-dealer, having specimens of the fairy coin, of a quality more permanent than usual, had not favoured us with an account of an impress so valuable to medalists. It is not the less edifying, as we are deprived of the more picturesque parts of the story, to learn that Thomas's payment was as faithful as his prophecies. The beautiful lady who bore the purse must have been undoubtedly the Fairy Queen, whose affection, though, like that of his own heroine Yseult, we cannot term it altogether laudable, seems yet to have borne a faithful and firm character.

I have dwelt at some length on the story of Thomas the Rhymer, as the oldest tradition of the kind which has reached us in detail, and as pretending to show the fate of the first Scottish poet, whose existence, and its date, are established both by history and records; and who, if we consider him as writing in the Anglo-Norman language, was certainly one among the earliest of its versifiers. But the legend is still more curious, from its being

the first and most distinguished instance of a man alleged to have obtained supernatural knowledge by means of the fairies.

Whence or how this singular community derived their more common popular name, we may say has not as yet been very clearly established. It is the opinion of the learned that the Persian word Peri, expressing an unearthly being, of a species very similar, will afford the best derivation, if we suppose it to have reached Europe through the medium of the Arabians, in whose alphabet the letter P does not exist, so that they pronounce the word Feri instead of Peri. Still there is something uncertain in this etymology. We hesitate to ascribe either to the Persians or the Arabians the distinguishing name of an ideal commonwealth, the notion of which they certainly did not contribute to us. Some are, therefore, tempted to suppose that the elves may have obtained their most frequent name from their being *par excellence* a *fair* or *comely* people, a quality which they affected on all occasions; while the superstition of the Scottish was likely enough to give them a name which might propitiate the vanity for which they deemed the race remarkable; just as, in other instances, they called the fays “men of peace,” “good neighbours,” and by other titles of the like import. It must be owned, at the same time, that the words *fay* and *fairy* may have been mere adoptions of the French *fee* and *feerie*, though these terms, on the other side of the Channel, have reference to a class of spirits corresponding, not to our fairies, but with the far different Fata of the Italians. But this is a question which we willingly leave for the decision of better etymologists than ourselves.

Letter V

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To return to Thomas the Rhymer, with an account of whose legend I concluded last letter, it would seem that the example which it afforded of obtaining the gift of prescience, and other supernatural powers, by means of the fairy people, became the common apology of those who attempted to

cure diseases, to tell fortunes, to revenge injuries, or to engage in traffic with the invisible world, for the purpose of satisfying their own wishes, curiosity, or revenge, or those of others. Those who practised the petty arts of deception in such mystic cases, being naturally desirous to screen their own impostures, were willing to be supposed to derive from the fairies, or from mortals transported to fairyland the power necessary to effect the displays of art which they pretended to exhibit. A confession of direct communication and league with Satan, though the accused were too frequently compelled by torture to admit and avow such horrors, might, the poor wretches hoped, be avoided by the avowal of a less disgusting intercourse with sublunary spirits, a race which might be described by negatives, being neither angels, devils, nor the souls of deceased men; nor would it, they might flatter themselves, be considered as any criminal alliance, that they held communion with a race not properly hostile to man, and willing, on certain conditions, to be useful and friendly to him. Such an intercourse was certainly far short of the witch's renouncing her salvation, delivering herself personally to the devil, and at once ensuring condemnation in this world, together with the like doom in the next.

Accordingly, the credulous, who, in search of health, knowledge, greatness, or moved by any of the numberless causes for which men seek to look into futurity, were anxious to obtain superhuman assistance, as well as the numbers who had it in view to dupe such willing clients, became both cheated and cheaters, alike anxious to establish the possibility of a harmless process of research into futurity, for laudable, or at least innocent objects, as healing diseases and the like; in short, of the existence of white magic, as it was called, in opposition to that black art exclusively and directly derived from intercourse with Satan. Some endeavoured to predict a man's fortune in marriage or his success in life by the aspect of the stars; others pretended to possess spells, by which they could reduce and compel an elementary spirit to enter within a stone, a looking-glass, or some other local place of abode, and confine her there by the power of an especial charm, conjuring her to abide and answer the questions of her master. Of these we shall afterwards say something; but the species of evasion now under our investigation is that of the fanatics or impostors who pretended to draw information from the equivocal spirits called fairies; and the number of instances before us is so great as induces us to believe that the pretence of communicating with Elfland, and not with the actual demon, was the

manner in which the persons accused of witchcraft most frequently endeavoured to excuse themselves, or at least to alleviate the charges brought against them of practising sorcery. But the Scottish law did not acquit those who accomplished even praiseworthy actions, such as remarkable cures by mysterious remedies; and the proprietor of a patent medicine who should in those days have attested his having wrought such miracles as we see sometimes advertised, might perhaps have forfeited his life before he established the reputation of his drop, elixir, or pill.

Sometimes the soothsayers, who pretended to act on this information from sublunary spirits, soared to higher matters than the practice of physic, and interfered in the fate of nations. When James I. was murdered at Perth in 1437, a Highland woman prophesied the course and purpose of the conspiracy, and had she been listened to, it might have been disconcerted. Being asked her source of knowledge, she answered Hudhart had told her; which might either be the same with Hudkin, a Dutch spirit somewhat similar to Friar Rush or Robin Goodfellow, or with the red-capped demon so powerful in the case of Lord Soulis, and other wizards, to whom the Scots assigned rather more serious influence.

[Footnote 32: Hudkin is a very familiar devil, who will do nobody hurt, except he receive injury; but he cannot abide that, nor yet be mocked. He talketh with men friendly, sometimes visibly, sometimes invisibly. There go as many tales upon this Hudkin in some parts of Germany as there did in England on Robin Goodfellow. — "Discourse concerning Devils," annexed to "The Discovery of Witchcraft," by Reginald Scot, book i. chap. 21.]

The most special account which I have found of the intercourse between Fairyland and a female professing to have some influence in that court, combined with a strong desire to be useful to the distressed of both sexes, occurs in the early part of a work to which I have been exceedingly obliged in the present and other publications. The details of the evidence, which consists chiefly of the unfortunate woman's own confession, are more full than usual, and comprehend some curious particulars. To spare technical repetitions, I must endeavour to select the principal facts in evidence in detail, so far as they bear upon the present subject.

[Footnote 33: The curious collection of trials, from "The Criminal Records of Scotland," now in the course of publication, by Robert Pitcairn, Esq., affords so singular a picture of the manners and habits of our ancestors, while yet a semibarbarous people, that it is equally worth the attention of the historian, the antiquary, the philosopher, and the poet.]

On the 8th November, 1576, Elizabeth or Bessie Dunlop, spouse to Andro Jak, in Lyne, in the Barony of Dalry, Ayrshire, was accused of sorcery and witchcraft and abuse of the people. Her answers to the interrogatories of the judges or prosecutors ran thus: It being required of her by what art she could tell of lost goods or prophesy the event of illness, she replied that of herself she had no knowledge or science of such matters, but that when questions were asked at her concerning such matters, she was in the habit of applying to one Thome Reid, who died at the battle of Pinkie (10th September, 1547), as he himself affirmed, and who resolved her any questions which she asked at him. This person she described as a respectable elderly-looking man, greybearded, and wearing a grey coat, with Lombard sleeves of the auld fashion. A pair of grey breeches and white stockings gartered above the knee, a black bonnet on his head, close behind and plain before, with silken laces drawn through the lips thereof, and a white wand in his hand, completed the description of what we may suppose a respectable-looking man of the province and period. Being demanded concerning her first interview with this mysterious Thome Reid, she gave rather an affecting account of the disasters with which she was then afflicted, and a sense of which perhaps aided to conjure up the imaginary counsellor. She was walking between her own house and the yard of Monkcastle, driving her cows to the common pasture, and making heavy moan with herself, weeping bitterly for her cow that was dead, her husband and child that were sick of the land-ill (some contagious sickness of the time), while she herself was in a very infirm state, having lately borne a child. On this occasion she met Thome Reid for the first time, who saluted her courteously, which she returned. “Sancta Maria, Bessie!” said the apparition, “why must thou make such dole and weeping for any earthly thing?” “Have I not reason for great sorrow,” said she, “since our property is going to destruction, my husband is on the point of death, my baby will not live, and I am myself at a weak point? Have I not cause to have a sore heart?” “Bessie,” answered the spirit, “thou hast displeased God in asking something that thou should not, and I counsel you to amend your fault. I tell thee, thy child shall die ere thou get home; thy two sheep shall also die; but thy husband shall recover, and be as well and feir as ever he was.” The good woman was something comforted to hear that her husband was to be spared in such her general calamity, but was rather alarmed to see her ghostly counsellor pass from her and disappear through a hole in the garden wall,

seemingly too narrow to admit of any living person passing through it. Another time he met her at the Thorn of Dawmstarnik, and showed his ultimate purpose by offering her plenty of every thing if she would but deny Christendom and the faith she took at the font-stone. She answered, that rather than do that she would be torn at horses' heels, but that she would be conformable to his advice in less matters. He parted with her in some displeasure. Shortly afterwards he appeared in her own house about noon, which was at the time occupied by her husband and three tailors. But neither Andrew Jak nor the three tailors were sensible of the presence of the phantom warrior who was slain at Pinkie; so that, without attracting their observation, he led out the goodwife to the end of the house near the kiln. Here he showed her a company of eight women and four men. The women were busked in their plaids, and very seemly. The strangers saluted her, and said, "Welcome, Bessie; wilt thou go with us?" But Bessie was silent, as Thome Reid had previously recommended. After this she saw their lips move, but did not understand what they said; and in a short time they removed from thence with a hideous ugly howling sound, like that of a hurricane. Thome Reid then acquainted her that these were the good wights (fairies) dwelling in the court of Elfland, who came to invite her to go thither with them. Bessie answered that, before she went that road, it would require some consideration. Thome answered, "Seest thou not me both meat-worth, clothes-worth, and well enough in person?" and engaged she should be easier than ever she was. But she replied, she dwelt with her husband and children, and would not leave them; to which Thome Reid replied, in very illhumour, that if such were her sentiments, she would get little good of him.

Although they thus disagreed on the principal object of Thome Reid's visits, Bessie Dunlop affirmed he continued to come to her frequently, and assist her with his counsel; and that if any one consulted her about the ailments of human beings or of cattle, or the recovery of things lost and stolen, she was, by the advice of Thome Reid, always able to answer the querists. She was also taught by her (literally ghostly) adviser how to watch the operation of the ointments he gave her, and to presage from them the recovery or death of the patient. She said Thome gave her herbs with his own hand, with which she cured John Jack's bairn and Wilson's of the Townhead. She also was helpful to a waiting-woman of the young Lady Stanlie, daughter of the Lady Johnstone, whose disease, according to the

opinion of the infallible Thome Reid, was "a cauld blood that came about her heart," and frequently caused her to swoon away. For this Thome mixed a remedy as generous as the balm of Gilead itself. It was composed of the most potent ale, concocted with spices and a little white sugar, to be drunk every morning before taking food. For these prescriptions Bessie Dunlop's fee was a peck of meal and some cheese. The young woman recovered. But the poor old Lady Kilbowie could get no help for her leg, which had been crooked for years; for Thome Reid said the marrow of the limb was perished and the blood benumbed, so that she would never recover, and if she sought further assistance, it would be the worse for her. These opinions indicate common sense and prudence at least, whether we consider them as originating with the *umquhile* Thome Reid, or with the culprit whom he patronized. The judgments given in the case of stolen goods were also well chosen; for though they seldom led to recovering the property, they generally alleged such satisfactory reasons for its not being found as effectually to cover the credit of the prophetess. Thus Hugh Scott's cloak could not be returned, because the thieves had gained time to make it into a kirtle. James Jamieson and James Baird would, by her advice, have recovered their plough-irons, which had been stolen, had it not been the will of fate that William Dougal, sheriff's officer, one of the parties searching for them, should accept a bribe of three pounds not to find them. In short, although she lost a lace which Thome Reid gave her out of his own hand, which, tied round women in childbirth, had the power of helping their delivery, Bessy Dunlop's profession of a wise woman seems to have flourished indifferently well till it drew the evil eye of the law upon her.

More minutely pressed upon the subject of her familiar, she said she had never known him while among the living, but was aware that the person so calling himself was one who had, in his lifetime, actually been known in middle earth as Thome Reid, officer to the Laird of Blair, and who died at Pinkie. Of this she was made certain, because he sent her on errands to his son, who had succeeded in his office, and to others his relatives, whom he named, and commanded them to amend certain trespasses which he had done while alive, furnishing her with sure tokens by which they should know that it was he who had sent her. One of these errands was somewhat remarkable. She was to remind a neighbour of some particular which she was to recall to his memory by the token that Thome Reid and he had set out together to go to the battle which took place on the Black Saturday; that

the person to whom the message was sent was inclined rather to move in a different direction, but that Thome Reid heartened him to pursue his journey, and brought him to the Kirk of Dalry, where he bought a parcel of figs, and made a present of them to his companion, tying them in his handkerchief; after which they kept company till they came to the field upon the fatal Black Saturday, as the battle of Pinkie was long called.

Of Thome's other habits, she said that he always behaved with the strictest propriety, only that he pressed her to go to Elfland with him, and took hold of her apron as if to pull her along. Again, she said she had seen him in public places, both in the churchyard at Dalry and on the street of Edinburgh, where he walked about among other people, and handled goods that were exposed to sale, without attracting any notice. She herself did not then speak to him, for it was his command that, upon such occasions, she should never address him unless he spoke first to her. In his theological opinions, Mr. Reid appeared to lean to the Church of Rome, which, indeed, was most indulgent to the fairy folk. He said that the *new law, i.e.,* the Reformation, was not good, and that the old faith should return again, but not exactly as it had been before. Being questioned why this visionary sage attached himself to her more than to others, the accused person replied, that when she was confined in childbirth of one of her boys, a stout woman came into her hut, and sat down on a bench by her bed, like a mere earthly gossip; that she demanded a drink, and was accommodated accordingly; and thereafter told the invalid that the child should die, but that her husband, who was then ailing, should recover. This visit seems to have been previous to her meeting Thome Reid near Monkcastle garden, for that worthy explained to her that her stout visitant was Queen of Fairies, and that he had since attended her by the express command of that lady, his queen and mistress. This reminds us of the extreme doting attachment which the Queen of the Fairies is represented to have taken for Dapper in "The Alchemist." Thome Reid attended her, it would seem, on being summoned thrice, and appeared to her very often within four years. He often requested her to go with him on his return to Fairyland, and when she refused, he shook his head, and said she would repent it.

If the delicacy of the reader's imagination be a little hurt at imagining the elegant Titania in the disguise of a *stout* woman, a heavy burden for a clumsy bench, drinking what Christopher Sly would have called very sufficient small-beer with a peasant's wife, the following description of the

fairy host may come more near the idea he has formed of that invisible company: — Bessie Dunlop declared that as she went to tether her nag by the side of Restalrig Loch (Lochend, near the eastern port of Edinburgh), she heard a tremendous sound of a body of riders rushing past her with such a noise as if heaven and earth would come together; that the sound swept past her and seemed to rush into the lake with a hideous rumbling noise. All this while she saw nothing; but Thome Reid showed her that the noise was occasioned by the wights, who were performing one of their cavalcades upon earth.

The intervention of Thome Reid as a partner in her trade of petty sorcery did not avail poor Bessie Dunlop, although his affection to her was apparently entirely platonic — the greatest familiarity on which he ventured was taking hold of her gown as he pressed her to go with him to Elfland. Neither did it avail her that the petty sorcery which she practised was directed to venial or even beneficial purposes. The sad words on the margin of the record, "Convict and burnt," sufficiently express the tragic conclusion of a curious tale.

Alison Pearson, in Byrehill, was, 28th May, 1588, tried for invocation of the spirits of the devil, specially in the vision of one Mr. William Sympson, her cousin and her mother's brother's son, who she affirmed was a great scholar and doctor of medicine, dealing with charms and abusing the ignorant people. Against this poor woman her own confession, as in the case of Bessie Dunlop, was the principal evidence.

As Bessie Dunlop had Thome Reid, Alison Pearson had also a familiar in the court of Elfland. This was her relative, William Sympson aforesaid, born in Stirling, whose father was king's smith in that town. William had been taken away, she said, by a man of Egypt (a Gipsy), who carried him to Egypt along with him; that he remained there twelve years, and that his father died in the meantime for opening a priest's book and looking upon it. She declared that she had renewed her acquaintance with her kinsman so soon as he returned. She further confessed that one day as she passed through Grange Muir she lay down in a fit of sickness, and that a green man came to her, and said if she would be faithful he might do her good. In reply she charged him, in the name of God and by the law he lived upon, if he came for her soul's good to tell his errand. On this the green man departed. But he afterwards appeared to her with many men and women with him, and against her will she was obliged to pass with them farther than she

could tell, with piping, mirth, and good cheer; also that she accompanied them into Lothian, where she saw puncheons of wine with tasses or drinking-cups. She declared that when she told of these things she was sorely tormented, and received a blow that took away the power of her left side, and left on it an ugly mark which had no feeling. She also confessed that she had seen before sunrise the good neighbours make their salves with pans and fires. Sometimes, she said, they came in such fearful forms as frightened her very much. At other times they spoke her fair, and promised her that she should never want if faithful, but if she told of them and their doings, they threatened to martyr her. She also boasted of her favour with the Queen of Elfland and the good friends she had at that court, notwithstanding that she was sometimes in disgrace there, and had not seen the queen for seven years. She said William Sympson is with the fairies, and that he lets her know when they are coming; and that he taught her what remedies to use, and how to apply them. She declared that when a whirlwind blew the fairies were commonly there, and that her cousin Sympson confessed that every year the tithe of them were taken away to hell. The celebrated Patrick Adamson, an excellent divine and accomplished scholar, created by James VI. Archbishop of St. Andrews, swallowed the prescriptions of this poor hypochondriac with good faith and will, eating a stewed fowl, and drinking out at two draughts a quart of claret, medicated with the drugs she recommended. According to the belief of the time, this Alison Pearson transferred the bishop's indisposition from himself to a white palfrey, which died in consequence. There is a very severe libel on him for this and other things unbecoming his order, with which he was charged, and from which we learn that Lethington and Buccleuch were seen by Dame Pearson in the Fairyland. This poor woman's kinsman, Sympson, did not give better shelter to her than Thome Reid had done to her predecessor. The margin of the court-book again bears the melancholy and brief record, "*Convicta et combusta*."

[Footnote 34: See "Scottish Poems," edited by John G. Dalzell, p. 321.]

The two poor women last mentioned are the more to be pitied as, whether enthusiasts or impostors, they practised their supposed art exclusively for the advantage of mankind. The following extraordinary detail involves persons of far higher quality, and who sought to familiars for more baneful purposes.

Katherine Munro, Lady Fowlis, by birth Katherine Ross of Balnagowan, of high rank, both by her own family and that of her husband, who was the fifteenth Baron of Fowlis, and chief of the warlike clan of Munro, had a stepmother's quarrel with Robert Munro, eldest son of her husband, which she gratified by forming a scheme for compassing his death by unlawful arts. Her proposed advantage in this was, that the widow of Robert, when he was thus removed, should marry with her brother, George Ross of Balnagowan; and for this purpose, her sister-in-law, the present Lady Balnagowan, was also to be removed. Lady Fowlis, if the indictment had a syllable of truth, carried on her practices with the least possible disguise. She assembled persons of the lowest order, stamped with an infamous celebrity as witches; and, besides making pictures or models in clay, by which they hoped to bewitch Robert Munro and Lady Balnagowan, they brewed, upon one occasion, poison so strong that a page tasting of it immediately took sickness. Another earthen jar (Scotticè *pig*) of the same deleterious liquor was prepared by the Lady Fowlis, and sent with her own nurse for the purpose of administering it to Robert Munro. The messenger having stumbled in the dark, broke the jar, and a rank grass grew on the spot where it fell, which sheep and cattle abhorred to touch; but the nurse, having less sense than the brute beasts, and tasting of the liquor which had been spilled, presently died. What is more to our present purpose, Lady Fowlis made use of the artillery of Elfland in order to destroy her stepson and sister-in-law. Laskie Loncart, one of the assistant hags, produced two of what the common people call elf-arrow heads, being, in fact, the points of flint used for arming the ends of arrow-shafts in the most ancient times, but accounted by the superstitious the weapons by which the fairies were wont to destroy both man and beast. The pictures of the intended victims were then set up at the north end of the apartment, and Christian Ross Malcolmson, an assistant hag, shot two shafts at the image of Lady Balnagowan, and three against the picture of Robert Munro, by which shots they were broken, and Lady Fowlis commanded new figures to be modelled. Many similar acts of witchcraft and of preparing poisons were alleged against Lady Fowlis.

Her son-in-law, Hector Munro, one of his stepmother's prosecutors, was, for reasons of his own, active in a similar conspiracy against the life of his own brother. The rites that he practised were of an uncouth, barbarous, and unusual nature. Hector, being taken ill, consulted on his case some of

the witches or soothsayers, to whom this family appears to have been partial. The answer was unanimous that he must die unless the principal man of his blood should suffer death in his stead. It was agreed that the vicarious substitute for Hector must mean George Munro, brother to him by the half-blood (the son of the Katharine Lady Fowlis before commemorated). Hector sent at least seven messengers for this young man, refusing to receive any of his other friends till he saw the substitute whom he destined to take his place in the grave. When George at length arrived, Hector, by advice of a notorious witch, called Marion MacIngarach, and of his own foster-mother, Christian Neil Dalyell, received him with peculiar coldness and restraint. He did not speak for the space of an hour, till his brother broke silence and asked, "How he did?" Hector replied, "That he was the better George had come to visit him," and relapsed into silence, which seemed singular when compared with the anxiety he had displayed to see his brother; but it was, it seems, a necessary part of the spell. After midnight the sorceress Marion MacIngarach, the chief priestess or Nicneven of the company, went forth with her accomplices, carrying spades with them. They then proceeded to dig a grave not far from the seaside, upon a piece of land which formed the boundary betwixt two proprietors. The grave was made as nearly as possible to the size of their patient Hector Munro, the earth dug out of the grave being laid aside for the time. After ascertaining that the operation of the charm on George Munro, the destined victim, should be suspended for a time, to avoid suspicion, the conspirators proceeded to work their spell in a singular, impressive, and, I believe, unique manner. The time being January, 1588, the patient, Hector Munro, was borne forth in a pair of blankets, accompanied with all who were entrusted with the secret, who were warned to be strictly silent till the chief sorceress should have received her information from the angel whom they served. Hector Munro was carried to his grave and laid therein, the earth being filled in on him, and the grave secured with stakes as at a real funeral. Marion MacIngarach, the Hecate of the night, then sat down by the grave, while Christian Neil Dalyell, the foster-mother, ran the breadth of about nine ridges distant, leading a boy in her hand, and, coming again to the grave where Hector Munro was interred alive, demanded of the witch which victim she would choose, who replied that she chose Hector to live and George to die in his stead. This form of incantation was thrice repeated ere Mr. Hector was removed from his chilling bed in a January grave and

carried home, all remaining mute as before. The consequence of a process which seems ill-adapted to produce the former effect was that Hector Munro recovered, and after the intervention of twelve months George Munro, his brother, died. Hector took the principal witch into high favour, made her keeper of his sheep, and evaded, it is said, to present her to trial when charged at Aberdeen to produce her. Though one or two inferior persons suffered death on account of the sorceries practised in the house of Fowlis, the Lady Katharine and her stepson Hector had both the unusual good fortune to be found not guilty. Mr. Pitcairn remarks that the juries, being composed of subordinate persons not suitable to the rank or family of the person tried, has all the appearance of having been packed on purpose for acquittal. It might also, in some interval of good sense, creep into the heads of Hector Munro's assize that the enchantment being performed in January, 1588, and the deceased being only taken ill of his fatal disease in April, 1590, the distance between the events might seem too great to admit the former being regarded as the cause of the latter.

[Footnote 35: Pitcairn's "Trials," vol. i. pp. 191-201.]

Another instance of the skill of a sorcerer being traced to the instructions of the elves is found in the confession of John Stewart, called a vagabond, but professing skill in palmistry and jugglery, and accused of having assisted Margaret Barclay, or Dein, to sink or cast away a vessel belonging to her own good brother. It being demanded of him by what means he professed himself to have knowledge of things to come, the said John confessed that the space of twentysix years ago, he being travelling on All-Hallow Even night, between the towns of Monygoif (so spelled) and Clary, in Galway, he met with the King of the Fairies and his company, and that the King of the Fairies gave him a stroke with a white rod over the forehead, which took from him the power of speech and the use of one eye, which he wanted for the space of three years. He declared that the use of speech and eyesight was restored to him by the King of Fairies and his company, on an Hallowe'en night, at the town of Dublin, in Ireland, and that since that time he had joined these people every Saturday at seven o'clock, and remained with them all the night; also, that they met every Hallow-tide, sometimes on Lanark Hill (Tintock, perhaps), sometimes on Kilmaurs Hill, and that he was then taught by them. He pointed out the spot of his forehead on which, he said, the King of the Fairies struck him with a white rod, whereupon the

prisoner, being blindfolded, they pricked the spot with a large pin, whereof he expressed no sense or feeling. He made the usual declaration, that he had seen many persons at the Court of Fairy, whose names he rehearsed particularly, and declared that all such persons as are taken away by sudden death go with the King of Elfland. With this man's evidence we have at present no more to do, though we may revert to the execrable proceedings which then took place against this miserable juggler and the poor women who were accused of the same crime. At present it is quoted as another instance of a fortune-teller referring to Elfland as the source of his knowledge.

At Auldearne, a parish and burgh of barony in the county of Nairne, the epidemic terror of witches seems to have gone very far. The confession of a woman called Isobel Gowdie, of date April, 1662, implicates, as usual, the Court of Fairy, and blends the operations of witchcraft with the facilities afforded by the fairies. These need be the less insisted upon in this place, as the archfiend, and not the elves, had the immediate agency in the abominations which she narrates. Yet she had been, she said, in the Dounie Hills, and got meat there from the Queen of Fairies more than she could eat. She added, that the queen is bravely clothed in white linen and in white and brown cloth, that the King of Fairy is a brave man; and there were elf-bulls roaring and *skoilling* at the entrance of their palace, which frightened her much. On another occasion this frank penitent confesses her presence at a rendezvous of witches, Lammas, 1659, where, after they had rambled through the country in different shapes — of cats, hares, and the like — eating, drinking, and wasting the goods of their neighbours into whose houses they could penetrate, they at length came to the dounie Hills, where the mountain opened to receive them, and they entered a fair big room, as bright as day. At the entrance ramped and roared the large fairy bulls, which always alarmed Isobel Gowdie. These animals are probably the water-bulls, famous both in Scottish and Irish tradition, which are not supposed to be themselves altogether *canny* or safe to have concern with. In their caverns the fairies manufactured those elf-arrow heads with which the witches and they wrought so much evil. The elves and the archfiend laboured jointly at this task, the former forming and sharpening the dart from the rough flint, and the latter perfecting and finishing (or, as it is called, *dighting*) it. Then came the sport of the meeting. The witches bestrode either corn-straws, beanstalks, or rushes, and calling, "Horse and Hattock, in the Devil's

name!" which is the elfin signal for mounting, they flew wherever they listed. If the little whirlwind which accompanies their transportation passed any mortal who neglected to bless himself, all such fell under the witches' power, and they acquired the right of shooting at him. The penitent prisoner gives the names of many whom she and her sisters had so slain, the death for which she was most sorry being that of William Brown, in the Milntown of Mains. A shaft was also aimed at the Reverend Harrie Forbes, a minister who was present at the examination of Isobel, the confessing party. The arrow fell short, and the witch would have taken aim again, but her master forbade her, saying the reverend gentleman's life was not subject to their power. To this strange and very particular confession we shall have occasion to recur when witchcraft is the more immediate subject. What is above narrated marks the manner in which the belief in that crime was blended with the fairy superstition.

To proceed to more modern instances of persons supposed to have fallen under the power of the fairy race, we must not forget the Reverend Robert Kirke, minister of the Gospel, the first translator of the Psalms into Gaelic verse. He was, in the end of the seventeenth century, successively minister of the Highland parishes of Balquidder and Aberfoyle, lying in the most romantic district of Perthshire, and within the Highland line. These beautiful and wild regions, comprehending so many lakes, rocks, sequestered valleys, and dim copsewoods, are not even yet quite abandoned by the fairies, who have resolutely maintained secure footing in a region so well suited for their residence. Indeed, so much was this the case formerly, that Mr. Kirke, while in his latter charge of Aberfoyle, found materials for collecting and compiling his Essay on the "Subterranean and for the most part Invisible People heretofore going under the name of Elves, Fawnes, and Fairies, or the like." In this discourse, the author, "with undoubting mind," describes the fairy race as a sort of astral spirits, of a kind betwixt humanity and angels — says, that they have children, nurses, marriages, deaths, and burials, like mortals in appearance; that, in some respect, they represent mortal men, and that individual apparitions, or double-men, are found among them, corresponding with mortals existing on earth. Mr. Kirke accuses them of stealing the milk from the cows, and of carrying away, what is more material, the women in pregnancy, and new-born children from their nurses. The remedy is easy in both cases. The milk cannot be stolen if the mouth of the calf, before he is permitted to suck, be rubbed

with a certain balsam, very easily come by; and the woman in travail is safe if a piece of cold iron is put into the bed. Mr. Kirke accounts for this by informing us that the great northern mines of iron, lying adjacent to the place of eternal punishment, have a savour odious to these "fascinating creatures." They have, says the reverend author, what one would not expect, many light toyish books (novels and plays, doubtless), others on Rosycrucian subjects, and of an abstruse mystical character; but they have no Bibles or works of devotion. The essayist fails not to mention the elf-arrow heads, which have something of the subtlety of thunderbolts, and can mortally wound the vital parts without breaking the skin. These wounds, he says, he has himself observed in beasts, and felt the fatal lacerations which he could not see.

[Footnote 36: The title continues: — "Among the Low Country Scots, as they are described by those who have the second sight, and now, to occasion farther enquiry, collected and compared by a circumspect enquirer residing among the Scottish-Irish (*i.e.*, the Gael, or Highlanders) in Scotland." It was printed with the author's name in 1691, and reprinted, Edinburgh, 1815, for Longman & Co.]

It was by no means to be supposed that the elves, so jealous and irritable a race as to be incensed against those who spoke of them under their proper names, should be less than mortally offended at the temerity of the reverend author, who had pryed so deeply into their mysteries, for the purpose of giving them to the public. Although, therefore, the learned divine's monument, with his name duly inscribed, is to be seen at the east end of the churchyard at Aberfoyle, yet those acquainted with his real history do not believe that he enjoys the natural repose of the tomb. His successor, the Rev. Dr. Grahame, has informed us of the general belief that, as Mr. Kirke was walking one evening in his nightgown upon a *Dun-shi,* or fairy mount, in the vicinity of the manse or parsonage, behold! he sunk down in what seemed to be a fit of apoplexy, which the unenlightened took for death, while the more understanding knew it to be a swoon produced by the supernatural influence of the people whose precincts he had violated. After the ceremony of a seeming funeral, the form of the Rev. Robert Kirke appeared to a relation, and commanded him to go to Grahame of Duchray, ancestor of the present General Graham Stirling. "Say to Duchray, who is my cousin as well as your own, that I am not dead, but a captive in Fairyland, and only one chance remains for my liberation. When the posthumous child, of which my wife has been delivered since my disappearance, shall be brought to baptism, I will appear in the room, when,

if Duchray shall throw over my head the knife or dirk which he holds in his hand, I may be restored to society; but if this opportunity is neglected, I am lost for ever." Duchray was apprised of what was to be done. The ceremony took place, and the apparition of Mr. Kirke was visibly seen while they were seated at table; but Grahame of Duchray, in his astonishment, failed to perform the ceremony enjoined, and it is to be feared that Mr. Kirke still "drees his weird in Fairyland," the Elfin state declaring to him, as the Ocean to poor Falconer, who perished at sea after having written his popular poem of "The Shipwreck" —

"Thou hast proclaimed our power — be thou our prey!"

Upon this subject the reader may consult a very entertaining little volume, called "Sketches of Perthshire," by the Rev. Dr. Grahame of Aberfoyle. The terrible visitation of fairy vengeance which has lighted upon Mr. Kirke has not intimidated his successor, an excellent man and good antiquary, from affording us some curious information on fairy superstition. He tells us that these capricious elves are chiefly dangerous on a Friday, when, as the day of the Crucifixion, evil spirits have most power, and mentions their displeasure at any one who assumes their accustomed livery of green, a colour fatal to several families in Scotland, to the whole race of the gallant Grahames in particular; insomuch that we have heard that in battle a Grahame is generally shot through the green check of his plaid; moreover, that a veteran sportsman of the name, having come by a bad fall, he thought it sufficient to account for it, that he had a piece of green whipcord to complete the lash of his hunting-whip. I remember, also, that my late amiable friend, James Grahame, author of "The Sabbath," would not break through this ancient prejudice of his clan, but had his library table covered with blue or black cloth, rather than use the fated colour commonly employed on such occasions.

[Footnote 37: Edinburgh, 1812.]

To return from the Perthshire fairies, I may quote a story of a nature somewhat similar to that of Mas Robert Kirke. The life of the excellent person who told it was, for the benefit of her friends and the poor, protracted to an unusual duration; so I conceive that this adventure, which took place in her childhood, might happen before the middle of last century. She was residing with some relations near the small seaport town of North

Berwick, when the place and its vicinity were alarmed by the following story: —

An industrious man, a weaver in the little town, was married to a beautiful woman, who, after bearing two or three children, was so unfortunate as to die during the birth of a fourth child. The infant was saved, but the mother had expired in convulsions; and as she was much disfigured after death, it became an opinion among her gossips that, from some neglect of those who ought to have watched the sick woman, she must have been carried off by the elves, and this ghastly corpse substituted in the place of the body. The widower paid little attention to these rumours, and, after bitterly lamenting his wife for a year of mourning, began to think on the prudence of forming a new marriage, which, to a poor artisan with so young a family, and without the assistance of a housewife, was almost a matter of necessity. He readily found a neighbour with whose good looks he was satisfied, whilst her character for temper seemed to warrant her good usage of his children. He proposed himself and was accepted, and carried the names of the parties to the clergyman (called, I believe, Mr. Matthew Reid) for the due proclamation of banns. As the man had really loved his late partner, it is likely that this proposed decisive alteration of his condition brought back many reflections concerning the period of their union, and with these recalled the extraordinary rumours which were afloat at the time of her decease, so that the whole forced upon him the following lively dream: — As he lay in his bed, awake as he thought, he beheld, at the ghostly hour of midnight, the figure of a female dressed in white, who entered his hut, stood by the side of his bed, and appeared to him the very likeness of his late wife. He conjured her to speak, and with astonishment heard her say, like the minister of Aberfoyle, that she was not dead, but the unwilling captive of the Good Neighbours. Like Mr. Kirke, too, she told him that if all the love which he once had for her was not entirely gone, an opportunity still remained of recovering her, or *winning her back*, as it was usually termed, from the comfortless realms of Elfland. She charged him on a certain day of the ensuing week that he should convene the most respectable housekeepers in the town, with the clergyman at their head, and should disinter the coffin in which she was supposed to have been buried. "The clergyman is to recite certain prayers, upon which," said the apparition, "I will start from the coffin and fly with great speed round the church, and you must have the fleetest runner of the parish (naming a man

famed for swiftness) to pursue me, and such a one, the smith, renowned for his strength, to hold me fast after I am overtaken; and in that case I shall, by the prayers of the church, and the efforts of my loving husband and neighbours, again recover my station in human society." In the morning the poor widower was distressed with the recollection of his dream, but, ashamed and puzzled, took no measures in consequence. A second night, as is not very surprising, the visitation was again repeated. On the third night she appeared with a sorrowful and displeased countenance, upbraided him with want of love and affection, and conjured him, for the last time, to attend to her instructions, which, if he now neglected, she would never have power to visit earth or communicate with him again. In order to convince him there was no delusion, he "saw in his dream" that she took up the nursling at whose birth she had died, and gave it suck; she spilled also a drop or two of her milk on the poor man's bedclothes, as if to assure him of the reality of the vision.

The next morning the terrified widower carried a statement of his perplexity to Mr. Matthew Reid, the clergyman. This reverend person, besides being an excellent divine in other respects, was at the same time a man of sagacity, who understood the human passions. He did not attempt to combat the reality of the vision which had thrown his parishioner into this tribulation, but he contended it could be only an illusion of the devil. He explained to the widower that no created being could have the right or power to imprison or detain the soul of a Christian — conjured him not to believe that his wife was otherwise disposed of than according to God's pleasure — assured him that Protestant doctrine utterly denies the existence of any middle state in the world to come — and explained to him that he, as a clergyman of the Church of Scotland, neither could nor dared authorize opening graves or using the intervention of prayer to sanction rites of a suspicious character. The poor man, confounded and perplexed by various feelings, asked his pastor what he should do. "I will give you my best advice," said the clergyman. "Get your new bride's consent to be married tomorrow, or to-day, if you can; I will take it on me to dispense with the rest of the banns, or proclaim them three times in one day. You will have a new wife, and, if you think of the former, it will be only as of one from whom death has separated you, and for whom you may have thoughts of affection and sorrow, but as a saint in Heaven, and not as a prisoner in Elfland." The

advice was taken, and the perplexed widower had no more visitations from his former spouse.

An instance, perhaps the latest which has been made public, of communication with the Restless People — (a more proper epithet than that of *Daoine Shi*, or Men of Peace, as they are called in Gaelic) — came under Pennant's notice so late as during that observant traveller's tour in 1769. Being perhaps the latest news from the invisible commonwealth, we give the tourist's own words.

"A poor visionary who had been working in his cabbage-garden (in Breadalbane) imagined that he was raised suddenly up into the air, and conveyed over a wall into an adjacent cornfield; that he found himself surrounded by a crowd of men and women, many of whom he knew to have been dead for some years, and who appeared to him skimming over the tops of the unbending corn, and mingling together like bees going to hive; that they spoke an unknown language, and with a hollow sound; that they very roughly pushed him to and fro, but on his uttering the name of God all vanished, but a female sprite, who, seizing him by the shoulder, obliged him to promise an assignation at that very hour that day seven-night; that he then found his hair was all tied in double knots (well known by the name of elf-locks), and that he had almost lost his speech; that he kept his word with the spectre, whom he soon saw floating through the air towards him; that he spoke to her, but she told him she was at that time in too much haste to attend to him, but bid him go away and no harm should befall him, and so the affair rested when I left the country. But it is incredible the mischief these *ægri somnia* did in the neighbourhood. The friends and neighbours of the deceased, whom the old dreamer had named, were in the utmost anxiety at finding them in such bad company in the other world; the almost extinct belief of the old idle tales began to gain ground, and the good minister will have many a weary discourse and exhortation before he can eradicate the absurd ideas this idle story has revived."

[Footnote 38: Pennant's "Tour in Scotland," vol. i. p. 110.]

It is scarcely necessary to add that this comparatively recent tale is just the counterpart of the story of Bessie Dunlop, Alison Pearson, and of the Irish butler who was so nearly carried off, all of whom found in Elfland some friend, formerly of middle earth, who attached themselves to the child of

humanity, and who endeavoured to protect a fellow-mortal against their less philanthropic companions.

These instances may tend to show how the fairy superstition, which, in its general sense of worshipping the *Dii Campestres*, was much the older of the two, came to bear upon and have connexion with that horrid belief in witchcraft which cost so many innocent persons and crazy impostors their lives for the supposed commission of impossible crimes. In the next chapter I propose to trace how the general disbelief in the fairy creed began to take place, and gradually brought into discredit the supposed feats of witchcraft, which afforded pretext for such cruel practical consequences.

Letter VI

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Immediate Effect of Christianity on Articles of Popular Superstition — Chaucer's Account of the Roman Catholic Priests banishing the Fairies — Bishop Corbett imputes the same Effect to the Reformation — His Verses on that Subject — His Iter Septentrionale — Robin Goodfellow and other Superstitions mentioned by Reginald Scot — Character of the English Fairies — The Tradition had become obsolete in that Author's Time — That of Witches remained in vigour — But impugned by various Authors after the Reformation, as Wierus, Naudæus, Scot, and others — Demonology defended by Bodinus, Remigius, &c. — Their mutual Abuse of each other — Imperfection of Physical Science at this Period, and the Predominance of Mysticism in that Department.

Although the influence of the Christian religion was not introduced to the nations of Europe with such radiance as to dispel at once those clouds of superstition which continued to obscure the understanding of hasty and ill-instructed converts, there can be no doubt that its immediate operation went to modify the erroneous and extravagant articles of credulity which lingered behind the old pagan faith, and which gave way before it, in proportion as its light became more pure and refined from the devices of men.

The poet Chaucer, indeed, pays the Church of Rome, with its monks and preaching friars, the compliment of having, at an early period, expelled from the land all spirits of an inferior and less holy character. The verses are curious as well as picturesque, and may go some length to establish the existence of doubts concerning the general belief in fairies among the well-instructed in the time of Edward III.

The fairies of whom the bard of Woodstock talks are, it will be observed, the ancient Celtic breed, and he seems to refer for the authorities of his tale to Bretagne, or Armorica, a genuine Celtic colony: —

"In old time of the King Artour,
Of which that Bretons speken great honour,

All was this land fulfilled of faerie;
The Elf queen, with her joly company,
Danced full oft in many a grene mead.
This was the old opinion, as I rede —
I speake of many hundred years ago,
But now can no man see no elves mo.
For now the great charity and prayers
Of limitours, and other holy freres,
That searchen every land and every stream,
As thick as motes in the sunne-beam,
Blessing halls, chambers, kitchenes, and boures,
Cities and burghes, castles high and towers,
Thropes and barnes, sheep-pens and dairies,
This maketh that there ben no fairies.
For there as wont to walken was an elf,
There walketh now the limitour himself,
In under nichtes and in morwenings,
And saith his mattins and his holy things,
As he goeth in his limitation.
Women may now go safely up and doun;
In every bush, and under every tree,
There is no other incubus than he,
And he ne will don them no dishonour."

[Footnote 39: Friars limited to beg within a certain district.]

[Footnote 40: "Wife of Bath's Tale."]

When we see the opinion which Chaucer has expressed of the regular clergy of his time, in some of his other tales, we are tempted to suspect some mixture of irony in the compliment which ascribes the exile of the fairies, with whih the land was "fulfilled" in King Arthur's time, to the warmth and zeal of the devotion of the limitary friars. Individual instances of scepticism there might exist among scholars, but a more modern poet, with a vein of humour not unworthy of Geoffrey himself, has with greater probability delayed the final banishment of the fairies from England, that is, from popular faith, till the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and has represented their expulsion as a consequence of the change of religion. Two or three verses of this lively satire may be very well worth the reader's notice, who must, at

the same time, be informed that the author, Dr. Corbett, was nothing less than the Bishop of Oxford and Norwich in the beginning of the seventeenth century. The poem is named “A proper new Ballad, entitled the Fairies’ Farewell, to be sung or whistled to the tune of the Meadow Brow by the learned; by the unlearned to the tune of Fortune:” —

“Farewell, rewards and fairies,
Good housewives now may say,
For now foul sluts in dairies
Do fare as well as they;
And though they sweep their hearths no less
Than maids were wont to do,
Yet who of late for cleanliness
Finds sixpence in her shoe?

“Lament, lament, old abbies,
The fairies’ lost command;
They did but change priests’ babies,
But some have changed your land;
And all your children sprung from hence
Are now grown Puritans,
Who live as changelings ever since
For love of your domains.

“At morning and at evening both,
You merry were and glad,
So little care of sleep and sloth
Those pretty ladies had.
When Tom came home from labour.
Or Cis to milking rose,
Then merrily, merrily went their tabor,
And merrily went their toes.

“Witness those rings and roundelays
Of theirs, which yet remain,
Were footed, in Queen Mary’s days,
On many a grassy plain;
But since of late Elizabeth,

And later James came in,
They never danced on any heath
As when the time hath bin.

"By which we note, the fairies
Were of the old profession,
Their songs were Ave Maries,
Their dances were procession.
But now, alas! they all are dead,
Or gone beyond the seas;
Or farther for religion fled,
Or else they take their ease."

The remaining part of the poem is dedicated to the praise and glory of old William Chourne of Staffordshire, who remained a true and stanch evidence in behalf of the departed elves, and kept, much it would seem to the amusement of the witty bishop, an inexhaustible record of their pranks and feats, whence the concluding verse —

"To William all give audience,
And pray ye for his noddle,
For all the fairies' evidence
Were lost if that were addle."

[Footnote 41: Corbett's Poems, edited by Octavuis Gilchrist, p. 213.]

This William Chourne appears to have attended Dr. Corbett's party on the *iter septentrionale*, "two of which were, and two desired to be, doctors;" but whether William was guide, friend, or domestic seems uncertain. The travellers lose themselves in the mazes of Chorley Forest on their way to Bosworth, and their route becomes so confused that they return on their steps and labour —

"As in a conjuror's circle — William found
A mean for our deliverance, — 'Turn your cloaks,'
Quoth he, 'for Puck is busy in these oaks;
If ever you at Bosworth would be found,
Then turn your cloaks, for this is fairy ground.'
But ere this witchcraft was performed, we meet
A very man who had no cloven feet.

Though William, still of little faith, has doubt,
'Tis Robin, or some sprite that walks about.
'Strike him,' quoth he, 'and it will turn to air —
Cross yourselves thrice and strike it.' — 'Strike that dare,'
Thought I, 'for sure this massy forester,
In strokes will prove the better conjuror.'
But 'twas a gentle keeper, one that knew
Humanity and manners, where they grew,
And rode along so far, till he could say,
'See, yonder Bosworth stands, and this your way.'"

[Footnote 42: Corbett's Poems, p. 191.]

In this passage the bishop plainly shows the fairies maintained their influence in William's imagination, since the courteous keeper was mistaken by their associate champion for Puck or Robin Goodfellow. The spells resorted to to get rid of his supposed delusions are alternatively that of turning the cloak — (recommended in visions of the second-sight or similar illusions as a means of obtaining a certainty concerning the being which is before imperfectly seen) — and that of exorcising the spirit with a cudgel; which last, Corbett prudently thinks, ought not to be resorted to unless under an absolute conviction that the exorcist is the stronger party. Chaucer, therefore, could not be serious in averring that the fairy superstitions were obsolete in his day, since they were found current three centuries afterwards.

[Footnote 43: A common instance is that of a person haunted with a resemblance whose face he cannot see. If he turn his cloak or plaid, he will obtain the full sight which he desires, and may probably find it to be his own fetch, or wraith, or double-ganger.]

It is not the less certain that, as knowledge and religion became more widely and brightly displayed over any country, the superstitious fancies of the people sunk gradually in esteem and influence; and in the time of Queen Elizabeth the unceasing labour of many and popular preachers, who declaimed against the "splendid miracles" of the Church of Rome, produced also its natural effect upon the other stock of superstitions. "Certainly," said Reginald Scot, talking of times before his own, "some one knave in a white sheet hath cozened and abused many thousands, specially when Robin Goodfellow kept such a coil in the country. In our childhood our mothers' maids have so terrified us with an ugly devil having horns on his head, fire

in his mouth, and a tail at his breech; eyes like a basin, fangs like a dog, claws like a bear, a skin like a negro, and a voice roaring like a lion, whereby we start and are afraid when we hear one cry, Boh! and they have so frayd us with bull-beggars, spirits, witches, urchins, elves, hags, fairies, satyrs, Pans, faunes, sylvans, Kitt-with-the-candlestick, tritons, centaurs, dwarfs, giants, imps, calcars, conjurers, nymphs, changelings, incubus, Robin Goodfellow, the spoorn, the man-in-the-oak, the hellwain, the fire-drake, the puckle, Tom Thumb, Hobgoblin, Tom Tumbler, Boneless, and such other bugbears, that we are afraid of our own shadows, insomuch that some never fear the devil but on a dark night; and then a polled sheep is a perilous beast, and many times is taken for our father's soul, specially in a churchyard, where a right hardy man heretofore durst not to have passed by night but his hair would stand upright. Well, thanks be to God, this wretched and cowardly infidelity, since the preaching of the Gospel, is in part forgotten, and doubtless the rest of these illusions will in a short time, by God's grace, be detected and vanish away."

[Footnote 44: Reginald Scot's "Discovery of Witchcraft," book vii. chap. 15.]

It would require a better demonologist than I am to explain the various obsolete superstitions which Reginald Scot has introduced as articles of the old English faith, into the preceding passage. I might indeed say the Phuca is a Celtic superstition, from which the word Pook or Puckle was doubtless derived; and I might conjecture that the man-in-the-oak was the same with the Erl-König of the Germans; and that the hellwain were a kind of wandering spirits, the descendants of a champion named Hellequin, who are introduced into the romance of Richard sans Peur. But most antiquaries will be at fault concerning the spoorn, Kitt-with-the-candlestick, Boneless, and some others. The catalogue, however, serves to show what progress the English have made in two centuries, in forgetting the very names of objects which had been the sources of terror to their ancestors of the Elizabethan age.

Before leaving the subject of fairy superstition in England we may remark that it was of a more playful and gentle, less wild and necromantic character, than that received among the sister people. The amusements of the southern fairies were light and sportive; their resentments were satisfied with pinching or scratching the objects of their displeasure; their peculiar sense of cleanliness rewarded the housewives with the silver token in the

shoe; their nicety was extreme concerning any coarseness or negligence which could offend their delicacy; and I cannot discern, except, perhaps, from the insinuations of some scrupulous divines, that they were vassals to or in close alliance with the infernals, as there is too much reason to believe was the case with their North British sisterhood. The common nursery story cannot be forgotten, how, shortly after the death of what is called a nice tidy housewife, the Elfin band was shocked to see that a person of different character, with whom the widower had filled his deserted arms, instead of the nicely arranged little loaf of the whitest bread, and a basin of sweet cream, duly placed for their refreshment by the deceased, had substituted a brown loaf and a cobb of herrings. Incensed at such a coarse regale, the elves dragged the peccant housewife out of bed, and pulled her down the wooden stairs by the heels, repeating, at the same time, in scorn of her churlish hospitality —

> "Brown bread and herring cobb!
> Thy fat sides shall have many a bob!"

But beyond such playful malice they had no desire to extend their resentment.

[Footnote 45: Dr. Jackson, in his "Treatise on Unbelief," opines for the severe opinion. "Thus are the Fayries, from difference of events ascribed to them, divided into good and bad, when as it is but one and the same malignant fiend that meddles in both; seeking sometimes to be feared, otherwhiles to be loued as God, for the bodily harmes or good turnes supposed to be in his power." — Jackson on Unbelief, p. 178, edit. 1625.]

The constant attendant upon the English Fairy court was the celebrated Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, who to the elves acted in some measure as the jester or clown of the company — (a character then to be found in the establishment of every person of quality) — or to use a more modern comparison, resembled the Pierrot of the pantomime. His jests were of the most simple and at the same time the broadest comic character — to mislead a clown on his path homeward, to disguise himself like a stool, in order to induce an old gossip to commit the egregious mistake of sitting down on the floor when she expected to repose on a chair, were his special enjoyments. If he condescended to do some work for the sleeping family, in which he had some resemblance to the Scottish household spirit called a Brownie, the selfish Puck was far from practising this labour on the disinterested principle of the northern goblin, who, if raiment or food was

left in his way and for his use, departed from the family in displeasure. Robin Goodfellow, on the contrary, must have both his food and his rest, as Milton informs us, amid his other notices of country superstitions, in the poem of L'Allegro. And it is to be noticed that he represents these tales of the fairies, told round the cottage hearth, as of a cheerful rather than a serious cast; which illustrates what I have said concerning the milder character of the southern superstitions, as compared with those of the same class in Scotland — the stories of which are for the most part of a frightful and not seldom of a disgusting quality.

Poor Robin, however, between whom and King Oberon Shakespeare contrives to keep a degree of distinct subordination, which for a moment deceives us by its appearance of reality, notwithstanding his turn for wit and humour, had been obscured by oblivion even in the days of Queen Bess. We have already seen, in a passage quoted from Reginald Scot, that the belief was fallen into abeyance; that which follows from the same author affirms more positively that Robin's date was over: —

"Know ye this, by the way, that heretofore Robin Goodfellow and Hobgoblin were as terrible, and also as credible, to the people as hags and witches be now; and in time to come a witch will be as much derided and condemned, and as clearly perceived, as the illusion and knavery of Robin Goodfellow, upon whom there have gone as many and as credible tales as witchcraft, saving that it hath not pleased the translators of the Bible to call spirits by the name of Robin Goodfellow, as they have diviners, soothsayers, poisoners, and cozeners by the name of witches." In the same tone Reginald Scot addresses the reader in the preface: — "To make a solemn suit to you that are partial readers to set aside partiality, to take in good part my writings, and with indifferent eyes to look upon my book, were labour lost and time ill-employed; for I should no more prevail herein than if, a hundred years since, I should have entreated your predecessors to believe that Robin Goodfellow, that great and ancient bull-beggar, had been but a cozening merchant, and no devil indeed. But Robin Goodfellow ceaseth now to be much feared, and Popery is sufficiently discovered; nevertheless, witches' charms and conjurers' cozenage are yet effectual." This passage seems clearly to prove that the belief in Robin Goodfellow and his fairy companions was now out of date; while that as to witchcraft, as was afterwards but too well shown, kept its ground against argument and controversy, and survived "to shed more blood."

[Footnote 46: Reginald Scot's "Discovery of Witchcraft," book vii. chap, ii.]

We are then to take leave of this fascinating article of the popular creed, having in it so much of interest to the imagination that we almost envy the credulity of those who, in the gentle moonlight of a summer night in England, amid the tangled glades of a deep forest, or the turfy swell of her romantic commons, could fancy they saw the fairies tracing their sportive ring. But it is in vain to regret illusions which, however engaging, must of necessity yield their place before the increase of knowledge, like shadows at the advance of morn. These superstitions have already survived their best and most useful purpose, having been embalmed in the poetry of Milton and of Shakespeare, as well as writers only inferior to these great names. Of Spenser we must say nothing, because in his "Faery Queen" the title is the only circumstance which connects his splendid allegory with the popular superstition, and, as he uses it, means nothing more than an Utopia or nameless country.

With the fairy popular creed fell, doubtless, many subordinate articles of credulity in England, but the belief in witches kept its ground. It was rooted in the minds of the common people, as well by the easy solution it afforded of much which they found otherwise hard to explain, as in reverence to the Holy Scriptures, in which the word *witch,* being used in several places, conveyed to those who did not trouble themselves about the nicety of the translation from the Eastern tongues, the inference that the same species of witches were meant as those against whom modern legislation had, in most European nations, directed the punishment of death. These two circumstances furnished the numerous believers in witchcraft with arguments in divinity and law which they conceived irrefragable. They might say to the theologist, Will you not believe in witches? the Scriptures aver their existence; — to the jurisconsult, Will you dispute the existence of a crime against which our own statute-book, and the code of almost all civilized countries, have attested, by laws upon which hundreds and thousands have been convicted, many or even most of whom have, by their judicial confessions, acknowledged their guilt and the justice of their punishment? It is a strange scepticism, they might add, which rejects the evidence of Scripture, of human legislature, and of the accused persons themselves.

Notwithstanding these specious reasons, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were periods when the revival of learning, the invention of

printing, the fearless investigations of the Reformers into subjects thought formerly too sacred for consideration of any save the clergy, had introduced a system of doubt, enquiry, disregard of authority, when unsupported by argument, and unhesitating exercise of the private judgment, on subjects which had occupied the bulls of popes and decrees of councils. In short, the spirit of the age was little disposed to spare error, however venerable, or countenance imposture, however sanctioned by length of time and universal acquiescence. Learned writers arose in different countries to challenge the very existence of this imaginary crime, to rescue the reputation of the great men whose knowledge, superior to that of their age, had caused them to be suspected of magic, and to put a stop to the horrid superstition whose victims were the aged, ignorant, and defenceless, and which could only be compared to that which sent victims of old through the fire to Moloch.

The courageous interposition of those philosophers who opposed science and experience to the prejudices of superstition and ignorance, and in doing so incurred much misrepresentation, and perhaps no little illwill, in the cause of truth and humanity, claim for them some distinction in a work on Demonology. The pursuers of exact science to its coy retreats, were sure to be the first to discover that the most remarkable phenomena in Nature are regulated by certain fixed laws, and cannot rationally be referred to supernatural agency, the sufficing cause to which superstition attributes all that is beyond her own narrow power of explanation. Each advance in natural knowledge teaches us that it is the pleasure of the Creator to govern the world by the laws which he has imposed, and which are not in our times interrupted or suspended.

The learned Wier, or Wierus, was a man of great research in physical science, and studied under the celebrated Cornelius Agrippa, against whom the charge of sorcery was repeatedly alleged by Paulus Jovius and other authors, while he suffered, on the other hand, from the persecution of the inquisitors of the Church, whose accusation against this celebrated man was, that he denied the existence of spirits, a charge very inconsistent with that of sorcery, which consists in corresponding with them. Wierus, after taking his degree as a doctor of medicine, became physician to the Duke of Cleves, at whose court he practised for thirty years with the highest reputation. This learned man, disregarding the scandal which, by so doing, he was likely to bring upon himself, was one of the first who attacked the

vulgar belief, and boldly assailed, both by serious arguments and by ridicule, the vulgar credulity on the subject of wizards and witches.

Gabriel Naudé, or Naudæus, as he termed himself, was a perfect scholar and man of letters, busied during his whole life with assembling books together, and enjoying the office of librarian to several persons of high rank, amongst others, to Queen Christina of Sweden. He was, besides, a beneficed clergyman, leading a most unblemished life, and so temperate as never to taste any liquor stronger than water; yet did he not escape the scandal which is usually flung by their prejudiced contemporaries upon those disputants whom it is found more easy to defame than to answer. He wrote an interesting work, entitled "Apologie pour les Grands Homines Accusés de Magie;" and as he exhibited a good deal of vivacity of talent, and an earnestness in pleading his cause, which did not always spare some of the superstitions of Rome herself, he was charged by his contemporaries as guilty of heresy and scepticism, when justice could only accuse him of an incautious eagerness to make good his argument.

Among persons who, upon this subject, purged their eyes with rue and euphrasie, besides the Rev. Dr. Harsnet and many others (who wrote rather on special cases of Demonology than on the general question), Reginald Scot ought to be distinguished. Webster assures us that he was a "person of competent learning, pious, and of a good family." He seems to have been a zealous Protestant, and much of his book, as well as that of Harsnet, is designed to throw upon the Papists in particular those tricks in which, by confederacy and imposture, the popular ideas concerning witchcraft, possession, and other supernatural fancies, were maintained and kept in exercise; but he also writes on the general question with some force and talent, considering that his subject is incapable of being reduced into a regular form, and is of a nature particularly seductive to an excursive talent. He appears to have studied legerdemain for the purpose of showing how much that is apparently unaccountable can nevertheless be performed without the intervention of supernatural assistance, even when it is impossible to persuade the vulgar that the devil has not been consulted on the occasion. Scot also had intercourse with some of the celebrated fortune-tellers, or Philomaths, of the time; one of whom he brings forward to declare the vanity of the science which he himself had once professed.

To defend the popular belief of witchcraft there arose a number of advocates, of whom Bodin and some others neither wanted knowledge nor

powers of reasoning. They pressed the incredulous party with the charge that they denied the existence of a crime against which the law had denounced a capital punishment. As that law was understood to emanate from James himself, who was reigning monarch during the hottest part of the controversy, the English authors who defended the opposite side were obliged to entrench themselves under an evasion, to avoid maintaining an argument unpalatable to a degree to those in power, and which might perchance have proved unsafe to those who used it. With a certain degree of sophistry they answered that they did not doubt the possibility of witches, but only demurred to what is their nature, and how they came to be such — according to the scholastic jargon, that the question in respect to witches was not *de existentia*, but only *de modo existendi*.

By resorting to so subtle an argument those who impugned the popular belief were obliged, with some inconsistency, to grant that witchcraft had existed, and might exist, only insisting that it was a species of witchcraft consisting of they knew not what, but certainly of something different from that which legislators, judges, and juries had hitherto considered the statute as designed to repress.

In the meantime (the rather that the debate was on a subject particularly difficult of comprehension) the debating parties grew warm, and began to call names. Bodin, a lively Frenchman of an irritable habit, explained the zeal of Wierus to protect the tribe of sorcerers from punishment, by stating that he himself was a conjurer and the scholar of Cornelius Agrippa, and might therefore well desire to save the lives of those accused of the same league with Satan. Hence they threw on their antagonists the offensive names of witch-patrons and witch-advocates, as if it were impossible for any to hold the opinion of Naudæus, Wierus, Scot, &c., without patronizing the devil and the witches against their brethren of mortality. Assailed by such heavy charges, the philosophers themselves lost patience, and retorted abuse in their turn, calling Bodin, Delrio, and others who used their arguments, witch-advocates, and the like, as the affirming and defending the existence of the crime seemed to increase the number of witches, and assuredly augmented the list of executions. But for a certain time the preponderance of the argument lay on the side of the Demonologists, and we may briefly observe the causes which gave their opinions, for a period, greater influence than their opponents on the public mind.

It is first to be observed that Wierus, for what reason cannot well be conjectured, except to show the extent of his cabalistical knowledge, had introduced into his work against witchcraft the whole Stenographia of Trithemius, which he had copied from the original in the library of Cornelius Agrippa; and which, suspicious from the place where he found it, and from the long catalogue of fiends which it contained, with the charms for raising and for binding them to the service of mortals, was considered by Bodin as containing proof that Wierus himself was a sorcerer; not one of the wisest, certainly, since he thus unnecessarily placed at the disposal of any who might buy the book the whole secrets which formed his stock-in-trade.

Secondly, we may notice that, from the state of physical science at the period when Van Helmont, Paracelsus, and others began to penetrate into its recesses, it was an unknown, obscure, and ill-defined region, and did not permit those who laboured in it to give that precise and accurate account of their discoveries which the progress of reasoning experimentally and from analysis has enabled the late discoverers to do with success. Natural magic — a phrase used to express those phenomena which could be produced by a knowledge of the properties of matter — had so much in it that was apparently uncombined and uncertain, that the art of chemistry was accounted mystical, and an opinion prevailed that the results now known to be the consequence of laws of matter, could not be traced through their various combinations even by those who knew the effects themselves. Physical science, in a word, was cumbered by a number of fanciful and incorrect opinions, chiefly of a mystical character. If, for instance, it was observed that a flag and a fern never grew near each other, the circumstance was imputed to some antipathy between these vegetables; nor was it for some time resolved by the natural rule, that the flag has its nourishment in marshy ground, whereas the fern loves a deep dryish soil. The attributes of the divining-rod were fully credited; the discovery of the philosopher's stone was daily hoped for; and electricity, magnetism, and other remarkable and misconceived phenomena were appealed to as proof of the reasonableness of their expectations. Until such phenomena were traced to their sources, imaginary and often mystical causes were assigned to them, for the same reason that, in the wilds of a partially discovered country, according to the satirist,

"Geographers on pathless downs
Place elephants for want of towns."

This substitution of mystical fancies for experimental reasoning gave, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a doubtful and twilight appearance to the various branches of physical philosophy. The learned and sensible Dr. Webster, for instance, writing in detection of supposed witchcraft, assumes, as a string of undeniable facts, opinions which our more experienced age would reject as frivolous fancies; "for example, the effects of healing by the weapon-salve, the sympathetic powder, the curing of various diseases by apprehensions, amulets, or by transplantation." All of which undoubted wonders he accuses the age of desiring to throw on the devil's back — an unnecessary load certainly, since such things do not exist, and it is therefore in vain to seek to account for them. It followed that, while the opposers of the ordinary theory might have struck the deepest blows at the witch hypothesis by an appeal to common sense, they were themselves hampered by articles of philosophical belief which they must have been sensible contained nearly as deep draughts upon human credulity as were made by the Demonologists, against whose doctrine they protested. This error had a doubly bad effect, both as degrading the immediate department in which it occurred, and as affording a protection for falsehood in other branches of science. The champions who, in their own province, were obliged by the imperfect knowledge of the times to admit much that was mystical and inexplicable — those who opined, with Bacon, that warts could be cured by sympathy — who thought, with Napier, that hidden treasures could be discovered by the mathematics — who salved the weapon instead of the wound, and detected murders as well as springs of water by the divining-rod, could not consistently use, to confute the believers in witches, an argument turning on the impossible or the incredible.

Such were the obstacles arising from the vanity of philosophers and the imperfection of their science, which suspended the strength of their appeal to reason and common sense against the condemning of wretches to a cruel death on account of crimes which the nature of things rendered in modern times totally impossible. We cannot doubt that they suffered considerably in the contest, which was carried on with much anger and malevolence; but the good seed which they had sown remained uncorrupted in the soil, to bear fruit so soon as the circumstances should be altered which at first

impeded its growth. In the next letter I shall take a view of the causes which helped to remove these impediments, in addition, it must always be remembered, to the general increase of knowledge and improvement of experimental philosophy.

Letter VII

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Penal laws, like those of the Middle Ages, denounced against witchcraft, may be at first hailed with unanimous acquiescence and approbation, but are uniformly found to disgust and offend at least the more sensible part of the public when the punishments become frequent and are relentlessly inflicted. Those against treason are no exception. Each reflecting government will do well to shorten that melancholy reign of terror which perhaps must necessarily follow on the discovery of a plot or the defeat of an insurrection. They ought not, either in humanity or policy, to wait till the voice of the nation calls to them, as Mecænas to Augustus, "*Surge tandem carnifex*!"

It is accordingly remarkable, in different countries, how often at some particular period of their history there occurred an epidemic of terror of witches, which, as fear is always cruel and credulous, glutted the public with seas of innocent blood; and how uniformly men loathed the gore after

having swallowed it, and by a reaction natural to the human mind desired, in prudence, to take away or restrict those laws which had been the source of carnage, in order that their posterity might neither have the will nor the means to enter into similar excesses.

A short review of foreign countries, before we come to notice the British Islands and their Colonies, will prove the truth of this statement. In Catholic countries on the Continent, the various kingdoms adopted readily that part of the civil law, already mentioned, which denounces sorcerers and witches as rebels to God, and authors of sedition in the empire. But being considered as obnoxious equally to the canon and civil law, Commissions of Inquisition were especially empowered to weed out of the land the witches and those who had intercourse with familiar spirits, or in any other respect fell under the ban of the Church, as well as the heretics who promulgated or adhered to false doctrine. Special warrants were thus granted from time to time in behalf of such inquisitors, authorizing them to visit those provinces of Germany, France, or Italy where any report concerning witches or sorcery had alarmed the public mind; and those Commissioners, proud of the trust reposed in them, thought it becoming to use the utmost exertions on their part, that the subtlety of the examinations, and the severity of the tortures they inflicted, might wring the truth out of all suspected persons, until they rendered the province in which they exercised their jurisdiction a desert from which the inhabitants fled. It would be impossible to give credit to the extent of this delusion, had not some of the inquisitors themselves been reporters of their own judicial exploits: the same hand which subscribed the sentence has recorded the execution.

In the earlier period of the Church of Rome witchcraft is frequently alluded to, and a capital punishment assigned to those who were supposed to have accomplished by sorcery the death of others, or to have attempted, by false prophecies or otherwise, under pretext of consulting with the spiritual world, to make innovation in the state. But no general denunciation against witchcraft itself, as a league with the Enemy of Man, or desertion of the Deity, and a crime *sui generis*, appears to have been so acted upon, until the later period of the sixteenth century, when the Papal system had attained its highest pitch of power and of corruption. The influence of the Churchmen was in early times secure, and they rather endeavoured, by the fabrication of false miracles, to prolong the blind veneration of the people,

than to vex others and weary themselves by secret investigations into dubious and mystical trespasses, in which probably the higher and better instructed members of the clerical order put as little faith at that time as they do now. Did there remain a mineral fountain, respected for the cures which it had wrought, a huge oak-tree, or venerated mount, which beauty of situation had recommended to traditional respect, the fathers of the Roman Church were in policy reluctant to abandon such impressive spots, or to represent them as exclusively the rendezvous of witches or of evil spirits. On the contrary, by assigning the virtues of the spring or the beauty of the tree to the guardianship of some saint, they acquired, as it were, for the defence of their own doctrine, a frontier fortress which they wrested from the enemy, and which it was at least needless to dismantle, if it could be conveniently garrisoned and defended. Thus the Church secured possession of many beautiful pieces of scenery, as Mr. Whitfield is said to have grudged to the devil the monopoly of all the fine tunes.

It is true that this policy was not uniformly observed. The story of the celebrated Jeanne d'Arc, called the Maid of Orleans, preserves the memory of such a custom, which was in that case turned to the prejudice of the poor woman who observed it.

It is well known that this unfortunate female fell into the hands of the English, after having, by her courage and enthusiasm manifested on many important occasions, revived the drooping courage of the French, and inspired them with the hope of once more freeing their country. The English vulgar regarded her as a sorceress — the French as an inspired heroine; while the wise on both sides considered her as neither the one nor the other, but a tool used by the celebrated Dunois to play the part which he assigned her. The Duke of Bedford, when the ill-starred Jeanne fell into his hands, took away her life in order to stigmatize her memory with sorcery and to destroy the reputation she had acquired among the French. The mean recurrence to such a charge against such a person had no more success than it deserved, although Jeanne was condemned both by the Parliament of Bordeux and the University of Paris. Her indictment accused her of having frequented an ancient oak-tree, and a fountain arising under it, called the Fated or Fairy Oak of Bourlemont. Here she was stated to have repaired during the hours of divine service, dancing, skipping, and making gestures, around the tree and fountain, and hanging on the branches chaplets and garlands of flowers, gathered for the purpose, reviving, doubtless, the

obsolete idolatry which in ancient times had been rendered on the same spot to the *Genius Loci*. The charmed sword and blessed banner, which she had represented as signs of her celestial mission, were in this hostile charge against her described as enchanted implements, designed by the fiends and fairies whom she worshipped to accomplish her temporary success. The death of the innocent, high-minded, and perhaps amiable enthusiast, was not, we are sorry to say, a sacrifice to a superstitious fear of witchcraft, but a cruel instance of wicked policy mingled with national jealousy and hatred.

To the same cause, about the same period, we may impute the trial of the Duchess of Gloucester, wife of the good Duke Humphrey, accused of consulting witches concerning the mode of compassing the death of her husband's nephew, Henry VI. The Duchess was condemned to do penance, and thereafter banished to the Isle of Man, while several of her accomplices died in prison or were executed. But in this instance also the alleged witchcraft was only the ostensible cause of a procedure which had its real source in the deep hatred between the Duke of Gloucester and Cardinal Beaufort, his half-brother. The same pretext was used by Richard III. when he brought the charge of sorcery against the Queen Dowager, Jane Shore, and the queen's kinsmen; and yet again was by that unscrupulous prince directed against Morton, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, and other adherents of the Earl of Richmond. The accusation in both cases was only chosen as a charge easily made and difficult to be eluded or repelled.

But in the meanwhile, as the accusation of witchcraft thus afforded to tyranny or policy the ready means of assailing persons whom it might not have been possible to convict of any other crime, the aspersion itself was gradually considered with increase of terror as spreading wider and becoming more contagious. So early as the year 1398 the University of Paris, in laying down rules for the judicial prosecuting of witches, express their regret that the crime was growing more frequent than in any former age. The more severe enquiries and frequent punishments by which the judges endeavoured to check the progress of this impious practice seem to have increased the disease, as indeed it has been always remarked that those morbid affections of mind which depend on the imagination are sure to become more common in proportion as public attention is fastened on stories connected with their display.

In the same century schisms arising from different causes greatly alarmed the Church of Rome. The universal spirit of enquiry which was

now afloat, taking a different direction in different countries, had in almost all of them stirred up a sceptical dissatisfaction with the dogmas of the Church — such views being rendered more credible to the poorer classes through the corruption of manners among the clergy, too many of whom wealth and ease had caused to neglect that course of morality which best recommends religious doctrine. In almost every nation in Europe there lurked in the crowded cities, or the wild solitude of the country, sects who agreed chiefly in their animosity to the supremacy of Rome and their desire to cast off her domination. The Waldenses and Albigenses were parties existing in great numbers through the south of France. The Romanists became extremely desirous to combine the doctrine of the heretics with witchcraft, which, according to their account, abounded especially where the Protestants were most numerous; and, the bitterness increasing, they scrupled not to throw the charge of sorcery, as a matter of course, upon those who dissented from the Catholic standard of faith. The Jesuit Delrio alleges several reasons for the affinity which he considers as existing between the Protestant and the sorcerer; he accuses the former of embracing the opinion of Wierus and other defenders of the devil (as he calls all who oppose his own opinions concerning witchcraft), thus fortifying the kingdom of Satan against that of the Church.

[Footnote 47: Delrio, “De Magia.” See the Preface.]

A remarkable passage in Monstrelet puts in a clear view the point aimed at by the Catholics in thus confusing and blending the doctrines of heresy and the practice of witchcraft, and how a meeting of inoffensive Protestants could be cunningly identified with a Sabbath of hags and fiends.

“In this year (1459), in the town of Arras and county of Artois, arose, through a terrible and melancholy chance, an opinion called, I know not why, the Religion of Vaudoisie. This sect consisted, it is said, of certain persons, both men and women, who, under cloud of night, by the power of the devil, repaired to some solitary spot, amid woods and deserts, where the devil appeared before them in a human form — save that his visage is never perfectly visible to them — read to the assembly a book of his ordinances, informing them how he would be obeyed; distributed a very little money and a plentiful meal, which was concluded by a scene of general profligacy; after which each one of the party was conveyed home to her or his own habitation.

"On accusations of access to such acts of madness," continues Monstrelet, "several creditable persons of the town of Arras were seized and imprisoned along with some foolish women and persons of little consequence. These were so horribly tortured that some of them admitted the truth of the whole accusations, and said, besides, that they had seen and recognised in their nocturnal assembly many persons of rank, prelates, seigneurs, and governors of bailliages and cities, being such names as the examinators had suggested to the persons examined, while they constrained them by torture to impeach the persons to whom they belonged. Several of those who had been thus informed against were arrested, thrown into prison, and tortured for so long a time that they also were obliged to confess what was charged against them. After this those of mean condition were executed and inhumanly burnt, while the richer and more powerful of the accused ransomed themselves by sums of money, to avoid the punishment and the shame attending it. Many even of those also confessed being persuaded to take that course by the interrogators, who promised them indemnity for life and fortune. Some there were, of a truth, who suffered with marvellous patience and constancy the torments inflicted on them, and would confess nothing imputed to their charge; but they, too, had to give large sums to the judges, who exacted that such of them as, notwithstanding their mishandling, were still able to move, should banish themselves from that part of the country." Monstrelet winds up this shocking narrative by informing us "that it ought not to be concealed that the whole accusation was a stratagem of wicked men for their own covetous purposes, and in order, by these false accusations and forced confessions, to destroy the life, fame, and fortune of wealthy persons."

Delrio himself confesses that Franciscus Balduinus gives an account of the pretended punishment, but real persecution, of these Waldenses, in similar terms with Monstrelet, whose suspicions are distinctly spoken out, and adds that the Parliament of Paris, having heard the affair by appeal, had declared the sentence illegal and the judges iniquitous, by an arrét dated 20th May, 1491. The Jesuit Delrio quotes the passage, but adheres with lingering reluctance to the truth of the accusation. "The Waldenses (of whom the Albigenses are a species) were," he says, "never free from the most wretched excess of fascination;" and finally, though he allows the conduct of the judges to have been most odious, he cannot prevail on himself to acquit the parties charged by such interested accusers with

horrors which should hardly have been found proved even upon the most distinct evidence. He appeals on this occasion to Florimond's work on Antichrist. The introduction of that work deserves to be quoted, as strongly illustrative of the condition to which the country was reduced, and calculated to make an impression the very reverse probably of that which the writer would have desired: —

"All those who have afforded us some signs of the approach of Antichrist agree that the increase of sorcery and witchcraft is to distinguish the melancholy period of his advent; and was ever age so afflicted with them as ours? The seats destined for criminals before our judicatories are blackened with persons accused of this guilt. There are not judges enough to try them. Our dungeons are gorged with them. No day passes that we do not render our tribunals bloody by the dooms which we pronounce, or in which we do not return to our homes discountenanced and terrified at the horrible contents of the confessions which it has been our duty to hear. And the devil is accounted so good a master that we cannot commit so great a number of his slaves to the flames but what there shall arise from their ashes a number sufficient to supply their place."

[Footnote 48: Florimond, "Concerning the Antichrist," cap. 7, n. 5, quoted by Delrio, "De Magia," p. 820.]

This last statement, by which it appears that the most active and unsparing inquisition was taking place, corresponds with the historical notices of repeated persecutions upon this dreadful charge of sorcery. A bull of Pope Innocent VIII. rang the tocsin against this formidable crime, and set forth in the most dismal colours the guilt, while it stimulated the inquisitors to the unsparing discharge of their duty in searching out and punishing the guilty. "It is come to our ears," says the bull, "that numbers of both sexes do not avoid to have intercourse with the infernal fiends, and that by their sorceries they afflict both man and beast; that they blight the marriage-bed, destroy the births of women, and the increase of cattle; they blast the corn on the ground, the grapes of the vineyard, the fruits of the trees, the grass and herbs of the field." For which reasons the inquisitors were armed with the apostolic power, and called upon to "convict, imprison, and punish," and so forth.

Dreadful were the consequences of this bull all over the Continent, especially in Italy, Germany, and France, About 1485 Cumanus burnt as

witches forty-one poor women in one year in the county of Burlia. In the ensuing years he continued the prosecution with such unremitting zeal that many fled from the country.

[Footnote 49: Dr. Hutchinson quotes "H. Institor," 105, 161.]

Alciatus states that an inquisitor, about the same period, burnt an hundred sorcerers in Piedmont, and persevered in his inquiries till human patience was exhausted, and the people arose and drove him out of the country, after which the jurisdiction was deferred to the archbishop. That prelate consulted Alciatus himself, who had just then obtained his doctor's degree in civil law, to which he was afterwards an honour. A number of unfortunate wretches were brought for judgment, fitter, according to the civilian's opinion, for a course of hellebore than for the stake. Some were accused of having dishonoured the crucifix and denied their salvation; others of having absconded to keep the Devil's Sabbath, in spite of bolts and bars; others of having merely joined in the choral dances around the witches' tree of rendezvous. Several of their husbands and relatives swore that they were in bed and asleep during these pretended excursions. Alciatus recommended gentle and temperate measures; and the minds of the country became at length composed.

[Footnote 50: Alciat. "Parerg. Juris," lib. viii. chap. 22.]

In 1488, the country four leagues around Constance was laid waste by lightning and tempest, and two women being, by fair means or foul, made to confess themselves guilty as the cause of the devastation, suffered death.

About 1515, 500 persons were executed at Geneva, under the character of "Protestant witches," from which we may suppose many suffered for heresy. Forty-eight witches were burnt at Ravensburgh within four years, as Hutchison reports, on the authority of Mengho, the author of the "Malleus Malleficarum." In Lorraine the learned inquisitor, Remigius, boasts that he put to death 900 people in fifteen years. As many were banished from that country, so that whole towns were on the point of becoming desolate. In 1524, 1,000 persons were put to death in one year at Como, in Italy, and about 100 every year after for several years.

[Footnote 51: Bart. de Spina, de Strigilibus.]

In the beginning of the next century the persecution of witches broke out in France with a fury which was hardly conceivable, and multitudes were burnt amid that gay and lively people. Some notion of the extreme prejudice of their judges may be drawn from the words of one of the inquisitors themselves. Pierre de Lancre, royal councillor in the Parliament of Bourdeaux, with whom the President Espaignel was joined in a commission to enquire into certain acts of sorcery, reported to have been committed in Labourt and its neighbourhood, at the foot of the Pyrenees, about the month of May, 1619. A few extracts from the preface will best evince the state of mind in which he proceeded to the discharge of his commission.

His story assumes the form of a narrative of a direct war between Satan on the one side and the Royal Commissioners on the other, "because," says Councillor de Lancre, with self-complaisance, "nothing is so calculated to strike terror into the fiend and his dominions as a commission with such plenary powers."

At first, Satan endeavoured to supply his vassals who were brought before the judges with strength to support the examinations, so that if, by intermission of the torture, the wretches should fall into a doze, they declared, when they were recalled from it to the question, that the profound stupor "had something of Paradise in it, being gilded," said the judge, "with the immediate presence of the devil;" though, in all probability, it rather derived its charms from the natural comparison between the insensibility of exhaustion and the previous agony of acute torture. The judges took care that the fiend seldom obtained any advantage in the matter by refusing their victims, in most cases, any interval of rest or sleep. Satan then proceeded, in the way of direct defiance, to stop the mouth of the accused openly, and by mere force, with something like a visible obstruction in their throat. Notwithstanding this, to put the devil to shame, some of the accused found means, in spite of him, to confess and be hanged, or rather burnt. The fiend lost much credit by his failure on this occasion. Before the formidable Commissioners arrived, he had held his *cour plénière* before the gates of Bourdeaux, and in the square of the palace of Galienne, whereas he was now insulted publicly by his own vassals, and in the midst of his festival of the Sabbath the children and relations of the witches who had suffered not sticking to say to him, "Out upon you! Your promise was that our mothers who were prisoners should not die; and look how you have kept your word with us! They have been burnt, and are a heap of ashes." To appease this

mutiny Satan had two evasions. He produced illusory fires, and encouraged the mutinous to walk through them, assuring them that the judicial pile was as frigid and inoffensive as those which he exhibited to them. Again, taking his refuge in lies, of which he is well known to be the father, he stoutly affirmed that their parents, who seemed to have suffered, were safe in a foreign country, and that if their children would call on them they would receive an answer. They made the invocation accordingly, and Satan answered each of them in a tone which resembled the voice of the lamented parent almost as successfully as Monsieur Alexandra could have done.

Proceeding to a yet more close attack, the Commissioners, on the eve of one of the Fiend's Sabbaths, placed the gibbet on which they executed their victims just on the spot where Satan's gilded chair was usually stationed. The devil was much offended at such an affront, and yet had so little power in the matter that he could only express his resentment by threats that he would hang Messieurs D'Amon and D'Urtubbe, gentlemen who had solicited and promoted the issuing of the Commission, and would also burn the Commissioners themselves in their own fire. We regret to say that Satan was unable to execute either of these laudable resolutions. Ashamed of his excuses, he abandoned for three or four sittings his attendance on the Sabbaths, sending as his representative an imp of subordinate account, and in whom no one reposed confidence. When he took courage again to face his parliament, the Archfiend covered his defection by assuring them that he had been engaged in a lawsuit with the Deity, which he had gained with costs, and that six score of infant children were to be delivered up to him in name of damages, and the witches were directed to procure such victims accordingly. After this grand fiction he confined himself to the petty vengeance of impeding the access of confessors to the condemned, which was the more easy as few of them could speak the Basque language. I have no time to detail the ingenious method by which the learned Councillor de Lancre explains why the district of Labourt should be particularly exposed to the pest of sorcery. The chief reason seems to be that it is a mountainous, a sterile, and a border country, where the men are all fishers and the women smoke tobacco and wear short petticoats.

To a person who, in this presumptuous, trifling, and conceited spirit, has composed a quarto volume full of the greatest absurdities and grossest obscenities ever impressed on paper, it was the pleasure of the most Christian Monarch to consign the most absolute power which could be

exercised on these poor people; and he might with as much prudence have turned a ravenous wolf upon an undefended flock, of whom the animal was the natural enemy, as they were his natural prey. The priest, as well as the ignorant peasant, fell under the suspicion of this fell Commission; and De Lancre writes, with much complacency, that the accused were brought to trial to the number of forty in one day — with what chance of escape, when the judges were blinded with prejudice, and could only hear the evidence and the defence through the medium of an interpreter, the understanding of the reader may easily anticipate.

Among other gross transgressions of the most ordinary rules, it may be remarked that the accused, in what their judges called confessions, contradicted each other at every turn respecting the description of the Domdaniel in which they pretended to have been assembled, and the fiend who presided there. All spoke to a sort of gilded throne; but some saw a hideous wild he-goat seated there; some a man disfigured and twisted, as suffering torture; some, with better taste, beheld a huge indistinct form, resembling one of those mutilated trunks of trees found in ancient forests. But De Lancre was no "Daniel come to judgment," and the discrepancy of evidence, which saved the life and fame of Susannah, made no impression in favour of the sorcerers of Labourt.

Instances occur in De Lancre's book of the trial and condemnation of persons accused of the crime of *lycanthropy*, a superstition which was chiefly current in France, but was known in other countries, and is the subject of great debate between Wier, Naudé, Scot, on the one hand, and their demonological adversaries on the other. The idea, said the one party, was that a human being had the power, by sorcery, of transforming himself into the shape of a wolf, and in that capacity, being seized with a species of fury, he rushed out and made havoc among the flocks, slaying and wasting, like the animal whom he represented, far more than he could devour. The more incredulous reasoners would not allow of a real transformation, whether with or without the enchanted hide of a wolf, which in some cases was supposed to aid the metamorphosis, and contended that lycanthropy only subsisted as a woful species of disease, a melancholy state of mind, broken with occasional fits of insanity, in which the patient imagined that he committed the ravages of which he was accused. Such a person, a mere youth, was tried at Besançon, who gave himself out for a servant, or yeoman pricker, of the Lord of the Forest — so he called his superior —

who was judged to be the devil. He was, by his master's power, transformed into the likeness and performed the usual functions of a wolf, and was attended in his course by one larger, which he supposed the Lord of the Forest himself. These wolves, he said, ravaged the flocks, and throttled the dogs which stood in their defence. If either had not seen the other, he howled, after the manner of the animal, to call his comrade to his share of the prey; if he did not come upon this signal, he proceeded to bury it the best way he could.

> Such was the general persecution under Messieurs Espiagnel and De
> Lancre. Many similar scenes occurred in France, till the edict of Louis
> XIV. discharging all future prosecutions for witchcraft, after which the
> crime itself was heard of no more.

[Footnote 52: The reader may sup full on such wild horrors in the *causes célèbres*.]

While the spirit of superstition was working such horrors in France, it was not, we may believe, more idle in other countries of Europe. In Spain, particularly, long the residence of the Moors, a people putting deep faith in all the daydreams of witchcraft, good and evil genii, spells and talismans, the ardent and devotional temper of the old Christians dictated a severe research after sorcerers as well as heretics, and relapsed Jews or Mahommedans. In former times, during the subsistence of the Moorish kingdoms in Spain, a school was supposed to be kept open in Toboso for the study, it is said, of magic, but more likely of chemistry, algebra, and other sciences, which, altogether mistaken by the ignorant and vulgar, and imperfectly understood even by those who studied them, were supposed to be allied to necromancy, or at least to natural magic. It was, of course, the business of the Inquisition to purify whatever such pursuits had left of suspicious Catholicism, and their labours cost as much blood on accusations of witchcraft and magic as for heresy and relapse.

Even the colder nations of Europe were subject to the same epidemic terror for witchcraft, and a specimen of it was exhibited in the sober and rational country of Sweden about the middle of last century, an account of which, being translated into English by a respectable clergyman, Doctor Horneck, excited general surprise how a whole people could be imposed

upon to the degree of shedding much blood, and committing great cruelty and injustice, on account of the idle falsehoods propagated by a crew of lying children, who in this case were both actors and witnesses.

The melancholy truth that "the human heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," is by nothing proved so strongly as by the imperfect sense displayed by children of the sanctity of moral truth. Both the gentlemen and the mass of the people, as they advance in years, learn to despise and avoid falsehood; the former out of pride, and from a remaining feeling, derived from the days of chivalry, that the character of a liar is a deadly stain on their honour; the other, from some general reflection upon the necessity of preserving a character for integrity in the course of life, and a sense of the truth of the common adage, that "honesty is the best policy." But these are acquired habits of thinking. The child has no natural love of truth, as is experienced by all who have the least acquaintance with early youth. If they are charged with a fault while they can hardly speak, the first words they stammer forth are a falsehood to excuse it. Nor is this all: the temptation of attracting attention, the pleasure of enjoying importance, the desire to escape from an unpleasing task, or accomplish a holiday, will at any time overcome the sentiment of truth, so weak is it within them. Hence thieves and housebreakers, from a surprisingly early period, find means of rendering children useful in their mystery; nor are such acolytes found to evade justice with less dexterity than the more advanced rogues. Where a number of them are concerned in the same mischief, there is something resembling virtue in the fidelity with which the common secret is preserved. Children, under the usual age of their being admitted to give evidence, were necessarily often examined in witch trials; and it is terrible to see how often the little impostors, from spite or in mere gaiety of spirit, have by their art and perseverance made shipwreck of men's lives. But it would be hard to discover a case which, supported exclusively by the evidence of children (the confessions under torture excepted), and obviously existing only in the young witnesses' own imagination, has been attended with such serious consequences, or given cause to so extensive and fatal a delusion, as that which occurred in Sweden.

The scene was the Swedish village of Mohra, in the province of Elfland, which district had probably its name from some remnant of ancient superstition. The delusion had come to a great height ere it reached the ears of government, when, as was the general procedure, Royal Commissioners

were sent down, men well fitted for the duty entrusted to them; that is, with ears open to receive the incredibilities with which they were to be crammed, and hearts hardened against every degree of compassion to the accused. The complaints of the common people, backed by some persons of better condition, were that a number of persons, renowned as witches, had drawn several hundred children of all classes under the devil's authority. They demanded, therefore, the punishment of these agents of hell, reminding the judges that the province had been clear of witches since the burning of some on a former occasion. The accused were numerous, so many as threescore and ten witches and sorcerers being seized in the village of Mohra; three-and-twenty confessed their crimes, and were sent to Faluna, where most of them were executed. Fifteen of the children were also led to death. Six-and-thirty of those who were young were forced to run the gauntlet, as it is called, and were, besides, lashed weekly at the church doors for a whole year. Twenty of the youngest were condemned to the same discipline for three days only.

The process seems to have consisted in confronting the children with the witches, and hearing the extraordinary story which the former insisted upon maintaining. The children, to the number of three hundred, were found more or less perfect in a tale as full of impossible absurdities as ever was told around a nursery fire. Their confession ran thus: —

They were taught by the witches to go to a cross way, and with certain ceremonies to invoke the devil by the name of Antecessor, begging him to carry them off to Blockula, meaning, perhaps, the Brockenberg, in the Hartz forest, a mountain infamous for being the common scene of witches' meetings, and to which Goethe represents the spirit Mephistopheles as conducting his pupil Faustus. The devil courteously appeared at the call of the children in various forms, but chiefly as a mad Merry-Andrew, with a grey coat, red and blue stockings, a red beard, a high-crowned hat, with linen of various colours wrapt round it, and garters of peculiar length. He set each child on some beast of his providing, and anointed them with a certain unguent composed of the scrapings of altars and the filings of church clocks. There is here a discrepancy of evidence which in another court would have cast the whole. Most of the children considered their journey to be corporeal and actual. Some supposed, however, that their strength or spirit only travelled with the fiend, and that their body remained behind. Very few adopted this last hypothesis, though the parents

unanimously bore witness that the bodies of the children remained in bed, and could not be awakened out of a deep sleep, though they shook them for the purpose of awakening them. So strong was, nevertheless, the belief of nurses and mothers in their actual transportation, that a sensible clergyman, mentioned in the preface, who had resolved he would watch his son the whole night and see what hag or fiend would take him from his arms, had the utmost difficulty, notwithstanding, in convincing his mother that the child had not been transported to Blockula during the very night he held him in his embrace.

The learned translator candidly allows, "out of so great a multitude as were accused, condemned, and executed, there might be some who suffered unjustly, and owed their death more to the malice of their enemies than to their skill in the black art, I will readily admit. Nor will I deny," he continues, "but that when the news of these transactions and accounts, how the children bewitched fel into fits and strange unusual postures, spread abroad in the kingdom, some fearful and credulous people, if they saw their children any way disordered, might think they were bewitched or ready to be carried away by imps." The learned gentleman here stops short in a train of reasoning, which, followed out, would have deprived the world of the benefit of his translation. For if it was possible that some of these unfortunate persons fell a sacrifice to the malice of their neighbours or the prejudices of witnesses, as he seems ready to grant, is it not more reasonable to believe that the whole of the accused were convicted on similar grounds, than to allow, as truth, the slightest part of the gross and vulgar impossibilities upon which alone their execution can be justified?

[Footnote 53: Translator's preface to Horneck's "Account of what happened in the Kingdom of Sweden." See appendix to Glanville's work.]

The Blockula, which was the object of their journey, was a house having a fine gate painted with divers colours, with a paddock, in which they turned the beasts to graze which had brought them to such scenes of revelry. If human beings had been employed they were left slumbering against the wall of the house. The plan of the devil's palace consisted of one large banqueting apartment and several withdrawing-rooms. Their food was homely enough, being broth made of coleworts and bacon, with bread and butter, and milk and cheese. The same acts of wickedness and profligacy were committed at Blockula which are usually supposed to take place upon

the devil's Sabbath elsewhere; but there was this particular, that the witches had sons and daughters by the fiends, who were married together, and produced an offspring of toads and serpents.

These confessions being delivered before the accused witches, they at first stoutly denied them. At last some of them burst into tears, and acquiesced in the horrors imputed to them. They said the practice of carrying off children had been enlarged very lately (which shows the whole rumours to have arisen recently); and the despairing wretches confirmed what the children said, with many other extravagant circumstances, as the mode of elongating a goat's back by means of a spit, on which we care not to be particular. It is worth mentioning that the devil, desirous of enjoying his own reputation among his subjects, pretended at one time to be dead, and was much lamented at Blockula — but he soon revived again.

Some attempts these witches had made to harm individuals on middle earth, but with little success. One old sorceress, indeed, attempted to strike a nail, given her by the devil for that purpose, into the head of the minister of Elfland; but as the skull was of unusual solidity, the reverend gentleman only felt a headache from her efforts. They could not be persuaded to exhibit any of their tricks before the Commissioners, excusing themselves by alleging that their witchcraft had left them, and that the devil had amused them with the vision of a burning pit, having a hand thrust out of it.

The total number who lost their lives on this singular occasion was fourscore and four persons, including fifteen children; and at this expense of blood was extinguished a flame that arose as suddenly, burned as fiercely, and decayed as rapidly, as any portent of the kind within the annals of superstition. The Commissioners returned to Court with the high approbation of all concerned; prayers were ordered through the churches weekly, that Heaven would be pleased to restrain the powers of the devil, and deliver the poor creatures who hitherto had groaned under it, as well as the innocent children, who were carried off by hundreds at once.

If we could ever learn the true explanation of this story, we should probably find that the cry was led by some clever mischievous boy, who wished to apologise to his parents for lying an hour longer in the morning by alleging he had been at Blockula on the preceding night; and that the desire to be as much distinguished as their comrade had stimulated the bolder and more acute of his companions to the like falsehoods; whilst those of weaker minds assented, either from fear of punishment or the force

of dreaming over at night the horrors which were dinned into their ears all day. Those who were ingenuous, as it was termed, in their confessions, received praise and encouragement; and those who denied or were silent, and, as it was considered, impenitent, were sure to bear the harder share of the punishment which was addressed to all. It is worth while also to observe, that the smarter children began to improve their evidence and add touches to the general picture of Blockula. “Some of the children talked much of a white angel, which used to forbid them what the devil bid them do, and told them that these doings should not last long. And (they added) this better being would place himself sometimes at the door betwixt the witches and the children, and when they came to Blockula he pulled the children back, but the witches went in.”

This additional evidence speaks for itself, and shows the whole tale to be the fiction of the children’s imagination, which some of them wished to improve upon. The reader may consult “An Account of what happened in the Kingdom of Sweden in the years 1669 and 1670, and afterwards translated out of High Dutch into English by Dr. Antony Horneck,” attached to Glanville’s “Sadducismus Triumphatus.” The translator refers to the evidence of Baron Sparr, Ambassador from the Court of Sweden to the Court of England in 1672; and that of Baron Lyonberg, Envoy Extraordinary of the same power, both of whom attest the confession and execution of the witches. The King of Sweden himself answered the express inquiries of the Duke of Holstein with marked reserve. “His judges and commissioners,” he said, “had caused divers men, women, and children, to be burnt and executed on such pregnant evidence as was brought before them. But whether the actions confessed and proved against them were real, or only the effects of strong imagination, he was not as yet able to determine” — a sufficient reason, perhaps, why punishment should have been at least deferred by the interposition of the royal authority.

We must now turn our eyes to Britain, in which our knowledge as to such events is necessarily more extensive, and where it is in a high degree more interesting to our present purpose.

Letter VIII

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Our account of Demonology in England must naturally, as in every other country, depend chiefly on the instances which history contains of the laws and prosecutions against witchcraft. Other superstitions arose and decayed, were dreaded or despised, without greater embarrassment, in the provinces in which they have a temporary currency, than that cowards and children go out more seldom at night, while the reports of ghosts and fairies are peculiarly current. But when the alarm of witchcraft arises, Superstition dips her hand in the blood of the persons accused, and records in the annals of jurisprudence their trials and the causes alleged in vindication of their execution. Respecting other fantastic allegations, the proof is necessarily transient and doubtful, depending upon the inaccurate testimony of vague report and of doting tradition. But in cases of witchcraft we have before us the recorded evidence upon which judge and jury acted, and can form an opinion with some degree of certainty of the grounds, real or fanciful, on which they acquitted or condemned. It is, therefore, in tracing, this part of Demonology, with its accompanying circumstances, that we have the best chance of obtaining an accurate view of our subject.

The existence of witchcraft was, no doubt, received and credited in England, as in the countries on the Continent, and originally punished accordingly. But after the fourteenth century the practices which fell under such a description were thought unworthy of any peculiar animadversion, unless they were connected with something which would have been of itself a capital crime, by whatever means it had been either essayed or accomplished. Thus the supposed paction between a witch and the demon was perhaps deemed in itself to have terrors enough to prevent its becoming an ordinary crime, and was not, therefore, visited with any statutory penalty. But to attempt or execute bodily harm to others through means of evil spirits, or, in a word, by the black art, was actionable at common law as much as if the party accused had done the same harm with an arrow or pistolshot. The destruction or abstraction of goods by the like instruments, supposing the charge proved, would, in like manner, be punishable. *A fortiori*, the consulting soothsayers, familiar spirits, or the like, and the obtaining and circulating pretended prophecies to the unsettlement of the State and the endangering of the King's title, is yet a higher degree of guilt.

And it may be remarked that the inquiry into the date of the King's life bears a close affinity with the desiring or compassing the death of the Sovereign, which is the essence of high treason. Upon such charges repeated trials took place in the courts of the English, and condemnations were pronounced, with sufficient justice, no doubt, where the connexion between the resort to sorcerers and the design to perpetrate a felony could be clearly proved. We would not, indeed, be disposed to go the length of so high an authority as Selden, who pronounces (in his "Table-Talk") that if a man heartily believed that he could take the life of another by waving his hat three times and crying Buzz! and should, under this fixed opinion, wave his hat and cry Buzz! accordingly, he ought to be executed as a murderer. But a false prophecy of the King's death is not to be dealt with exactly on the usual principle; because, however idle in itself, the promulgation of such a prediction has, in times such as we are speaking of, a strong tendency to work its completion.

Many persons, and some of great celebrity, suffered for the charge of trafficking with witches, to the prejudice of those in authority. We have already mentioned the instance of the Duchess of Gloucester, in Henry the Sixth's reign, and that of the Queen Dowager's kinsmen, in the Protectorate of Richard, afterwards the Third. In 1521, the Duke of Buckingham was beheaded, owing much to his having listened to the predictions of one Friar Hopkins. In the same reign, the Maid of Kent, who had been esteemed a prophetess, was put to death as a cheat. She suffered with seven persons who had managed her fits for the support of the Catholic religion, and confessed her fraud upon the scaffold. About seven years after this, Lord Hungerford was beheaded for consulting certain soothsayers concerning the length of Henry the Eighth's life. But these cases rather relate to the purpose for which the sorcery was employed, than to the fact of using it.

Two remarkable statutes were passed in the year 1541; one against false prophecies, the other against the act of conjuration, witchcraft, and sorcery, and at the same time against breaking and destroying crosses. The former enactment was certainly made to ease the suspicious and wayward fears of the tetchy King Henry. The prohibition against witchcraft might be also dictated by the king's jealous doubts of hazard to the succession. The enactment against breaking crosses was obviously designed to check the ravages of the Reformers, who in England as well as elsewhere desired to sweep away Popery with the besom of destruction. This latter statute was

abrogated in the first year of Edward VI., perhaps as placing an undue restraint on the zeal of good Protestants against idolatry.

At length, in 1562, a formal statute against sorcery, as penal in itself, was actually passed; but as the penalty was limited to the pillory for the first transgression, the legislature probably regarded those who might be brought to trial as impostors rather than wizards. There are instances of individuals tried and convicted as impostors and cheats, and who acknowledged themselves such before the court and people; but in their articles of visitation the prelates directed enquiry to be made after those who should use enchantments, witchcraft, sorcery, or any like craft, *invented by the devil*.

But it is here proper to make a pause for the purpose of enquiring in what manner the religious disputes which occupied all Europe about this time influenced the proceedings of the rival sects in relation to Demonology.

The Papal Church had long reigned by the proud and absolute humour which she had assumed, of maintaining every doctrine which her rulers had adopted in dark ages; but this pertinacity at length made her citadel too large to be defended at every point by a garrison whom prudence would have required to abandon positions which had been taken in times of darkness, and were unsuited to the warfare of a more enlightened age. The sacred motto of the Vatican was, "*Vestigia nulla retrorsum*;" and this rendered it impossible to comply with the more wise and moderate of her own party, who would otherwise have desired to make liberal concessions to the Protestants, and thus prevent, in its commencement, a formidable schism in the Christian world.

To the system of Rome the Calvinists offered the most determined opposition, affecting upon every occasion and on all points to observe an order of church-government, as well as of worship, expressly in the teeth of its enactments; — in a word, to be a good Protestant, they held it almost essential to be in all things diametrically opposite to the Catholic form and faith. As the foundation of this sect was laid in republican states, as its clerical discipline was settled on a democratic basis, and as the countries which adopted that form of government were chiefly poor, the preachers having lost the rank and opulence enjoyed by the Roman Church, were gradually thrown on the support of the people. Insensibly they became occupied with the ideas and tenets natural to the common people, which, if

they have usually the merit of being honestly conceived and boldly expressed, are not the less often adopted with credulity and precipitation, and carried into effect with unhesitating harshness and severity.

Betwixt these extremes the Churchmen of England endeavoured to steer a middle course, retaining a portion of the ritual and forms of Rome, as in themselves admirable, and at any rate too greatly venerated by the people to be changed merely for opposition's sake. Their comparatively undilapidated revenue, the connexion of their system with the state, with views of ambition as ample as the station of a churchman ought to command, rendered them independent of the necessity of courting their flocks by any means save regular discharge of their duty; and the excellent provisions made for their education afforded them learning to confute ignorance and enlighten prejudice.

Such being the general character of the three Churches, their belief in and persecution of such crimes as witchcraft and sorcery were necessarily modelled upon the peculiar tenets which each system professed, and gave rise to various results in the countries where they were severally received.

The Church of Rome, as we have seen, was unwilling, in her period of undisputed power, to call in the secular arm to punish men for witchcraft — a crime which fell especially under ecclesiastical cognizance, and could, according to her belief, be subdued by the spiritual arm alone. The learned men at the head of the establishment might safely despise the attempt at those hidden arts as impossible; or, even if they were of a more credulous disposition, they might be unwilling to make laws by which their own enquiries in the mathematics, algebra, chemistry, and other pursuits vulgarly supposed to approach the confines of magic art, might be inconveniently restricted. The more selfish part of the priesthood might think that a general belief in the existence of witches should be permitted to remain, as a source both of power and of revenue — that if there were no possessions, there could be no exorcism-fees — and, in short, that a wholesome faith in all the absurdities of the vulgar creed as to supernatural influences was necessary to maintain the influence of Diana of Ephesus. They suffered spells to be manufactured, since every friar had the power of reversing them; they permitted poison to be distilled, because every convent had the antidote, which was disposed of to all who chose to demand it. It was not till the universal progress of heresy, in the end of the fifteenth century, that the bull of Pope Innocent VIII., already quoted, called to

convict, imprison, and condemn the sorcerers, chiefly because it was the object to transfer the odium of these crimes to the Waldenses, and excite and direct the public hatred against the new sect by confounding their doctrines with the influences of the devil and his fiends. The bull of Pope Innocent was afterwards, in the year 1523, enforced by Adrian VI. with a new one, in which excommunication was directed against *sorcerers and heretics*.

While Rome thus positively declared herself against witches and sorcerers, the Calvinists, in whose numbers must be included the greater part of the English Puritans, who, though they had not finally severed from the communion of the Anglican Church, yet disapproved of her ritual and ceremonies as retaining too much of the Papal stamp, ranked themselves, in accordance with their usual policy, in diametrical opposition to the doctrine of the Mother Church. They assumed in the opposite sense whatever Rome pretended to as a proof of her omnipotent authority. The exorcisms, forms, and rites, by which good Catholics believed that incarnate fiends could be expelled and evil spirits of every kind rebuked — these, like the holy water, the robes of the priest, and the sign of the cross, the Calvinists considered either with scorn and contempt as the tools of deliberate quackery and imposture, or with horror and loathing, as the fit emblems and instruments of an idolatrous system.

Such of them as did not absolutely deny the supernatural powers of which the Romanists made boast, regarded the success of the exorcising priest, to whatever extent they admitted it, as at best a casting out of devils by the power of Beelzebub, the King of the Devils. They saw also, and resented bitterly, the attempt to confound any dissent from the doctrines of Rome with the proneness to an encouragement of rites of sorcery. On the whole, the Calvinists, generally speaking, were of all the contending sects the most suspicious of sorcery, the most undoubting believers in its existence, and the most eager to follow it up with what they conceived to be the due punishment of the most fearful of crimes.

The leading divines of the Church of England were, without doubt, fundamentally as much opposed to the doctrines of Rome as those who altogether disclaimed opinions and ceremonies merely because she had entertained them. But their position in society tended strongly to keep them from adopting, on such subjects as we are now discussing, either the eager credulity of the vulgar mind or the fanatic ferocity of their Calvinistic

rivals. We have no purpose to discuss the matter in detail — enough has probably been said to show generally why the Romanist should have cried out a miracle respecting an incident which the Anglican would have contemptuously termed an imposture; while the Calvinist, inspired with a darker zeal, and, above all, with the unceasing desire of open controversy with the Catholics, would have styled the same event an operation of the devil.

It followed that, while the divines of the Church of England possessed the upper hand in the kingdom, witchcraft, though trials and even condemnations for that offence occasionally occurred, did not create that epidemic terror which the very suspicion of the offence carried with it elsewhere; so that Reginald Scot and others alleged it was the vain pretences and empty forms of the Church of Rome, by the faith reposed in them, which had led to the belief of witchcraft or sorcery in general. Nor did prosecutions on account of such charges frequently involve a capital punishment, while learned judges were jealous of the imperfection of the evidence to support the charge, and entertained a strong and growing suspicion that legitimate grounds for such trials seldom actually existed. On the other hand, it usually happened that wherever the Calvinist interest became predominant in Britain, a general persecution of sorcerers and witches seemed to take place of consequence. Fearing and hating sorcery more than other Protestants, connecting its ceremonies and usages with those of the detested Catholic Church, the Calvinists were more eager than other sects in searching after the traces of this crime, and, of course, unusually successful, as they might suppose, in making discoveries of guilt, and pursuing it to the expiation of the fagot. In a word, a principle already referred to by Dr. Francis Hutchison will be found to rule the tide and the reflux of such cases in the different churches. The numbers of witches, and their supposed dealings with Satan, will increase or decrease according as such doings are accounted probable or impossible. Under the former supposition, charges and convictions will be found augmented in a terrific degree. When the accusations are disbelieved and dismissed as not worthy of attention, the crime becomes unfrequent, ceases to occupy the public mind, and affords little trouble to the judges.

The passing of Elizabeth’s statute against witchcraft in 1562 does not seem to have been intended to increase the number of trials, or cases of conviction at least; and the fact is, it did neither the one nor the other. Two

children were tried in 1574 for counterfeiting possession, and stood in the pillory for impostors. Mildred Norrington, called the Maid of Westwell, furnished another instance of possession; but she also confessed her imposture, and publicly showed her fits and tricks of mimicry. The strong influence already possessed by the Puritans may probably be sufficient to account for the darker issue of certain cases, in which both juries and judges in Elizabeth's time must be admitted to have shown fearful severity.

These cases of possession were in some respects sore snares to the priests of the Church of Rome, who, while they were too sagacious not to be aware that the pretended fits, contortions, strange sounds, and other extravagances, produced as evidence of the demon's influence on the possessed person, were nothing else than marks of imposture by some idle vagabond, were nevertheless often tempted to admit them as real, and take the credit of curing them. The period was one when the Catholic Church had much occasion to rally around her all the respect that remained to her in a schismatic and heretical kingdom; and when her fathers and doctors announced the existence of such a dreadful disease, and of the power of the church's prayers, relics, and ceremonies, to cure it, it was difficult for a priest, supposing him more tender of the interest of his order than that of truth, to avoid such a tempting opportunity as a supposed case of possession offered for displaying the high privilege in which his profession made him a partaker, or to abstain from conniving at the imposture, in order to obtain for his church the credit of expelling the demon. It was hardly to be wondered at, if the ecclesiastic was sometimes induced to aid the fraud of which such motives forbade him to be the detector. At this he might hesitate the less, as he was not obliged to adopt the suspected and degrading course of holding an immediate communication *in limine* with the impostor, since a hint or two, dropped in the supposed sufferer's presence, might give him the necessary information what was the most exact mode of performing his part, and if the patient was possessed by a devil of any acuteness or dexterity, he wanted no further instruction how to play it. Such combinations were sometimes detected, and brought more discredit on the Church of Rome than was counterbalanced by any which might be more cunningly managed. On this subject the reader may turn to Dr. Harsnett's celebrated book on Popish Impostures, wherein he gives the history of several notorious cases of detected fraud, in which Roman ecclesiastics had not hesitated to mingle themselves. That of Grace Sowerbutts, instructed by

a Catholic priest to impeach her grandmother of witchcraft, was a very gross fraud.

Such cases were not, however, limited to the ecclesiastics of Rome. We have already stated that, as extremes usually approach each other, the Dissenters, in their violent opposition to the Papists, adopted some of their ideas respecting demoniacs; and we have now to add that they also claimed, by the vehemence of prayer and the authority of their own sacred commission, that power of expelling devils which the Church of Rome pretended to exercise by rites, ceremonies, and relics. The memorable case of Richard Dugdale, called the Surrey Impostor, was one of the most remarkable which the Dissenters brought forward. This youth was supposed to have sold his soul to the devil, on condition of being made the best dancer in Lancashire, and during his possession played a number of fantastic tricks, not much different from those exhibited by expert posture-masters of the present day. This person threw himself into the hands of the Dissenters, who, in their eagerness, caught at an opportunity to relieve an afflicted person, whose case the regular clergy appeared to have neglected. They fixed a committee of their number, who weekly attended the supposed sufferer, and exercised themselves in appointed days of humiliation and fasting during the course of a whole year. All respect for the demon seems to have abandoned the reverend gentlemen, after they had relieved guard in this manner for some little time, and they got so regardless of Satan as to taunt him with the mode in which he executed his promise to teach his vassal dancing. The following specimen of raillery is worth commemoration: — ”What, Satan! is this the dancing that Richard gave himself to thee for? &c. Canst thou dance no better? &c. Ransack the old records of all past times and places in thy memory; canst thou not there find out some better way of trampling? Pump thine invention dry; cannot the universal seed-plot of subtile wiles and stratagems spring up one new method of cutting capers? Is this the top of skill and pride, to shuffle feet and brandish knees thus, and to trip like a doe and skip like a squirrel? And wherein differ thy leapings from the hoppings of a frog, or the bouncings of a goat, or friskings of a dog, or gesticulations of a monkey? And cannot a palsy shake such a loose leg as that? Dost thou not twirl like a calf that hath the turn, and twitch up thy houghs just like a springhault tit?” One might almost conceive the demon replying to this raillery in the words of Dr. Johnson, “This merriment of parsons is extremely offensive.”

[Footnote 54: Hutchison on Witchcraft, p. 162.]

The dissenters were probably too honest, however simple, to achieve a complete cure on Dugdale by an amicable understanding; so, after their year of vigil, they relinquished their task by degrees. Dugdale, weary of his illness, which now attracted little notice, attended a regular physician, and was cured of that part of his disease which was not affected in a regular way *par ordonnance du médecin*. But the reverend gentlemen who had taken his case in hand still assumed the credit of curing him, and if anything could have induced them to sing *Te Deum*, it would have been this occasion. They said that the effect of their public prayers had been for a time suspended, until seconded by the continued earnestness of their private devotions!

The ministers of the Church of England, though, from education, intercourse with the world, and other advantages, they were less prone to prejudice than those of other sects, are yet far from being entirely free of the charge of encouraging in particular instances the witch superstition. Even while Dr. Hutchison pleads that the Church of England has the least to answer for in that matter, he is under the necessity of acknowledging that some regular country clergymen so far shared the rooted prejudices of congregations, and of the government which established laws against it, as to be active in the persecution of the suspected, and even in countenancing the superstitious signs by which in that period the vulgar thought it possible to ascertain the existence of the afflictions by witchcraft, and obtain the knowledge of the perpetrator. A singular case is mentioned of three women, called the Witches of Warbois. Indeed, their story is a matter of solemn enough record; for Sir Samuel Cromwell, having received the sum of forty pounds as lord of the manor, out of the estate of the poor persons who suffered, turned it into a rent-charge of forty shillings yearly, for the endowment of an annual lecture on the subject of witchcraft, to be preached by a doctor or bachelor of divinity of Queen’s College, Cambridge. The accused, one Samuel and his wife, were old and very poor persons, and their daughter a young woman. The daughter of a Mr. Throgmorton, seeing the poor old woman in a black knitted cap, at a time when she was not very well, took a whim that she had bewitched her, and was ever after exclaiming against her. The other children of this fanciful family caught up the same cry, and the eldest of them at last got up a vastly pretty drama, in which she herself furnished all the scenes and played all the parts.

Such imaginary scenes, or *make-believe* stories, are the common amusement of lively children; and most readers may remember having had some Utopia of their own. But the nursery drama of Miss Throgmorton had a horrible conclusion. This young lady and her sisters were supposed to be haunted by nine spirits, dispatched by the wicked Mother Samuel for that purpose. The sapient parents heard one part of the dialogue, when the children in their fits returned answers, as was supposed, to the spirits who afflicted them; and when the patients from time to time recovered, they furnished the counterpart by telling what the spirits had said to them. The names of the spirits were Pluck, Hardname, Catch, Blue, and three Smacks, who were cousins. Mrs. Joan Throgmorton, the eldest (who, like other young women of her age, about fifteen, had some disease on her nerves, and whose fancy ran apparently on love and gallantry), supposed that one of the Smacks was her lover, did battle for her with the less friendly spirits, and promised to protect her against Mother Samuel herself; and the following curious extract will show on what a footing of familiarity the damsel stood with her spiritual gallant: "From whence come you, Mr. Smack?" says the afflicted young lady; "and what news do you bring?" Smack, nothing abashed, informed her he came from fighting with Pluck: the weapons, great cowl-staves; the scene, a ruinous bakehouse in Dame Samuel's yard. "And who got the mastery, I pray you?" said the damsel. Smack answered, he had broken Pluck's head. "I would," said the damsel, "he had broken your neck also." "Is that the thanks I am to have for my labour?" said the disappointed Smack. "Look you for thanks at my hand?" said the distressed maiden. "I would you were all hanged up against each other, with your dame for company, for you are all naught." On this repulse, exit Smack, and enter Pluck, Blue, and Catch, the first with his head broken, the other limping, and the third with his arm in a sling, all trophies of Smack's victory. They disappeared after having threatened vengeance upon the conquering Smack. However, he soon afterwards appeared with his laurels. He told her of his various conflicts. "I wonder," said Mrs. Joan, or Jane, "that you are able to beat them; you are little, and they very big." "He cared not for that," he replied; "he would beat the best two of them, and his cousins Smacks would beat the other two." This most pitiful mirth, for such it certainly is, was mixed with tragedy enough. Miss Throgmorton and her sisters railed against Darne Samuel; and when Mr. Throgmorton brought her to his house by force, the little fiends longed to draw blood of

her, scratch her, and torture her, as the witch-creed of that period recommended; yet the poor woman incurred deeper suspicion when she expressed a wish to leave a house where she was so coarsely treated and lay under such odious suspicions.

It was in vain that this unhappy creature endeavoured to avert their resentment by submitting to all the ill-usage they chose to put upon her; in vain that she underwent unresistingly the worst usage at the hand of Lady Cromwell, her landlady, who, abusing her with the worst epithets, tore her cap from her head, clipped out some of her hair, and gave it to Mrs. Throgmorton to burn it for a counter-charm. Nay, Mother Samuel's complaisance in the latter case only led to a new charge. It happened that the Lady Cromwell, on her return home, dreamed of her day's work, and especially of the old dame and her cat; and, as her ladyship died in a *year and quarter* from that very day, it was sagaciously concluded that she must have fallen a victim to the witcheries of the terrible Dame Samuel. Mr. Throgmorton also compelled the old woman and her daughter to use expressions which put their lives in the power of these malignant children, who had carried on the farce so long that they could not well escape from their own web of deceit but by the death of these helpless creatures. For example, the prisoner, Dame Samuel, was induced to say to the supposed spirit, "As I am a witch, and a causer of Lady Cromwell's death, I charge thee to come out of the maiden." The girl lay still; and this was accounted a proof that the poor woman, who, only subdued and crushed by terror and tyranny, did as she was bidden, was a witch. One is ashamed of an English judge and jury when it must be repeated that the evidence of these enthusiastic and giddy-pated girls was deemed sufficient to the condemnation of three innocent persons. Goody Samuel, indeed, was at length worried into a confession of her guilt by the various vexations which were practised on her. But her husband and daughter continued to maintain their innocence. The last showed a high spirit and proud value for her character. She was advised by some, who pitied her youth, to gain at least a respite by pleading pregnancy; to which she answered disdainfully, "No, I will not be both held witch and strumpet!" The mother, to show her sanity of mind and the real value of her confession, caught at the advice recommended to her daughter. As her years put such a plea out of the question, there was a laugh among the unfeeling audience, in which the poor old victim joined loudly and heartily. Some there were who thought it

no joking matter, and were inclined to think they had a Joanna Southcote before them, and that the devil must be the father. These unfortunate Samuels were condemned at Huntingdon, before Mr. Justice Fenner, 4th April, 1593. It was a singular case to be commemorated by an annual lecture, as provided by Sir Samuel Cromwell, for the purposes of justice were never so perverted, nor her sword turned to a more flagrant murder.

We may here mention, though mainly for the sake of contrast, the much-disputed case of Jane Wenham, the Witch of Walkerne, as she was termed, which was of a much later date. Some of the country clergy were carried away by the land-flood of superstition in this instance also and not only encouraged the charge, but gave their countenance to some of the ridiculous and indecent tricks resorted to as proofs of witchcraft by the lowest vulgar. But the good sense of the judge, seconded by that of other reflecting and sensible persons, saved the country from the ultimate disgrace attendant on too many of these unhallowed trials. The usual sort of evidence was brought against this poor woman, by pretences of bewitched persons vomiting fire — a trick very easy to those who chose to exhibit such a piece of jugglery amongst such as rather desire to be taken in by it than to detect the imposture. The witchfinder practised upon her the most vulgar and ridiculous tricks or charms; and out of a perverted examination they drew what they called a confession, though of a forced and mutilated character. Under such proof the jury brought her in guilty, and she was necessarily condemned to die. More fortunate, however, than many persons placed in the like circumstances, Jane Wenham was tried before a sensible and philosophic judge, who could not understand that the life of an Englishwoman, however mean, should be taken away by a set of barbarous tricks and experiments, the efficacy of which depended on popular credulity. He reprieved the witch before he left the assize-town. The rest of the history is equally a contrast to some we have told and others we shall have to recount. A humane and highspirited gentleman, Colonel Plummer of Gilston, putting at defiance popular calumny, placed the poor old woman in a small house near his own and under his immediate protection. Here she lived and died, in honest and fair reputation, edifying her visitors by her accuracy and attention in repeating her devotions; and, removed from her brutal and malignant neighbours, never afterwards gave the slightest cause of suspicion or offence till her dying day. As this was one of the last cases

of conviction in England, Dr Hutchison has been led to dilate upon it with some strength of eloquence as well as argument.

He thus expostulates with some of the better class who were eager for the prosecution: — ”(1) What single fact of sorcery did this Jane Wenham do? What charm did she use, or what act of witchcraft could you prove upon her? Laws are against evil actions that can be proved to be of the person’s doing. What single fact that was against the statute could you fix upon her? I ask (2) Did she so much as speak an imprudent word, or do an immoral action, that you could put into the narrative of her case? When she was denied a few turnips, she laid them down very submissively; when she was called witch and bitch, she only took the proper means for the vindication of her good name; when she saw this storm coming upon her she locked herself in her own house and tried to keep herself out of your cruel hands; when her door was broken open, and you gave way to that barbarous usage that she met with, she protested her innocence, fell upon her knees, and begged she might not go to gaol, and, in her innocent simplicity, would have let you swim her; and at her trial she declared herself a clear woman. This was her behaviour. And what could any of us have done better, excepting in that case where she complied with you too much, and offered to let you swim her?

“(3) When you used the meanest of paganish and popish superstitions — when you scratched and mangled and ran pins into her flesh, and used that ridiculous trial of the bottle, &c. — whom did you consult, and from whom did you expect your answers? Who was your father? and into whose hands did you put yourselves? and (if the true sense of the statute had been turned upon you) which way would you have defended yourselves? (4) Durst you have used her in this manner if she had been rich? and doth not her poverty increase rather than lessen your guilt in what you did?

“And therefore, instead of closing your book with a *liberavimus animas nostras*, and reflecting upon the court, I ask you (5) Whether you have not more reason to give God thanks that you met with a wise judge, and a sensible gentleman, who kept you from shedding innocent blood, and reviving the meanest and cruelest of all superstitions amongst us?”

[Footnote 55: Hutchison’s “Essay on Witchcraft,” p. 166.]

But although individuals of the English Church might on some occasions be justly accused of falling into lamentable errors on a subject where error was

so general, it was not an usual point of their professional character; and it must be admitted that the most severe of the laws against witchcraft originated with a Scottish King of England, and that the only extensive persecution following that statute occurred during the time of the Civil Wars, when the Calvinists obtained for a short period a predominating influence in the councils of Parliament.

James succeeded to Elizabeth amidst the highest expectations on the part of his new people, who, besides their general satisfaction at coming once more under the rule of a king, were also proud of his supposed abilities and real knowledge of books and languages, and were naturally, though imprudently, disposed to gratify him by deferring to his judgment in matters wherein his studies were supposed to have rendered him a special proficient. Unfortunately, besides the more harmless freak of becoming a prentice in the art of poetry, by which words and numbers were the only sufferers, the monarch had composed a deep work upon Demonology, embracing in their fullest extent the most absurd and gross of the popular errors on this subject. He considered his crown and life as habitually aimed at by the sworn slaves of Satan. Several had been executed for an attempt to poison him by magical arts; and the turbulent Francis Stewart, Earl of Bothwell, whose repeated attempts on his person had long been James's terror, had begun his course of rebellion by a consultation with the weird sisters and soothsayers. Thus the king, who had proved with his pen the supposed sorcerers to be the direct enemies of the Deity, and who conceived he knew them from experience to be his own — who, moreover, had upon much lighter occasions (as in the case of Vorstius) showed no hesitation at throwing his royal authority into the scale to aid his arguments — very naturally used his influence, when it was at the highest, to extend and enforce the laws against a crime which he both hated and feared.

The English statute against witchcraft, passed in the very first year of that reign, is therefore of a most special nature, describing witchcraft by all the various modes and ceremonies in which, according to King James's fancy, that crime could be perpetrated; each of which was declared felony, without benefit of clergy.

This gave much wider scope to prosecution on the statute than had existed under the milder acts of Elizabeth. Men might now be punished for the practice of witchcraft, as itself a crime, without necessary reference to the ulterior objects of the perpetrator. It is remarkable that in the same year,

when the legislature rather adopted the passions and fears of the king than expressed their own by this fatal enactment, the Convocation of the Church evinced a very different spirit; for, seeing the ridicule brought on their sacred profession by forward and presumptuous men, in the attempt to relieve demoniacs from a disease which was commonly occasioned by natural causes, if not the mere creature of imposture, they passed a canon, establishing that no minister or ministers should in future attempt to expel any devil or devils, without the license of his bishop; thereby virtually putting a stop to a fertile source of knavery among the people, and disgraceful folly among the inferior churchmen.

The new statute of James does not, however, appear to have led at first to many prosecutions. One of the most remarkable was (*proh pudor!*) instigated by a gentleman, a scholar of classical taste, and a beautiful poet, being no other than Edward Fairfax of Fayston, in Knaresborough Forest, the translator of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered." In allusion to his credulity on such subjects, Collins has introduced the following elegant lines: —

> "How have I sate while piped the pensive wind,
> To hear thy harp, by British Fairfax strung;
> Prevailing poet, whose undoubting mind
> Believed the magic wonders which he sung!"

Like Mr. Throgmorton in the Warbois case, Mr. Fairfax accused six of his neighbours of tormenting his children by fits of an extraordinary kind, by imps, and by appearing before the afflicted in their own shape during the crisis of these operations. The admitting this last circumstance to be a legitimate mode of proof, gave a most cruel advantage against the accused, for it could not, according to the ideas of the demonologists, be confuted even by the most distinct *alibi*. To a defence of that sort it was replied that the afflicted person did not see the actual witch, whose corporeal presence must indeed have been obvious to every one in the room as well as to the afflicted, but that the evidence of the sufferers related to the appearance of their *spectre*, or apparition; and this was accounted a sure sign of guilt in those whose forms were so manifested during the fits of the afflicted, and who were complained of and cried out upon by the victim. The obvious tendency of this doctrine, as to visionary or spectral evidence, as it was called, was to place the life and fame of the accused in the power of any hypochondriac patient or malignant impostor, who might either seem to see,

or aver she saw, the *spectrum* of the accused old man or old woman, as if enjoying and urging on the afflictions which she complained of; and, strange to tell, the fatal sentence was to rest, not upon the truth of the witnesses' eyes, but that of their imagination. It happened fortunately for Fairfax's memory, that the objects of his prosecution were persons of good character, and that the judge was a man of sense, and made so wise and skilful a charge to the jury, that they brought in a verdict of not guilty.

The celebrated case of "the Lancashire witches" (whose name was and will be long remembered, partly from Shadwell's play, but more from the ingenious and well-merited compliment to the beauty of the females of that province which it was held to contain), followed soon after. Whether the first notice of this sorcery sprung from the idle head of a mischievous boy, is uncertain; but there is no doubt that it was speedily caught up and fostered for the purpose of gain. The original story ran thus: —

These Lancaster trials were at two periods, the one in 1613, before Sir James Altham and Sir Edward Bromley, Barons of Exchequer, when nineteen witches were tried at once at Lancaster, and another of the name of Preston at York. The report against these people is drawn up by Thomas Potts. An obliging correspondent sent me a sight of a copy of this curious and rare book. The chief personage in the drama is Elizabeth Southam, a witch redoubted under the name of Dembdike, an account of whom may be seen in Mr. Roby's "Antiquities of Lancaster," as well as a description of Maulkins' Tower, the witches' place of meeting. It appears that this remote county was full of Popish recusants, travelling priests, and so forth; and some of their spells are given in which the holy names and things alluded to form a strange contrast with the purpose to which they were applied, as to secure a good brewing of ale or the like. The public imputed to the accused parties a long train of murders, conspiracies, charms, mischances, hellish and damnable practices, "apparent," says the editor, "on their own examinations and confessions," and, to speak the truth, visible nowhere else. Mother Dembdike had the good luck to die before conviction. Among other tales, we have one of two *female* devils, called Fancy and Tib. It is remarkable that some of the unfortunate women endeavoured to transfer the guilt from themselves to others with whom they had old quarrels, which confessions were held good evidence against those who made them, and against the alleged accomplice also. Several of the unhappy women were found not guilty, to the great displeasure of the ignorant people of the

county. Such was the first edition of the Lancashire witches. In that which follows the accusation can be more clearly traced to the most villanous conspiracy.

About 1634 a boy called Edmund Robinson, whose father, a very poor man, dwelt in Pendle Forest, the scene of the alleged witching, declared that while gathering *bullees* (wild plums, perhaps) in one of the glades of the forest, he saw two greyhounds, which he imagined to belong to gentlemen in that neighbourhood. The boy reported that, seeing nobody following them, he proposed to have a course; but though a hare was started, the dogs refused to run. On this, young Robinson was about to punish them with a switch, when one Dame Dickenson, a neighbour's wife, started up instead of the one greyhound; a little boy instead of the other. The witness averred that Mother Dickenson offered him money to conceal what he had seen, which he refused, saying "Nay, thou art a witch." Apparently she was determined he should have full evidence of the truth of what he said, for, like the Magician Queen in the Arabian Tales, she pulled out of her pocket a bridle and shook it over the head of the boy who had so lately represented the other greyhound. He was directly changed into a horse; Mother Dickenson mounted, and took Robinson before her. They then rode to a large house or barn called Hourstoun, into which Edmund Robinson entered with others. He there saw six or seven persons pulling at halters, from which, as they pulled them, meat ready dressed came flying in quantities, together with lumps of butter, porringers of milk, and whatever else might, in the boy's fancy, complete a rustic feast. He declared that while engaged in the charm they made such ugly faces and looked so fiendish that he was frightened. There was more to the same purpose — as the boy's having seen one of these hags sitting halfway up his father's chimney, and some such goodly matter. But it ended in near a score of persons being committed to prison; and the consequence was that young Robinson was carried from church to church in the neighbourhood, that he might recognise the faces of any persons he had seen at the rendezvous of witches. Old Robinson, who had been an evidence against the former witches in 1613, went along with his son, and knew, doubtless, how to make his journey profitable; and his son probably took care to recognise none who might make a handsome consideration. "This boy," says Webster, "was brought into the church at Kildwick, a parish church, where I, being then curate there, was preaching at the time, to look about him, which made some little disturbance for the

time." After prayers Mr. Webster sought and found the boy, and two very unlikely persons, who, says he, "did conduct him and manage the business: I did desire some discourse with the boy in private, but that they utterly denied. In the presence of a great many many people I took the boy near me and said, 'Good boy, tell me truly and in earnest, didst thou hear and see such strange things of the motions of the witches as many do report that thou didst relate, or did not some person teach thee to say such things of thyself?' But the two men did pluck the boy from me, and said he had been examined by two able justices of peace, and they never asked him such a question. To whom I replied, 'The persons accused had the more wrong.'" The boy afterwards acknowledged, in his more advanced years, that he was instructed and suborned to swear these things against the accused persons by his father and others, and was heard often to confess that on the day which he pretended to see the said witches at the house or barn, he was gathering plums in a neighbour's orchard.

[Footnote 56: Webster on Witchcraft, edition 1677, p. 278.]

There was now approaching a time when the law against witchcraft, sufficiently bloody in itself, was to be pushed to more violent extremities than the quiet scepticism of the Church of England clergy gave way to. The great Civil War had been preceded and anticipated by the fierce disputes of the ecclesiastical parties. The rash and ill-judged attempt to enforce upon the Scottish a compliance with the government and ceremonies of the High Church divines, and the severe prosecutions in the Star Chamber and Prerogative Courts, had given the Presbyterian system for a season a great degree of popularity in England; and as the King's party declined during the Civil War, and the state of church-government was altered, the influence of the Calvinistic divines increased. With much strict morality and pure practice of religion, it is to be regretted these were still marked by unhesitating belief in the existence of sorcery, and a keen desire to extend and enforce the legal penalties against it. Wier has considered the clergy of every sect as being too eager in this species of persecution: *Ad gravem hanc impietatem, connivent theologi plerique omnes*. But it is not to be denied that the Presbyterian ecclesiastics who, in Scotland, were often appointed by the Privy Council Commissioners for the trial of witchcraft, evinced a very extraordinary degree of credulity in such cases, and that the temporary superiority of the same sect in England was marked by enormous cruelties

of this kind. To this general error we must impute the misfortune that good men, such as Calamy and Baxter, should have countenanced or defended such proceedings as those of the impudent and cruel wretch called Matthew Hopkins, who, in those unsettled times, when men did what seemed good in their own eyes, assumed the title of Witchfinder General, and, travelling through the counties of Essex, Sussex, Norfolk, and Huntingdon, pretended to discover witches, superintending their examination by the most unheard-of tortures, and compelling forlorn and miserable wretches to admit and confess matters equally absurd and impossible; the issue of which was the forfeiture of their lives. Before examining these cases more minutely, I will quote Baxter's own words; for no one can have less desire to wrong a devout and conscientious man, such as that divine most unquestionably was, though borne aside on this occasion by prejudice and credulity.

"The hanging of a great number of witches in 1645 and 1646 is famously known. Mr. Calamy went along with the judges on the circuit to hear their confessions, and see there was no fraud or wrong done them. I spoke with many understanding, pious, learned, and credible persons that lived in the counties, and some that went to them in the prisons, and heard their sad confessions. Among the rest an old *reading parson*, named Lowis, not far from Framlingham, was one that was hanged, who confessed that he had two imps, and that one of them was always putting him upon doing mischief; and he, being near the sea, as he saw a ship under sail, it moved him to send it to sink the ship; and he consented, and saw the ship sink before them." Mr. Baxter passes on to another story of a mother who gave her child an imp like a mole, and told her to keep it in a can near the fire, and she would never want; and more such stuff as nursery-maids tell froward children to keep them quiet.

It is remarkable that in this passage Baxter names the Witchfinder General rather slightly as "one Hopkins," and without doing him the justice due to one who had discovered more than one hundred witches, and brought them to confessions, which that good man received as indubitable. Perhaps the learned divine was one of those who believed that the Witchfinder General had cheated the devil out of a certain memorandum-book, in which Satan, for the benefit of his memory certainly, had entered all the witches' names in England, and that Hopkins availed himself of this record.

[Footnote 57: This reproach is noticed in a very rare tract, which was bought at Mr. Lort's sale, by the celebrated collector Mr. Bindley, and is now in the author's possession. Its full title is, "The

Discovery of Witches, in Answer to several Queries lately delivered to the Judge of Assize for the County of Norfolk; and now published by Matthew Hopkins, Witchfinder, for the Benefit of the whole Kingdom. Printed for R. Royston, at the Angel, in Inn Lane. 1647."]

It may be noticed that times of misrule and violence seem to create individuals fitted to take advantage from them, and having a character suited to the seasons which raise them into notice and action; just as a blight on any tree or vegetable calls to life a peculiar insect to feed upon and enjoy the decay which it has produced. A monster like Hopkins could only have existed during the confusion of civil dissension. He was perhaps a native of Manningtree, in Essex; at any rate, he resided there in the year 1644, when an epidemic outcry of witchcraft arose in that town. Upon this occasion he had made himself busy, and, affecting more zeal and knowledge than other men, learned his trade of a witchfinder, as he pretends, from experiment. He was afterwards permitted to perform it as a legal profession, and moved from one place to another, with an assistant named Sterne, and a female. In his defence against an accusation of fleecing the country, he declares his regular charge was twenty shillings a town, including charges of living and journeying thither and back again with his assistants. He also affirms that he went nowhere unless called and invited. His principal mode of discovery was to strip the accused persons naked, and thrust pins into various parts of their body, to discover the witch's mark, which was supposed to be inflicted by the devil as a sign of his sovereignty, and at which she was also said to suckle her imps. He also practised and stoutly defended the trial by swimming, when the suspected person was wrapped in a sheet, having the great toes and thumbs tied together, and so dragged through a pond or river. If she sank, it was received in favour of the accused; but if the body floated (which must have occurred ten times for once, if it was placed with care on the surface of the water), the accused was condemned, on the principle of King James, who, in treating of this mode of trial, lays down that, as witches have renounced their baptism, so it is just that the element through which the holy rite is enforced should reject them, which is a figure of speech, and no argument. It was Hopkins's custom to keep the poor wretches waking, in order to prevent them from having encouragement from the devil, and, doubiless, to put infirm, terrified, overwatched persons in the next state to absolute madness; and for the same purpose they were dragged about by their keepers till extreme weariness and the pain of blistered feet might form additional inducements to confession. Hopkins

confesses these last practices of keeping the accused persons waking, and forcing them to walk for the same purpose, had been originally used by him. But as his tract is a professed answer to charges of cruelty and oppression, he affirms that both practices were then disused, and that they had not of late been resorted to.

The boast of the English nation is a manly independence and common-sense, which will not long permit the license of tyranny or oppression on the meanest and most obscure sufferers. Many clergymen and gentlemen made head against the practices of this cruel oppressor of the defenceless, and it required courage to do so when such an unscrupulous villain had so much interest.

Mr. Gaul, a clergyman, of Houghton, in Huntingdonshire, had the courage to appear in print on the weaker side; and Hopkins, in consequence, assumed the assurance to write to some functionaries of the place the following letter, which is an admirable medley of impudence, bullying, and cowardice: —

"My service to your worship presented. — I have this day received a letter to come to a town called Great Houghton to search for evil-disposed persons called witches (though I hear your minister is far against us, through ignorance). I intend to come, God willing, the sooner to hear his singular judgment in the behalf of such parties. I have known a minister in Suffolk as much against this discovery in a pulpit, and forced to recant it by the Committee in the same place. I much marvel such evil men should have any (much more any of the clergy, who should daily speak terror to convince such offenders) stand up to take their parts against such as are complainants for the king, and sufferers themselves, with their families and estates. I intend to give your town a visit suddenly. I will come to Kimbolton this week, and it will be ten to one but I will come to your town first; but I would certainly know before whether your town affords many sticklers for such cattle, or is willing to give and allow us good welcome and entertainment, as others where I have been, else I shall waive your shire (not as yet beginning in any part of it myself), and betake me to such places where I do and may punish (not only) without control, but with thanks and recompense. So I humbly take my leave, and rest your servant to be commanded,

"MATTHEW HOPKINS."

The sensible and courageous Mr. Gaul describes the tortures employed by this fellow as equal to any practised in the Inquisition. “Having taken the suspected witch, she is placed in the middle of a room, upon a stool or table, cross-legged, or in some other uneasy posture, to which, if she submits not, she is then bound with cords; there she is watched and kept without meat or sleep for four-and-twenty hours, for, they say, they shall within that time see her imp come and suck. A little hole is likewise made in the door for the imps to come in at; and lest they should come in some less discernible shape, they that watch are taught to be ever and anon sweeping the room, and if they see any spiders or flies, to kill them; and if they cannot kill them, they may be sure they are their imps.”

If torture of this kind was applied to the Reverend Mr. Lewis, whose death is too slightly announced by Mr. Baxter, we can conceive him, or any man, to have indeed become so weary of his life as to acknowledge that, by means of his imps, he sunk a vessel, without any purpose of gratification to be procured to himself by such iniquity. But in another cause a judge would have demanded some proof of the *corpus delecti*, some evidence of a vessel being lost at the period, whence coming and whither bound; in short, something to establish that the whole story was not the idle imagination of a man who might have been entirely deranged, and certainly was so at the time he made the admission. John Lewis was presented to the vicarage of Brandiston, near Framlington, in Suffolk, 6th May, 1596, where he lived about fifty years, till executed as a wizard on such evidence as we have seen. Notwithstanding the story of his alleged confession, he defended himself courageously at his trial, and was probably condemned rather as a royalist and malignant than for any other cause. He showed at the execution considerable energy, and to secure that the funeral service of the church should be said over his body, he read it aloud for himself while on the road to the gibbet.

We have seen that in 1647 Hopkins’s tone became lowered, and he began to disavow some of the cruelties he had formerly practised. About the same time a miserable old woman had fallen into the cruel hands of this miscreant near Hoxne, a village in Suffolk, and had confessed all the usual enormities, after being without food or rest a sufficient time. “Her imp,” she said, “was called Nan.” A gentleman in the neighbourhood, whose widow survived to authenticate the story, was so indignant that he went to the house, took the woman out of such inhuman hands, dismissed the

witchfinders, and after due food and rest the poor old woman could recollect nothing of the confession, but that she gave a favourite pullet the name of Nan. For this Dr. Hutchison may be referred to, who quotes a letter from the relict of the humane gentleman.

In the year 1645 a Commission of Parliament was sent down, comprehending two clergymen in esteem with the leading party, one of whom, Mr. Fairclough of Kellar, preached before the rest on the subject of witchcraft; and after this appearance of enquiry the inquisitions and executions went on as before. But the popular indignation was so strongly excited against Hopkins, that some gentlemen seized on him, and put him to his own favourite experiment of swimming, on which, as he happened to float, he stood convicted of witchcraft, and so the country was rid of him. Whether he was drowned outright or not does not exactly appear, but he has had the honour to be commemorated by the author of Hudibras: —

> "Hath not this present Parliament
> A leiger to the devil sent,
> Fully empower'd to treat about
> Finding revolted witches out?
> And has he not within a year
> Hang'd threescore of them in one shire?
> Some only for not being drown'd,
> And some for sitting above ground
> Whole days and nights upon their breeches,
> And feeling pain, were hang'd for witches.
> And some for putting knavish tricks
> Upon green geese or turkey chicks;
> Or pigs that suddenly deceased
> Of griefs unnatural, as he guess'd,
> Who proved himself at length a witch,
> And made a rod for his own breech."

[Footnote 59: "Hudibras," part ii. canto 3.]

The understanding reader will easily conceive that this alteration of the current in favour of those who disapproved of witch-prosecutions, must have received encouragement from some quarter of weight and influence; yet it may sound strangely enough that this spirit of lenity should have been the result of the peculiar principles of those sectarians of all denominations,

classed in general as Independents, who, though they had originally courted the Presbyterians as the more numerous and prevailing party, had at length shaken themselves loose of that connexion, and finally combated with and overcome them. The Independents were distinguished by the wildest license in their religious tenets, mixed with much that was nonsensical and mystical. They disowned even the title of a regular clergy, and allowed the preaching of any one who could draw together a congregation that would support him, or who was willing, without recompense, to minister to the spiritual necessities of his hearers. Although such laxity of discipline afforded scope to the wildest enthusiasm, and room for all possible varieties of doctrine, it had, on the other hand, this inestimable recommendation, that it contributed to a degree of general toleration which was at that time unknown to any other Christian establishment. The very genius of a religion which admitted of the subdivision of sects *ad infinitum*, excluded a legal prosecution of any one of these for heresy or apostasy. If there had even existed a sect of Manichæans, who made it their practice to adore the Evil Principle, it may be doubted whether the other sectaries would have accounted them absolute outcasts from the pale of the church; and, fortunately, the same sentiment induced them to regard with horror the prosecutions against witchcraft. Thus the Independents, when, under Cromwell, they attained a supremacy over the Presbyterians, who to a certain point had been their allies, were disposed to counteract the violence of such proceedings under pretence of witchcraft, as had been driven forward by the wretched Hopkins, in Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk, for three or four years previous to 1647.

The return of Charles II. to his crown and kingdom, served in some measure to restrain the general and wholesale manner in which the laws against witchcraft had been administered during the warmth of the Civil War. The statute of the 1st of King James, nevertheless, yet subsisted; nor is it in the least likely, considering the character of the prince, that he, to save the lives of a few old men or women, would have run the risk of incurring the odium of encouraging or sparing a crime still held in horror by a great part of his subjects. The statute, however, was generally administered by wise and skilful judges, and the accused had such a chance of escape as the rigour of the absurd law permitted.

Nonsense, it is too obvious, remained in some cases predominant. In the year 1663 an old dame, named Julian Coxe, was convicted chiefly on the

evidence of a huntsman, who declared on his oath, that he laid his greyhounds on a hare, and coming up to the spot where he saw them mouth her, there he found, on the other side of a bush, Julian Coxe lying panting and breathless, in such a manner as to convince him that she had been the creature which afforded him the course. The unhappy woman was executed on this evidence.

Two years afterwards (1664), it is with regret we must quote the venerable and devout Sir Matthew Hales, as presiding at a trial, in consequence of which Amy Dunny and Rose Callender were hanged at Saint Edmondsbury. But no man, unless very peculiarly circumstanced, can extricate himself from the prejudices of his nation and age. The evidence against the accused was laid, 1st, on the effect of spells used by ignorant persons to counteract the supposed witchcraft; the use of which was, under the statute of James I., as criminal as the act of sorcery which such counter-charms were meant to neutralize, 2ndly, The two old women, refused even the privilege of purchasing some herrings, having expressed themselves with angry impatience, a child of the herring-merchant fell ill in conseqence. 3rdly, A cart was driven against the miserable cottage of Amy Dunny. She scolded, of course; and shortly after the cart — (what a good driver will scarce comprehend) — stuck fast in a gate, where its wheels touched neither of the posts, and yet was moved easily forward on one of the posts (by which it was *not* impeded) being cut down. 4thly, One of the afflicted girls being closely muffled, went suddenly into a fit upon being touched by one of the supposed witches. But upon another trial it was found that the person so blindfolded fell into the same rage at the touch of an unsuspected person. What perhaps sealed the fate of the accused was the evidence of the celebrated Sir Thomas Browne, “that the fits were natural, but heightened by the power of the devil cooperating with the malice of witches;” — a strange opinion, certainly, from the author of a treatise on “Vulgar Errors!”

[Footnote 60: See the account of Sir T. Browne in No. XIV. of the “Family Library” (“Lives of British Physicians”), p. 60.]

But the torch of science was now fairly lighted, and gleamed in more than one kingdom of the world, shooting its rays on every side, and catching at all means which were calculated to increase the illumination. The Royal Society, which had taken its rise at Oxford from a private association who

met in Dr. Wilkin's chambers about the year 1652, was, the year after the Restoration, incorporated by royal charter, and began to publish their Transactions, and give a new and more rational character to the pursuits of philosophy.

In France, where the mere will of the government could accomplish greater changes, the consequence of an enlarged spirit of scientific discovery was, that a decisive stop was put to the witch-prosecutions which had heretofore been as common in that kingdom as in England. About the year 1672 there was a general arrest of very many shepherds and others in Normandy, and the Parliament of Rouen prepared to proceed in the investigation with the usual severity. But an order, or *arret*, from the king (Louis XIV.), with advice of his council, commanding all these unfortunate persons to be set at liberty and protected, had the most salutary effects all over the kingdom. The French Academy of Sciences was also founded; and, in imitation, a society of learned Germans established a similar institution at Leipsic. Prejudices, however old, were overawed and controlled — much was accounted for on natural principles that had hitherto been imputed to spiritual agency — everything seemed to promise that farther access to the secrets of nature might be opened to those who should prosecute their studies experimentally and by analysis — and the mass of ancient opinions which overwhelmed the dark subject of which we treat began to be derided and rejected by men of sense and education.

In many cases the prey was now snatched from the spoiler. A pragmatical justice of peace in Somersetshire commenced a course of enquiry after offenders against the statute of James I., and had he been allowed to proceed, Mr. Hunt might have gained a name as renowned for witchfinding as that of Mr. Hopkins; but his researches were stopped from higher authority — the lives of the poor people arrested (twelve in number) were saved, and the country remained at quiet, though the supposed witches were suffered to live. The examinations attest some curious particulars, which may be found in *Sadducismus Triumphatus*: for among the usual string of froward, fanciful, or, as they were called, afflicted children, brought forward to club their startings, starings, and screamings, there appeared also certain remarkable confessions of the accused, from which we learn that the Somerset Satan enlisted his witches, like a wily recruiting sergeant, with one shilling in hand and twelve in promises; that when the party of weird-sisters passed to the witch-meeting they used the magic

words, *Thout, tout, throughout, and about*; and that when they departed they exclaimed, *Rentum, Tormentum*! We are further informed that his Infernal Highness, on his departure, leaves a smell, and that (in nursery-maid's phrase) not a pretty one, behind him. Concerning this fact we have a curious exposition by Mr. Glanville. "This," — according to that respectable authority, "seems to imply the reality of the business, those ascititious particles which he held together in his sensible shape being loosened at the vanishing, and so offending the nostrils by their floating and diffusing themselves in the open air." How much are we bound to regret that Mr. Justice Hunt's discovery "of this hellish kind of witches," in itself so clear and plain, and containing such valuable information, should have been smothered by meeting with opposition and discouragement from some then in authority!

[Footnote 61: Glanville's "Collection of Relations."]

Lord Keeper Guildford was also a stifler of the proceedings against witches. Indeed, we may generally remark, during the latter part of the seventeenth century, that where the judges were men of education and courage, sharing in the information of the times, they were careful to check the precipitate ignorance and prejudice of the juries, by giving them a more precise idea of the indifferent value of confessions by the accused themselves, and of testimony derived from the pretended visions of those supposed to be bewitched. Where, on the contrary, judges shared with the vulgar in their ideas of such fascination, or were contented to leave the evidence with the jury, fearful to withstand the general cry too common on such occasions, a verdict of guilty often followed.

We are informed by Roger North that a case of this kind happened at the assizes in Exeter, where his brother, the Lord Chief Justice, did not interfere with the crown trials, and the other judge left for execution a poor old woman, condemned, as usual, on her own confession, and on the testimony of a neighbour, who deponed that he saw a cat jump into the accused person's cottage window at twilight, one evening, and that he verily believed the said cat to be the devil; on which precious testimony the poor wretch was accordingly hanged. On another occasion, about the same time, the passions of the great and little vulgar were so much excited by the aquittal of an aged village dame, whom the judge had taken some pains to rescue, that Sir John Long, a man of rank and fortune, came to the judge in

the greatest perplexity, requesting that the hag might not be permitted to return to her miserable cottage on his estates, since all his tenants had in that case threatened to leave him. In compassion to a gentleman who apprehended ruin from a cause so whimsical, the dangerous old woman was appointed to be kept by the town where she was acquitted, at the rate of half-a-crown a week, paid by the parish to which she belonged. But behold! in the period betwixt the two assizes Sir John Long and his farmers had mustered courage enough to petition that this witch should be sent back to them in all her terrors, because they could support her among them at a shilling a week cheaper than they were obliged to pay to the town for her maintenance. In a subsequent trial before Lord Chief Justice North himself, that judge detected one of those practices which, it is to be feared, were too common at the time, when witnesses found their advantage in feigning themselves bewitched. A woman, supposed to be the victim of the male sorcerer at the bar, vomited pins in quantities, and those straight, differing from the crooked pins usually produced at such times, and less easily concealed in the mouth. The judge, however, discovered, by cross-examining a candid witness, that in counterfeiting her fits of convulsion the woman sunk her head on her breast, so as to take up with her lips the pins which she had placed ready in her stomacher. The man was acquitted, of course. A frightful old hag, who was present, distinguished herself so much by her benedictions on the judge, that he asked the cause of the peculiar interest which she took in the acquittal. "Twenty years ago," said the poor woman, "they would have hanged me for a witch, but could not; and now, but for your lordship, they would have murdered my innocent son."

[Footnote 62: Roger North's "Life of Lord-Keeper Guilford."]

Such scenes happened frequently on the assizes, while country gentlemen, like the excellent Sir Roger de Coverley, retained a private share in the terror with which their tenants, servants, and retainers regarded some old Moll White, who put the hounds at fault and ravaged the fields with hail and hurricanes. Sir John Reresby, after an account of a poor woman tried for a witch at York in 1686 and acquitted, as he thought, very properly, proceeds to tell us that, notwithstanding, the sentinel upon the jail where she was confined avowed "that he saw a scroll of paper creep from under the prison-door, and then change itself first into a monkey and then into a turkey, which the underkeeper confirmed. This," says Sir John, "I have

heard from the mouth of both, and now leave it to be believed or disbelieved as the reader may be inclined." We may see that Reresby, a statesman and a soldier, had not as yet "plucked the old woman out of his heart." Even Addison himself ventured no farther in his incredulity respecting this crime than to contend that although witchcraft might and did exist, there was no such thing as a modern instance competently proved.

[Footnote 63: "Memoirs of Sir John Reresby," p. 237.]

As late as 1682 three unhappy women named Susan Edwards, Mary Trembles, and Temperance Lloyd were hanged at Exeter for witchcraft, and, as usual, on their own confession. This is believed to be the last execution of the kind in England under form of judicial sentence. But the ancient superstition, so interesting to vulgar credulity, like sediment clearing itself from water, sunk down in a deeper shade upon the ignorant and lowest classes of society in proportion as the higher regions were purified from its influence. The populace, including the ignorant of every class, were more enraged against witches when their passions were once excited in proportion to the lenity exercised towards the objects of their indignation by those who administered the laws. Several cases occurred in which the mob, impressed with a conviction of the guilt of some destitute old creatures, took the law into their own hands, and proceeding upon such evidence as Hopkins would have had recourse to, at once, in their own apprehension, ascertained their criminality and administered the deserved punishment.

The following instance of such illegal and inhuman proceedings occurred at Oakly, near Bedford, on 12th July, 1707. There was one woman, upwards of sixty years of age, who, being under an imputation of witchcraft, was desirous to escape from so foul a suspicion, and to conciliate the goodwill of her neighbours, by allowing them to duck her. The parish officers so far consented to their humane experiment as to promise the poor woman a guinea if she should clear herself by sinking. The unfortunate object was tied up in a wet sheet, her thumbs and great toes were bound together, her cap torn off, and all her apparel searched for pins; for there is an idea that a single pin spoils the operation of the charm. She was then dragged through the river Ouse by a rope tied round her middle. Unhappily for the poor woman, her body floated, though her head remained under water. The experiment was made three times with the same effect. The cry to hang or drown the witch then became general, and as she lay

half-dead on the bank they loaded the wretch with reproaches, and hardly forbore blows. A single humane bystander took her part, and exposed himself to rough usage for doing so. Luckily one of the mob themselves at length suggested the additional experiment of weighing the witch against the church Bible. The friend of humanity caught at this means of escape, supporting the proposal by the staggering argument that the Scripture, being the work of God himself, must outweigh necessarily all the operations or vassals of the devil. The reasoning was received as conclusive, the more readily as it promised a new species of amusement. The woman was then weighed against a church Bible of twelve pounds jockey weight, and as she was considerably preponderant, was dismissed with honour. But many of the mob counted her acquittal irregular, and would have had the poor dame drowned or hanged on the result of her ducking, as the more authentic species of trial.

At length a similar piece of inhumanity, which had a very different conclusion, led to the final abolition of the statute of James I. as affording countenance for such brutal proceedings. An aged pauper, named Osborne, and his wife, who resided near Tring, in Staffordshire, fell under the suspicion of the mob on account of supposed witchcraft. The overseers of the poor, understanding that the rabble entertained a purpose of swimming these infirm creatures, which indeed they had expressed in a sort of proclamation, endeavoured to oppose their purpose by securing the unhappy couple in the vestry-room, which they barricaded. They were unable, however, to protect them in the manner they intended. The mob forced the door, seized the accused, and, with ineffable brutality, continued dragging the wretches through a pool of water till the woman lost her life. A brute in human form, who had superintended the murder, went among the spectators, and requested money for the sport he had shown them! The life of the other victim was with great difficulty saved. Three men were tried for their share in this inhuman action. Only one of them, named Colley, was condemned and hanged. When he came to execution, the rabble, instead of crowding round the gallows as usual, stood at a distance, and abused those who were putting to death, they said, an honest fellow for ridding the parish of an accursed witch. This abominable murder was committed July 30, 1751.

The repetitition of such horrors, the proneness of the people to so cruel and heart-searing a superstition, was traced by the legislature to its source,

namely, the yet unabolished statute of James I. Accordingly, by the 9th George II. cap. 5, that odious law, so long the object of horror to all ancient and poverty-stricken females in the kingdom, was abrogated, and all criminal procedure on the subject of sorcery or witchcraft discharged in future throughout Great Britain; reserving for such as should pretend to the skill of fortune-tellers, discoverers of stolen goods, or the like, the punishment of the correction-house, as due to rogues and vagabonds. Since that period witchcraft has been little heard of in England, and although the belief in its existence has in remote places survived the law that recognised the evidence of the crime, and assigned its punishment — yet such faith is gradually becoming forgotten since the rabble have been deprived of all pretext to awaken it by their own riotous proceedings. Some rare instances have occurred of attempts similar to that for which Colley suffered; and I observe one is preserved in that curious register of knowledge, Mr. Hone's "Popular Amusements," from which it appears that as late as the end of last century this brutality was practised, though happily without loss of life.

The Irish statute against witchcraft still exists, as it would seem. Nothing occurred in that kingdom which recommended its being formally annulled; but it is considered as obsolete, and should so wild a thing be attempted in the present day, no procedure, it is certain, would now be permitted to lie upon it.

If anything were wanted to confirm the general proposition that the epidemic terror of witchcraft increases and becomes general in proportion to the increase of prosecutions against witches, it would be sufficient to quote certain extraordinary occurrences in New England. Only a brief account can be here given of the dreadful hallucination under which the colonists of that province were for a time deluded and oppressed by a strange contagious terror, and how suddenly and singularly it was cured, even by its own excess; but it is too strong evidence of the imaginary character of this hideous disorder to be altogether suppressed.

New England, as is well known, was peopled mainly by emigrants who had been disgusted with the government of Charles I. in church and state, previous to the great Civil War. Many of the more wealthy settlers were Presbyterians and Calvinists; others, fewer in number and less influential from their fortune, were Quakers, Anabaptists, or members of the other sects who were included under the general name of Independents. The Calvinists brought with them the same zeal for religion and strict morality

which everywhere distinguished them. Unfortunately, they were not wise according to their zeal, but entertained a proneness to believe in supernatural and direct personal intercourse between the devil and his vassals, an error to which, as we have endeavoured to show, their brethren in Europe had from the beginning been peculiarly subject. In a country imperfectly cultivated, and where the partially improved spots were embosomed in inaccessible forests, inhabited by numerous tribes of savages, it was natural that a disposition to superstition should rather gain than lose ground, and that to other dangers and horrors with which they were surrounded, the colonists should have added fears of the devil, not merely as the Evil Principle tempting human nature to sin, and thus endangering our salvation, but as combined with sorcerers and witches to inflict death and torture upon children and others.

The first case which I observe was that of four children of a person called John Goodwin, a mason. The eldest, a girl, had quarrelled with the laundress of the family about some linen which was amissing. The mother of the laundress, an ignorant, testy, and choleric old Irishwoman, scolded the accuser; and shortly after, the elder Goodwin, her sister and two brothers, were seized with such strange diseases that all their neighbours concluded they were bewitched. They conducted themselves as those supposed to suffer under maladies created by such influence were accustomed to do. They stiffened their necks so hard at one time that the joints could not be moved; at another time their necks were so flexible and supple that it seemed the bone was dissolved. They had violent convulsions, in which their jaws snapped with the force of a spring-trap set for vermin. Their limbs were curiously contorted, and to those who had a taste for the marvellous, seemed entirely dislocated and displaced. Amid these distortions, they cried out against the poor old woman, whose name was Glover, alleging that she was in presence with them adding to their torments. The miserable Irishwoman, who hardly could speak the English language, repeated her Pater Noster and Ave Maria like a good Catholic; but there were some words which she had forgotten. She was therefore supposed to be unable to pronounce the whole consistently and correctly, and condemned and executed accordingly.

But the children of Goodwin found the trade they were engaged in to be too profitable to be laid aside, and the eldest in particular continued all the external signs of witchcraft and possession. Some of these were excellently

calculated to flatter the self-opinion and prejudices of the Calvinist ministers by whom she was attended, and accordingly bear in their very front the character of studied and voluntary imposture. The young woman, acting, as was supposed, under the influence of the devil, read a Quaker treatise with ease and apparent satisfaction; but a book written against the poor inoffensive Friends the devil would not allow his victim to touch, She could look on a Church of England Prayerbook, and read the portions of Scripture which it contains without difficulty or impediment; but the spirit which possessed her threw her into fits if she attempted to read the same Scriptures from the Bible, as if the awe which it is supposed the fiends entertain for Holy Writ depended, not on the meaning of the words, but the arrangement of the page, and the type in which they were printed. This singular species of flattery was designed to captivate the clergyman through his professional opinions; others were more strictly personal. The afflicted damsel seems to have been somewhat of the humour of the Inamorata of Messrs. Smack, Pluck, Catch, and Company, and had, like her, merry as well as melancholy fits. She often imagined that her attendant spirits brought her a handsome pony to ride off with them to their rendezvous. On such occasions she made a spring upwards, as if to mount her horse, and then, still seated on her chair, mimicked with dexterity and agility the motions of the animal pacing, trotting, and galloping, like a child on the nurse's knee; but when she cantered in this manner upstairs, she affected inability to enter the clergyman's study, and when she was pulled into it by force, used to become quite well, and stand up as a rational being. "Reasons were given for this," says the simple minister, "that seem more kind than true." Shortly after this, she appears to have treated the poor divine with a species of sweetness and attention, which gave him greater embarrassment than her former violence. She used to break in upon him at his studies to importune him to come downstairs, and thus advantaged doubtless the kingdom of Satan by the interruption of his pursuits. At length the Goodwins were, or appeared to be, cured. But the example had been given and caught, and the blood of poor Dame Glover, which had been the introduction to this tale of a hobbyhorse, was to be the forerunner of new atrocities and fearfully more general follies.

This scene opened by the illness of two girls, a daughter and niece of Mr. Parvis, the minister of Salem, who fell under an affliction similar to that of the Goodwins. Their mouths were stopped, their throats choked, their

limbs racked, thorns were stuck into their flesh, and pins were ejected from their stomachs. An Indian and his wife, servants of the family, endeavouring, by some spell of their own, to discover by whom the fatal charm had been imposed on their master's children, drew themselves under suspicion, and were hanged. The judges and juries persevered, encouraged by the discovery of these poor Indians' guilt, and hoping they might thus expel from the colony the authors of such practices. They acted, says Mather, the historian, under a conscientious wish to do justly; but the cases of witchcraft and possession increased as if they were transmitted by contagion, and the same sort of spectral evidence being received which had occasioned the condemnation of the Indian woman Titu, became generally fatal. The afflicted persons failed not to see the spectres, as they were termed, of the persons by whom they were tormented. Against this species of evidence no *alibi* could be offered, because it was admitted, as we have said elsewhere, that the real persons of the accused were not there present; and everything rested upon the assumption that the afflicted persons were telling the truth, since their evidence could not be redargued. These spectres were generally represented as offering their victims a book, on signing which they would be freed from their torments. Sometimes the devil appeared in person, and added his own eloquence to move the afflicted persons to consent.

At first, as seems natural enough, the poor and miserable alone were involved; but presently, when such evidence was admitted as incontrovertible, the afflicted began to see the spectral appearances of persons of higher condition and of irreproachable lives, some of whom were arrested, some made their escape, while several were executed. The more that suffered the greater became the number of afflicted persons, and the wider and the more numerous were the denunciations against supposed witches. The accused were of all ages. A child of five years old was indicted by some of the afflicted, who imagined they saw this juvenile wizard active in tormenting them, and appealed to the mark of little teeth on their bodies, where they stated it had bitten them. A poor dog was also hanged as having been alleged to be busy in this infernal persecution. These gross insults on common reason occasioned a revulsion in public feeling, but not till many lives had been sacrificed. By this means nineteen men and women were executed, besides a stouthearted man named Cory, who refused to plead, and was accordingly pressed to death according to the old law. On this

horrible occasion a circumstance took place disgusting to humanity, which must yet be told, to show how superstition can steel the heart of a man against the misery of his fellow-creature. The dying man, in the mortal agony, thrust out his tongue, which the sheriff crammed with his cane back again into his mouth. Eight persons were condemned besides those who had actually suffered, and no less than two hundred were in prison and under examination.

Men began then to ask whether the devil might not artfully deceive the afflicted into the accusation of good and innocent persons by presenting witches and fiends in the resemblance of blameless persons, as engaged in the tormenting of their diseased countryfolk. This argument was by no means inconsistent with the belief in witchcraft, and was the more readily listened to on that account. Besides, men found that no rank or condition could save them from the danger of this horrible accusation if they continued to encourage the witnesses in such an unlimited course as had hitherto been granted to them. Influenced by these reflections, the settlers awoke as from a dream, and the voice of the public, which had so lately demanded vengeance on all who were suspected of sorcery, began now, on the other hand, to lament the effusion of blood, under the strong suspicion that part of it at least had been innocently and unjustly sacrificed. In Mather's own language, which we use as that of a man deeply convinced of the reality of the crime, "experience showed that the more were apprehended the more were still afflicted by Satan, and the number of confessions increasing did but increase the number of the accused, and the execution of some made way to the apprehension of others. For still the afflicted complained of being tormented by new objects as the former were removed, so that some of those that were concerned grew amazed at the number and condition of those that were accused, and feared that Satan, by his wiles, had enwrapped innocent persons under the imputation of that crime; and at last, as was evidently seen, there must be a stop put, or the generation of the kingdom of God would fall under condemnation."

[Footnote 64: Mather's "Magnalia," book vi. chap. lxxxii. The zealous author, however, regrets the general gaol delivery on the score of sorcery and thinks, had the times been calm, the case might have required a farther investigation, and that, on the whole, the matter was ended too abruptly But, the temper of the times considered, he admits candidly that it is better to act moderately in matters capital, and to let the guilty escape, than run the risk of destroying the innocent.]

The prosecutions were therefore suddenly stopped, the prisoners dismissed, the condemned pardoned, and even those who had confessed, the number of whom was very extraordinary, were pardoned amongst others; and the author we have just quoted thus records the result: — ”When this prosecution ceased, the Lord so chained up Satan that the afflicted grew presently well. The accused were generally quiet, and for five years there was no such molestation among us.”

To this it must be added that the congregation of Salem compelled Mr. Parvis, in whose family the disturbance had begun, and who, they alleged, was the person by whom it was most fiercely driven on in the commencement, to leave his settlement amongst them. Such of the accused as had confessed the acts of witchcraft imputed to them generally denied and retracted their confessions, asserting them to have been made under fear of torture, influence of persuasion, or other circumstances exclusive of their free will. Several of the judges and jurors concerned in the sentence of those who were executed published their penitence for their rashness in convicting these unfortunate persons; and one of the judges, a man of the most importance in the colony, observed, during the rest of his life, the anniversary of the first execution as a day of solemn fast and humiliation for his own share in the transaction. Even the barbarous Indians were struck with wonder at the infatuation of the English colonists on this occasion, and drew disadvantageous comparisons between them and the French, among whom, as they remarked, “the Great Spirit sends no witches.”

The system of witchcraft, as believed in Scotland, must next claim our attention, as it is different in some respects from that of England, and subsisted to a later period, and was prosecuted with much more severity.

Letter IX

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For many years the Scottish nation had been remarkable for a credulous belief in witchcraft, and repeated examples were supplied by the annals of sanguinary executions on this sad accusation. Our acquaintance with the slender foundation on which Boetius and Buchanan reared the early part of their histories may greatly incline us to doubt whether a king named Duffus ever reigned in Scotland, and, still more, whether he died by the agency of a gang of witches, who inflicted torments upon an image made in his name, for the sake of compassing his death. In the tale of Macbeth, which is

another early instance of Demonology in Scottish history, the weird-sisters, who were the original prophetesses, appeared to the usurper in a dream, and are described as *volæ*, or sibyls, rather than as witches, though Shakspeare has stamped the latter character indelibly upon them.

One of the earliest real cases of importance founded upon witchcraft was, like those of the Duchess of Gloucester and others in the sister country, mingled with an accusation of a political nature, which, rather than the sorcery, brought the culprits to their fate. The Earl of Mar, brother of James III. of Scotland, fell under the king's suspicion for consulting with witches and sorcerers how to shorten the king's days. On such a charge, very inexplicitly stated, the unhappy Mar was bled to death in his own lodgings without either trial or conviction; immediately after which catastrophe twelve women of obscure rank and three or four wizards, or warlocks, as they were termed, were burnt at Edinburgh, to give a colour to the Earl's guilt.

In the year 1537 a noble matron fell a victim to a similar charge. This was Janet Douglas, Lady Glammis, who, with her son, her second husband, and several others, stood accused of attempting James's life by poison, with a view to the restoration of the Douglas family, of which Lady Glammis's brother, the Earl of Angus, was the head. She died much pitied by the people, who seem to have thought the articles against her forged for the purpose of taking her life, her kindred and very name being so obnoxious to the King.

Previous to this lady's execution there would appear to have been but few prosecuted to death on the score of witchcraft, although the want of the justiciary records of that period leaves us in uncertainty. But in the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, when such charges grew general over Europe, cases of the kind occurred very often in Scotland, and, as we have already noticed, were sometimes of a peculiar character. There is, indeed, a certain monotony in most tales of the kind. The vassals are usually induced to sell themselves at a small price to the Author of Ill, who, having commonly to do with women, drives a very hard bargain. On the contrary, when he was pleased to enact the female on a similar occasion, he brought his gallant, one William Barton, a fortune of no less than fifteen pounds, which, even supposing it to have been the Scottish denomination of coin, was a very liberal endowment compared with his niggardly conduct towards the fair sex on such an occasion. Neither did he

pass false coin on this occasion, but, on the contrary, generously gave Burton a merk, to keep the fifteen pounds whole. In observing on Satan's conduct in this matter, Master George Sinclair observes that it is fortunate the Enemy is but seldom permitted to bribe so high (as £15 Scots); for were this the case, he might find few men or women capable of resisting his munificence. I look upon this as one of the most severe reflections on our forefathers' poverty which is extant.

In many of the Scottish witches' trials, as to the description of Satan's Domdaniel, and the Sabbath which he there celebrates, the northern superstition agrees with that of England. But some of the confessions depart from the monotony of repetition, and add some more fanciful circumstances than occur in the general case. Isobel Gowdie's confession, already mentioned, is extremely minute, and some part of it at least may be quoted, as there are other passages not very edifying. The witches of Auldearne, according to this penitent, were so numerous, that they were told off into squads, or *covines*, as they were termed, to each of which were appointed two officers. One of these was called the Maiden of the Covine, and was usually, like Tam o' Shanter's Nannie, a girl of personal attractions, whom Satan placed beside himself, and treated with particular attention, which greatly provoked the spite of the old hags, who felt themselves insulted by the preference. When assembled, they dug up graves, and possessed themselves of the carcases (of unchristened infants in particular), whose joints and members they used in their magic unguents and salves. When they desired to secure for their own use the crop of some neighbour, they made a pretence of ploughing it with a yoke of paddocks. These foul creatures drew the plough, which was held by the devil himself. The plough-harness and soams were of quicken grass, the sock and coulter were made out of a riglen's horn, and the covine attended on the operation, praying the devil to transfer to them the fruit of the ground so traversed, and leave the proprietors nothing but thistles and briars. The witches' sports, with their elfin archery, I have already noticed (page 136). They entered the house of the Earl of Murray himself, and such other mansions as were not fenced against them by vigil and prayer, and feasted on the provisions they found there.

[Footnote 65: This word Covine seems to signify a subdivision or squad. The tree near the front of an ancient castle was called the *Covine tree*, probably because the lord received his company there.

"He is lord of the hunting horn,
And king of the Covine tree;
He's well loo'd in the western waters,
But best of his ain minnie."]

As these witches were the countrywomen of the weird sisters in Macbeth, the reader may be desirous to hear some of their spells, and of the poetry by which they were accompanied and enforced. They used to hash the flesh of an unchristened child, mixed with that of dogs and sheep, and place it in the house of those whom they devoted to destruction in body or goods, saying or singing —

"We put this intill this hame,
In our lord the Devil's name;
The first hands that handle thee,
Burn'd and scalded may they be!
We will destroy houses and hald,
With the sheep and nolt into the fauld;
And little sall come to the fore,
Of all the rest of the little store!"

Metamorphoses were, according to Isobel, very common among them, and the forms of crows, cats, hares, and other animals, were on such occasions assumed. In the hare shape Isobel herself had a bad adventure. She had been sent by the devil to Auldearne in that favourite disguise, with some message to her neighbours, but had the misfortune to meet Peter Papley of Killhill's servants going to labour, having his hounds with them. The hounds sprung on the disguised witch, "and I," says Isobel, "run a very long time, but being hard pressed, was forced to take to my own house, the door being open, and there took refuge behind a chest." But the hounds came in and took the other side of the chest, so that Isobel only escaped by getting into another house, and gaining time to say the disenchanting rhyme: —

"Hare, hare, God send thee care!
I am in a hare's likeness now;
But I shall be a woman even now —
Hare, hare, God send thee care!"

Such accidents, she said, were not uncommon, and the witches were sometimes bitten by the dogs, of which the marks remained after their restoration to human shape. But none had been killed on such occasions.

The ceremonial of the Sabbath meetings was very strict. The Foul Fiend was very rigid in exacting the most ceremonious attention from his votaries, and the title of Lord when addressed by them. Sometimes, however, the weird sisters, when whispering amongst themselves, irreverently spoke of their sovereign by the name of Black John; upon such occasions the Fiend rushed on them like a schoolmaster who surprises his pupils in delict, and beat and buffeted them without mercy or discretion, saying, "I ken weel eneugh what you are saying of me." Then might be seen the various tempers of those whom he commanded. Alexander Elder, in Earlseat, often fell under his lord's displeasure for neglect of duty, and, being weak and simple, could never defend himself save with tears, cries, and entreaties for mercy; but some of the women, according to Isobel Gowdie's confession, had more of the spirit which animated the old dame of Kellyburn Braes. Margaret Wilson, in Auldearne, would "defend herself finely," and make her hands save her head, after the old Scottish manner. Bessie Wilson could also speak very crustily with her tongue, and "belled the cat" with the devil stoutly. The others chiefly took refuge in crying "Pity! mercy!" and such like, while Satan kept beating them with wool cards and other sharp scourges, without attending to their entreaties or complaints. There were attendant devils and imps, who served the witches. They were usually distinguished by their liveries, which were sad-dun, grass-green, sea-green, and yellow. The witches were taught to call these imps by names, some of which might belong to humanity, while others had a diabolical sound. These were Robert the Jakis, Saunders the Red Reaver, Thomas the Feary, Swein, an old Scandinavian Duerg probably; the Roaring Lion, Thief of Hell, Wait-upon-Herself, MacKeeler, Robert the Rule, Hendrie Craig, and Rorie. These names, odd and uncouth enough, are better imagined at least than those which Hopkins contrived for the imps which he discovered — such as Pyewacket, Peck-in-the-Crown, Sack-and-Sugar, News, Vinegar-Tom, and Grizell Greedigut, the broad vulgarity of which epithets shows what a flat imagination he brought to support his impudent fictions.

The devil, who commanded the fair sisterhood, being fond of mimicking the forms of the Christian church, used to rebaptize the witches with their blood, and in his own great name. The proud-stomached

Margaret Wilson, who scorned to take a blow unrepaid, even from Satan himself, was called Pickle-nearest-the-Wind; her compeer, Bessie Wilson, was Throw-the-Cornyard; Elspet Nishe's was Bessie Bald; Bessie Hay's nickname was Able-and-Stout; and Jane Mairten, the Maiden of the Covine, was called Ower-the-Dike-with-it.

Isobel took upon herself, and imputed to her sisters, as already mentioned, the death of sundry persons shot with elf-arrows, because they had omitted to bless themselves as the aerial flight of the hags swept past them. She had herself the temerity to shoot at the Laird of Park as he was riding through a ford, but missed him through the influence of the running stream, perhaps, for which she thanks God in her confession; and adds, that at the time she received a great cuff from Bessie Hay for her awkwardness. They devoted the male children of this gentleman (of the wellknown family of Gordon of Park, I presume) to wasting illness, by the following lines, placing at the same time in the fire figures composed of clay mixed with paste, to represent the object: —

> "We put this water amongst this meal,
> For long dwining and ill heal;
> We put it in into the fire,
> To burn them up stook and stour.
> That they be burned with our will,
> Like any stikkle in a kiln."

[Footnote 66: See p. 136.]

[Footnote 67: Pining.]

[Footnote 68: We should read perhaps, "limb and lire."]

[Footnote 69: Stubble.]

Such was the singular confession of Isobel Gowdie, made voluntarily, it would seem, and without compulsion of any kind, judicially authenticated by the subscription of the notary, clergymen, and gentlemen present; adhered to after their separate *diets*, as they are called, of examination, and containing no variety or contradiction in its details. Whatever might be her state of mind in other respects, she seems to have been perfectly conscious of the perilous consequence of her disclosures to her own person. "I do not deserve," says she, "to be seated here at ease and unharmed, but rather to be

stretched on an iron rack: nor can my crimes be atoned for, were I to be drawn asunder by wild horses."

It only remains to suppose that this wretched creature was under the dominion of some peculiar species of lunacy, to which a full perusal of her confession might perhaps guide a medical person of judgment and experience. Her case is interesting, as throwing upon the rites and ceremonies of the Scottish witches a light which we seek in vain elsewhere.

Other unfortunate persons were betrayed to their own reproof by other means than the derangement of mind which seems to have operated on Isobel Gowdie. Some, as we have seen, endeavoured to escape from the charge of witchcraft by admitting an intercourse with the fairy people; an excuse which was never admitted as relevant. Others were subjected to cruel tortures, by which our ancestors thought the guilty might be brought to confession, but which far more frequently compelled the innocent to bear evidence against themselves. On this subject the celebrated Sir George Mackenzie, "that noble wit of Scotland," as he is termed by Dryden, has some most judicious reflections, which we shall endeavour to abstract as the result of the experience of one who, in his capacity of Lord Advocate, had often occasion to conduct witch-trials, and who, not doubting the existence of the crime, was of opinion that, on account of its very horror, it required the clearest and most strict probation.

He first insists on the great improbability of the fiend, without riches to bestow, and avowedly subjected to a higher power, being able to enlist such numbers of recruits, and the little advantage which he himself would gain by doing so. But, 2dly, says Mackenzie, "the persons ordinarily accused of this crime are poor ignorant men, or else women, who understand not the nature of what they are accused of; and many mistake their own fears and apprehensions for witchcraft, of which I shall give two instances. One, of a poor weaver who, after he had confessed witchcraft, being asked how he saw the devil, made answer, 'Like flies dancing about the candle.' Another, of a woman, who asked seriously, when she was accused, if a woman might be a witch and not know it? And it is dangerous that persons, of all others the most simple, should be tried for a crime of all others the most mysterious. 3rdly, These poor creatures, when they are defamed, become so confounded with fear and the close prison in which they are kept, and so starved for want of meat and drink, either of which wants is enough to disarm the strongest reason, that hardly wiser and more serious people than

they would escape distraction; and when men are confounded with fear and apprehension, they will imagine things the most ridiculous and absurd" of which instances are given. 4thly, "Most of these poor creatures are tortured by their keepers, who, being persuaded they do God good service, think it their duty to vex and torment poor prisoners delivered up to them as rebels to heaven and enemies to men; and I know" (continues Sir George), "*ex certissima scientia*, that most of all that ever were taken were tormented in this manner, and this usage was the ground of all their confession; and albeit the poor miscreants cannot prove this usage, the actors being the only witnesses, yet the judge should be jealous of it, as that which did at first elicit the confession, and for fear of which they dare not retract it." 5thly, This learned author gives us an instance how these unfortunate creatures might be reduced to confession by the very infamy which the accusation cast upon them, and which was sure to follow, condemning them for life to a state of necessity, misery, and suspicion, such as any person of reputation would willingly exchange for a short death, however painful.

"I went when I was a justice-deput to examine some women who had confessed judicially, and one of them, who was a silly creature, told me under secresie, that she had not confest because she was guilty, but being a poor creature who wrought for her meat, and being defamed for a witch, she knew she would starve, for no person thereafter would either give her meat or lodging, and that all men would beat her and hound dogs at her, and that therefore she desired to be out of the world; whereupon she wept most bitterly, and upon her knees called God to witness to what she said. Another told me that she was afraid the devil would challenge a right to her, after she was said to be his servant, and would haunt her, as the minister said, when he was desiring her to confess, and therefore she desired to die. And really ministers are oft times indiscreet in their zeal to have poor creatures to confess in this; and I recommend to judges that the wisest ministers should be sent to them, and those who are sent should be cautious in this particular."

[Footnote 70: Mackenzie's "Criminal Law," p. 45.]

As a corollary to this affecting story, I may quote the case of a woman in Lauder jail, who lay there with other females on a charge of witchcraft. Her companions in prison were adjudged to die, and she too had, by a confession as full as theirs, given herself up as guilty. She therefore sent for

the minister of the town, and entreated to be put to death with the others who had been appointed to suffer upon the next Monday. The clergyman, however, as well as others, had adopted a strong persuasion that this confession was made up in the pride of her heart, for the destruction of her own life, and had no foundation in truth. We give the result in the minister's words: —

"Therefore much pains was taken on her by ministers and others on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday morning, that she might resile from that confession which was suspected to be but a temptation of the devil, to destroy both her soul and body; yea, it was charged home upon her by the ministers, that there was just ground of jealousy that her confession was not sincere, and she was charged before the Lord to declare the truth, and not to take her blood upon her own head. Yet she stiffly adhered to what she had said, and cried always to be put away with the rest. Whereupon, on Monday morning, being called before the judges, and confessing before them what she had said, she was found guilty and condemned to die with the rest that same day. Being carried forth to the place of execution, she remained silent during the first, second, and third prayer, and then perceiving that there remained no more but to rise and go to the stake, she lifted up her body, and with a loud voice cried out, 'Now all you that see me this day, know that I am now to die as a witch by my own confession, and I free all men, especially the ministers and magistrates, of the guilt of my blood. I take it wholly upon myself — my blood be upon my own head; and as I must make answer to the God of Heaven presently, I declare I am as free of witchcraft as any child; but being delated by a malicious woman, and put in prison under the name of a witch, disowned by my husband and friends, and seeing no ground of hope of my coming out of prison, or ever coming in credit again, through the temptation of the devil I made up that confession on purpose to destroy my own life, being weary of it, and choosing rather to die than live;' — and so died. Which lamentable story, as it did then astonish all the spectators, none of which could restrain themselves from tears; so it may be to all a demonstration of Satan's subtlety, whose design is still to destroy all, partly by tempting many to presumption, and some others to despair. These things to be of truth, are attested by an eye and ear witness who is yet alive, a faithful minister of the gospel." It is strange the inference does not seem to have been deduced, that as one woman out of very despair renounced her own life, the same might have been the case in

many other instances, wherein the confessions of the accused constituted the principal if not sole evidence of the guilt.

[Footnote 71: Sinclair's "Satan's Invisible World Discovered," p. 43.]

One celebrated mode of detecting witches and torturing them at the same time, to draw forth confession, was by running pins into their body, on pretence of discovering the devil's stigma, or mark, which was said to be inflicted by him upon all his vassals, and to be insensible to pain. This species of search, the practice of the infamous Hopkins, was in Scotland reduced to a trade; and the young witchfinder was allowed to torture the accused party, as if in exercise of a lawful calling, although Sir George Mackenzie stigmatises it as a horrid imposture. I observe in the Collections of Mr. Pitcairn, that at the trial of Janet Peaston of Dalkeith the magistrates and ministers of that market town caused John Kincaid of Tranent, the common pricker, to exercise his craft upon her, "who found two marks of what he called the devil's making, and which appeared indeed to be so, for she could not feel the pin when it was put into either of the said marks, nor did they (the marks) bleed when they were taken out again; and when she was asked where she thought the pins were put in, she pointed to a part of her body distant from the real place. They were pins of three inches in length."

Besides the fact that the persons of old people especially sometimes contain spots void of sensibility, there is also room to believe that the professed prickers used a pin the point or lower part of which was, on being pressed down, sheathed in the upper, which was hollow for the purpose, and that which appeared to enter the body did not pierce it at all. But, were it worth while to dwell on a subject so ridiculous, we might recollect that in so terrible an agony of shame as is likely to convulse a human being under such a trial, and such personal insults, the blood is apt to return to the heart, and a slight wound, as with a pin, may be inflicted without being followed by blood. In the latter end of the seventeenth century this childish, indecent, and brutal practice began to be called by its right name. Fountainhall has recorded that in 1678 the Privy Council received the complaint of a poor woman who had been abused by a country magistrate and one of those impostors called prickers. They expressed high displeasure against the presumption of the parties complained against, and treated the pricker as a common cheat.

[Footnote 72: Fountainhall's "Decisions," vol. i. p. 15.]

From this and other instances it appears that the predominance of the superstition of witchcraft, and the proneness to persecute those accused of such practices in Scotland, were increased by the too great readiness of subordinate judges to interfere in matters which were, in fact, beyond their jurisdiction. The Supreme Court of Justiciary was that in which the cause properly and exclusively ought to have been tried. But, in practice, each inferior judge in the country, the pettiest bailie in the most trifling burgh, the smallest and most ignorant baron of a rude territory, took it on him to arrest, imprison, and examine, in which examinations, as we have already seen, the accused suffered the grossest injustice. The copies of these examinations, made up of extorted confessions, or the evidence of inhabile witnesses, were all that were transmitted to the Privy Council, who were to direct the future mode of procedure. Thus no creature was secure against the malice or folly of some defamatory accusation, if there was a timid or superstitious judge, though of the meanest denomination, to be found within the district.

But, secondly, it was the course of the Privy Council to appoint commissions of the gentlemen of the country, and particularly of the clergymen, though not likely, from their education, to be freed from general prejudice, and peculiarly liable to be affected by the clamour of the neighbourhood againt the delinquent. Now, as it is well known that such a commission could not be granted in a case of murder in the county where the crime was charged, there seems no good reason why the trial of witches, so liable to excite the passions, should not have been uniformly tried by a court whose rank and condition secured them from the suspicion of partiality. But our ancestors arranged it otherwise, and it was the consequence that such commissioners very seldom, by acquitting the persons brought before them, lost an opportunity of destroying a witch.

Neither must it be forgotten that the proof led in support of the prosecution was of a kind very unusual in jurisprudence. The lawyers admitted as evidence what they called *damnum minatum, et malum secutum* — some mischief, that is to say, following close upon a threat, or wish of revenge, uttered by the supposed witch, which, though it might be attributed to the most natural course of events, was supposed necessarily to be in consequence of the menaces of the accused.

Sometimes this vague species of evidence was still more loosely adduced, and allegations of danger threatened and mischief ensuing were admitted, though the menaces had not come from the accused party herself. On 10th June, 1661, as John Stewart, one of a party of stout burghers of Dalkeith appointed to guard an old woman called Christian Wilson from that town to Niddrie, was cleaning his gun, he was slyly questioned by Janet Cocke, another confessing witch, who probably saw his courage was not entirely constant, "What would you think if the devil raise a whirlwind, and take her from you on the road tomorrow?" Sure enough, on their journey to Niddrie the party actually were assailed by a sudden gust of wind (not a very uncommon event in that climate), which scarce permitted the valiant guard to keep their feet, while the miserable prisoner was blown into a pool of water, and with difficulty raised again. There is some ground to hope that this extraordinary evidence was not admitted upon the trial.

There is a story told of an old wizard, whose real name was Alexander Hunter, though he was more generally known by the nickname of Hatteraick, which it had pleased the devil to confer upon him. The man had for some time adopted the credit of being a conjurer, and curing the diseases of man and beast by spells and charms. One summer's day, on a green hillside, the devil appeared to him in shape of a grave "Mediciner," addressing him thus roundly, "Sandie, you have too long followed my trade without acknowledging me for a master. You must now enlist with me and become my servant, and I will teach you your trade better." Hatteraick consented to the proposal, and we shall let the Rev. Mr. George Sinclair tell the rest of the tale.

"After this he grew very famous through the country for his charming and curing of diseases in men and beasts, and turned a vagrant fellow like a jockie, gaining meal, and flesh, and money by his charms, such was the ignorance of many at that time. Whatever house he came to none durst refuse Hatteraick an alms, rather for his ill than his good. One day he came to the yait (gate) of Samuelston, when some friends after dinner were going to horse. A young gentleman, brother to the lady, seeing him, switcht him about the ears, saying — 'You warlock carle, what have you to do here?' Whereupon the fellow goes away grumbling, and was overheard to say, 'You shall dear buy this ere it be long.' This was *damnum minatum*. The young gentleman conveyed his friends a far way off, and came home that way again, where he supped. After supper, taking his horse and crossing

Tyne water to go home, he rides through a shady piece of a haugh, commonly called Allers, and the evening being somewhat dark, he met with some persons there that begat a dreadful consternation in him, which for the most part he would never reveal. This was *malum secutum*. When he came home the servants observed terror and fear in his countenance. The next day he became distracted, and was bound for several days. His sister, the Lady Samuelston, hearing of it, was heard say, 'Surely that knave Hatteraick is the cause of his trouble; call for him in all haste.' When he had come to her, 'Sandie,' says she, 'what is this you have done to my brother William?' 'I told him,' says he, 'I should make him repent of his striking me at the yait lately.' She, giving the rogue fair words, and promising him his pockful of meal, with beef and cheese, persuaded the fellow to cure him again. He undertook the business. 'But I must first,' says he, 'have one of his sarks' (shirts), which was soon gotten. What pranks he played with it cannot be known, but within a short while the gentleman recovered his health. When Hatteraick came to receive his wages he told the lady, 'Your brother William shall quickly go off the country, but shall never return,' She, knowing the fellow's prophecies to hold true, caused the brother to make a disposition to her of all his patrimony, to the defrauding of his younger brother, George. After that this warlock had abused the country for a long time, he was at last apprehended at Dunbar, and brought into Edinburgh, and burnt upon the Castlehill."

[Footnote 73: Or Scottish wandering beggar.]

[Footnote 74: Sinclair's "Satan's Invisible World Discovered," p. 98.]

Now, if Hatteraick was really put to death on such evidence, it is worth while to consider what was its real amount. A hot-tempered swaggering young gentleman horsewhips a beggar of ill fame for loitering about the gate of his sister's house. The beggar grumbles, as any man would. The young man, riding in the night, and probably in liquor, through a dark shady place, is frightened by, he would not, and probably could not, tell what, and has a fever fit. His sister employs the wizard to take off the spell according to his profession; and here is *damnum minatum, et malum secutum*, and all legal cause for burning a man to ashes! The vagrant Hatteraick probably knew something of the wild young man which might soon oblige him to leave the country; and the selfish Lady Samuelston, learning the probability

of his departure, committed a fraud which ought to have rendered her evidence inadmissible.

Besides these particular disadvantages, to which the parties accused of this crime in Scotland were necessarily exposed, both in relation to the judicature by which they were tried and the evidence upon which they were convicted, their situation was rendered intolerable by the detestation in which they were held by all ranks. The gentry hated them because the diseases and death of their relations and children were often imputed to them; the grossly superstitious vulgar abhorred them with still more perfect dread and loathing. And amongst those natural feelings, others of a less pardonable description found means to shelter themselves. In one case, we are informed by Mackenzie, a poor girl was to die for witchcraft, of whom the real crime was that she had attracted too great a share, in the lady's opinion, of the attention of the laird.

Having thus given some reasons why the prosecutions for witchcraft in Scotland were so numerous and fatal, we return to the general history of the trials recorded from the reign of James V. to the union of the kingdoms. Through the reign of Queen Mary these trials for sorcery became numerous, and the crime was subjected to heavier punishment by the 73rd Act of her 9th Parliament. But when James VI. approached to years of discretion, the extreme anxiety which he displayed to penetrate more deeply into mysteries which others had regarded as a very millstone of obscurity, drew still larger attention to the subject. The sovereign had exhausted his talents of investigation on the subject of witchcraft, and credit was given to all who acted in defence of the opinions of the reigning prince. This natural tendency to comply with the opinions of the sovereign was much augmented by the disposition of the Kirk to the same sentiments. We have already said that these venerable persons entertained, with good faith, the general erroneous belief respecting witchcraft — regarding it indeed as a crime which affected their own order more nearly than others in the state, since, especially called to the service of heaven, they were peculiarly bound to oppose the incursions of Satan. The works which remain behind them show, among better things, an unhesitating belief in what were called by them "special providences;" and this was equalled, at least, by their credulity as to the actual interference of evil spirits in the affairs of this world. They applied these principles of belief to the meanest causes. A horse falling lame was a snare of the devil to keep the good clergyman from

preaching; the arrival of a skilful farrier was accounted a special providence to defeat the purpose of Satan. This was, doubtless, in a general sense true, since nothing can happen without the foreknowledge and will of Heaven; but we are authorized to believe that the period of supernatural interference has long passed away, and that the great Creator is content to execute his purposes by the operation of those laws which influence the general course of nature. Our ancient Scottish divines thought otherwise. Surrounded, as they conceived themselves, by the snares and temptations of hell, and relying on the aid of Heaven, they entered into war with the kingdom of Satan, as the crusaders of old invaded the land of Palestine, with the same confidence in the justice of their cause and similar indifference concerning the feelings of those whom they accounted the enemies of God and man. We have already seen that even the conviction that a woman was innocent of the crime of witchcraft did not induce a worthy clergyman to use any effort to withdraw her from the stake; and in the same collection there occur some observable passages of God's providence to a godly minister in giving him "full clearness" concerning Bessie Grahame, suspected of witchcraft. The whole detail is a curious illustration of the spirit of credulity which well-disposed men brought with them to such investigations, and how easily the gravest doubts were removed rather than a witch should be left undetected.

[Footnote 75: "Satan's Invisible World," by Mr. George Sinclair. The author was Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, and afterwards minister of Eastwood, in Renfrewshire.]

Bessie Grahame had been committed, it would seem, under suspicions of no great weight, since the minister, after various conferences, found her defence so successful, that he actually pitied her hard usage, and wished for her delivery from prison, especially as he doubted whether a civil court would send her to an assize, or whether an assize would be disposed to convict her. While the minister was in this doubt, a fellow named Begg was employed as a skilful pricker; by whose authority it is not said, he thrust a great brass pin up to the head in a wart on the woman's back, which he affirmed to be the devil's mark. A commission was granted for trial; but still the chief gentlemen in the county refused to act, and the clergyman's own doubts were far from being removed. This put the worthy man upon a solemn prayer to God, "that if he would find out a way for giving the minister full clearness of her guilt, he would acknowledge it as a singular

favour and mercy." This, according to his idea, was accomplished in the following manner, which he regarded as an answer to his prayer. One evening the clergyman, with Alexander Simpson, the kirk-officer, and his own servant, had visited Bessie in her cell, to urge her to confession, but in vain. As they stood on the stair-head behind the door, they heard the prisoner, whom they had left alone in her place of confinement, discoursing with another person, who used a low and ghostly tone, which the minister instantly recognised as the Foul Fiend's voice. But for this discovery we should have been of opinion that Bessie Grahame talked to herself, as melancholy and despairing wretches are in the habit of doing. But as Alexander Simpson pretended to understand the sense of what was said within the cell, and the minister himself was pretty sure he heard two voices at the same time, he regarded the overhearing this conversation as the answer of the Deity to his petition, and thenceforth was troubled with no doubts either as to the reasonableness and propriety of his prayer, or the guilt of Bessie Grahame, though she died obstinate, and would not confess; nay, made a most decent and Christian end, acquitting her judges and jury of her blood, in respect of the strong delusion under which they laboured.

Although the ministers, whose opinions were but two strongly on this head in correspondence with the prevailing superstitions of the people, nourished in the early system of church government a considerable desire to secure their own immunities and privileges as a national church, which failed not at last to be brought into contact with the king's prerogative; yet in the earlier part of his reign, James, when freed from the influence of such a favourite as the profligate Stuart, Earl of Arran, was in his personal qualities rather acceptable to the clergy of his kingdom and period. At his departing from Scotland on his romantic expedition to bring home a consort from Denmark, he very politically recommended to the clergy to contribute all that lay in their power to assist the civil magistrates, and preserve the public peace of the kingdom. The king after his return acknowledged with many thanks the care which the clergy had bestowed in this particular. Nor were they slack in assuming the merit to themselves, for they often reminded him in their future discords that his kingdom had never been so quiet as during his voyage to Denmark, when the clergy were in a great measure intrusted with the charge of the public government.

During the halcyon period of union between kirk and king their hearty agreement on the subject of witchcraft failed not to heat the fires against the

persons suspected of such iniquity. The clergy considered that the Roman Catholics, their principal enemies, were equally devoted to the devil, the mass, and the witches, which in their opinion were mutually associated together, and natural allies in the great cause of mischief. On the other hand, the pedantic sovereign having exercised his learning and ingenuity in the Demonologia, considered the execution of every witch who was burnt as a necessary conclusion of his own royal syllogisms. The juries were also afraid of the consequences of acquittal to themselves, being liable to suffer under an assize of error should they be thought to have been unjustly merciful; and as the witches tried were personally as insignificant as the charge itself was odious, there was no restraint whatever upon those in whose hands their fate lay, and there seldom wanted some such confession as we have often mentioned, or such evidence as that collected by the minister who overheard the dialogue between the witch and her master, to salve their consciences and reconcile them to bring in a verdict of guilty.

The execution of witches became for these reasons very common in Scotland, where the king seemed in some measure to have made himself a party in the cause, and the clergy esteemed themselves such from the very nature of their profession. But the general spite of Satan and his adherents was supposed to be especially directed against James, on account of his match with Anne of Denmark — the union of a Protestant princess with a Protestant prince, the King of Scotland and heir of England being, it could not be doubted, an event which struck the whole kingdom of darkness with alarm. James was self-gratified by the unusual spirit which he had displayed on his voyage in quest of his bride, and well disposed to fancy that he had performed it in positive opposition, not only to the indirect policy of Elizabeth, but to the malevolent purpose of hell itself. His fleet had been tempest-tost, and he very naturally believed that the prince of the power of the air had been personally active on the occasion.

The principal person implicated in these heretical and treasonable undertakings was one Agnes Simpson, or Samson, called the Wise Wife of Keith, and described by Archbishop Spottiswood, not as one of the base or ignorant class of ordinary witches, but a grave matron, composed and deliberate in her answers, which were all to some purpose. This grave dame, from the terms of her indictment, seems to have been a kind of white witch, affecting to cure diseases by words and charms, a dangerous profession considering the times in which she lived. Neither did she always

keep the right and sheltered side of the law in such delicate operations. One article of her indictment proves this, and at the same time establishes that the Wise Woman of Keith knew how to turn her profession to account; for, being consulted in the illness of Isobel Hamilton, she gave her opinion that nothing could amend her unless the devil was raised; and the sick woman's husband, startling at the proposal, and being indifferent perhaps about the issue, would not bestow the necessary expenses, whereupon the Wise Wife refused to raise the devil, and the patient died. This woman was principally engaged in an extensive conspiracy to destroy the fleet of the queen by raising a tempest; and to take the king's life by anointing his linen with poisonous materials, and by constructing figures of clay, to be wasted and tormented after the usual fashion of necromancy.

Amongst her associates was an unhappy lady of much higher degree. This was Dame Euphane MacCalzean, the widow of a Senator of the College of Justice, and a person infinitely above the rank of the obscure witches with whom she was joined in her crime. Mr. Pitcairn supposes that this connexion may have arisen from her devotion to the Catholic faith and her friendship for the Earl of Bothwell.

The third person in this singular league of sorcerers was Doctor John Fian, otherwise Cunninghame, who was schoolmaster at Tranent, and enjoyed much hazardous reputation as a warlock. This man was made the hero of the whole tale of necromancy, in an account of it published at London, and entitled, "News from Scotland," which has been lately reprinted by the Roxburghe Club. It is remarkable that the Scottish witchcrafts were not thought sufficiently horrible by the editor of this tract, without adding to them the story of a philtre being applied to a cow's hair instead of that of the young woman for whom it was designed, and telling how the animal came lowing after the sorcerer to his schoolroom door, like a second Pasiphaë, the original of which charm occurs in the story of Apuleius.

[Footnote 76: "Lucii Apuleii Metamorphoses," lib. iii.]

Besides these persons, there was one Barbara Napier, alias Douglas, a person of some rank; Geillis Duncan, a very active witch; and about thirty other poor creatures of the lowest condition — among the rest, and doorkeeper to the conclave, a silly old ploughman, called as his nickname

Graymeal, who was cuffed by the devil for saying simply, “God bless the king!”

When the monarch of Scotland sprung this strong covey of his favourite game, they afforded the Privy Council and him sport for the greatest part of the remaining winter. He attended on the examinations himself, and by one means or or other, they were indifferently well dressed to his palate.

Agnes Sampson, the grave matron before mentioned, after being an hour tortured by the twisting of a cord around her head, according to the custom of the Buccaneers, confessed that she had consulted with one Richard Grahame concerning the probable length of the king’s life, and the means of shortening it. But Satan, to whom they at length resorted for advice, told them in French respecting King James, *Il est un homme de Dieu*. The poor woman also acknowledged that she had held a meeting with those of her sisterhood, who had charmed a cat by certain spells, having four joints of men knit to its feet, which they threw into the sea to excite a tempest. Another frolic they had when, like the weird sisters in Macbeth, they embarked in sieves with much mirth and jollity, the Fiend rolling himself before them upon the waves, dimly seen, and resembling a huge haystack in size and appearance. They went on board of a foreign ship richly laded with wines, where, invisible to the crew, they feasted till the sport grew tiresome, and then Satan sunk the vessel and all on board.

Fian, or Cunninghame, was also visited by the sharpest tortures, ordinary and extraordinary. The nails were torn from his fingers with smith’s pincers; pins were driven into the places which the nails usually defended; his knees were crushed in *the boots*, his finger bones were splintered in the pilniewinks. At length his constancy, hitherto sustained, as the bystanders supposed, by the help of the devil, was fairly overcome, and he gave an account of a great witch-meeting at North Berwick, where they paced round the church *withershinns*, that is, in reverse of the motion of the sun. Fian then blew into the lock of the church-door, whereupon the bolts gave way, the unhallowed crew entered, and their master the devil appeared to his servants in the shape of a black man occupying the pulpit. He was saluted with an “Hail, Master!” but the company were dissatisfied with his not having brought a picture of the king, repeatedly promised, which was to place his majesty at the mercy of this infernal crew. The devil was particularly upbraided on this subject by divers respectable-looking females — no question, Euphane MacCalzean, Barbara Napier, Agnes Sampson,

and some other amateur witch above those of the ordinary profession. The devil on this memorable occasion forgot himself, and called Fian by his own name, instead of the demoniacal *sobriquet* of Rob the Rowar, which had been assigned to him as Master of the Rows or Rolls. This was considered as bad taste, and the rule is still observed at every rendezvous of forgers, smugglers, or the like, where it is accounted very indifferent manners to name an individual by his own name, in case of affording ground of evidence which may upon a day of trial be brought against him. Satan, something disconcerted, concluded the evening with a divertisement and a dance after his own manner. The former consisted in disinterring a new-buried corpse, and dividing it in fragments among the company, and the ball was maintained by wellnigh two hundred persons, who danced a ring dance, singing this chant —

> "Cummer, gang ye before; Cummer gang ye.
> Gif ye will not gang before, Cummers, let me."

After this choral exhibition, the music seems to have been rather imperfect, the number of dancers considered. Geillis Duncan was the only instrumental performer, and she played on a Jew's harp, called in Scotland a *trump*. Dr. Fian, muffled, led the ring, and was highly honoured, generally acting as clerk or recorder, as above mentioned.

King James was deeply interested in those mysterious meetings, and took great delight to be present at the examinations of the accused. He sent for Geillis Duncan, and caused her to play before him the same tune to which Satan and his companions led the brawl in North Berwick churchyard. His ears were gratified in another way, for at this meeting it was said the witches demanded of the devil why he did bear such enmity against the king? who returned the flattering answer that the king was the greatest enemy whom he had in the world.

[Footnote 77: The music of this witch tune is unhappily lost. But that of another, believed to have been popular on such occasions, is preserved.

> "The silly bit chicken, gar cast her a pickle,
> And she will grow mickle,
> And she will do good."]

Almost all these poor wretches were executed, nor did Euphane MacCalzean's station in life save her from the common doom, which was strangling to death, and burning to ashes thereafter. The majority of the jury which tried Barbara Napier having acquitted her of attendance at the North Berwick meeting, were themselves threatened with a trial for wilful error upon an assize, and could only escape from severe censure and punishment by pleading guilty, and submitting themselves to the king's pleasure. This rigorous and iniquitous conduct shows a sufficient reason why there should be so few acquittals from a charge of witchcraft where the juries were so much at the mercy of the crown.

It would be disgusting to follow the numerous cases in which the same uniform credulity, the same extorted confessions, the same prejudiced and exaggerated evidence, concluded in the same tragedy at the stake and the pile. The alterations and trenching which lately took place for the purpose of improving the Castlehill of Edinburgh displayed the ashes of the numbers who had perished in this manner, of whom a large proportion must have been executed between 1590, when the great discovery was made concerning Euphane MacCalzean and the Wise Wife of Keith and their accomplices, and the union of the crowns.

Nor did King James's removal to England soften this horrible persecution. In Sir Thomas Hamilton's Minutes of Proceedings in the Privy Council, there occurs a singular entry, evincing plainly that the Earl of Mar, and others of James's Council, were becoming fully sensible of the desperate iniquity and inhumanity of these proceedings. I have modernized the spelling that this appalling record may be legible to all my readers.

"1608, December 1. The Earl of Mar declared to the Council that some women were taken in Broughton as witches, and being put to an assize and convicted, albeit they persevered constant in their denial to the end, yet they were burned quick [*alive*] after such a cruel manner that some of them died in despair, renouncing and blaspheming [God]; and others, half burned, brak out of the fire, and were cast quick in it again, till they were burned to the death."

[Footnote 78: I am obliged to the kindness of Mr. Pitcairn for this singular extract. The southern reader must be informed that the jurisdiction or regality of Broughton embraced Holyrood, Canongate, Leith, and other suburban parts of Edinburgh, and bore the same relation to that city as the borough of Southwark to London.]

This singular document shows that even in the reign of James, so soon as his own august person was removed from Edinburgh, his dutiful Privy Council began to think that they had supt full with horrors, and were satiated with the excess of cruelty which dashed half-consumed wretches back into the flames from which they were striving to escape.

But the picture, however much it may have been disgusting and terrifying to the Council at the time, and though the intention of the entry upon the records was obviously for the purpose of preventing such horrid cruelties in future, had no lasting effect on the course of justice, as the severities against witches were most unhappily still considered necessary. Through the whole of the sixteenth, and the greater part of the seventeenth century, little abatement in the persecution of this metaphysical crime of witchcraft can be traced in the kingdom. Even while the Independents held the reins of government, Cromwell himself, and his major-generals and substitutes, were obliged to please the common people of Scotland by abandoning the victims accused of witchcraft to the power of the law, though the journals of the time express the horror and disgust with which the English sectarians beheld a practice so inconsistent with their own humane principle of universal toleration.

Instead of plunging into a history of these events which, generally speaking, are in detail as monotonous as they are melancholy, it may amuse the reader to confine the narrative to a single trial, having in the course of it some peculiar and romantic events. It is the tale of a sailor's wife, more tragic in its event than that of the chestnut-muncher in Macbeth.

[Footnote 79: A copy of the record of the trial, which took place in Ayrshire, was sent to me by a friend who withheld his name, so that I can only thank him in this general acknowledgment.]

Margaret Barclay, wife of Archibald Dein, burgess of Irvine, had been slandered by her sister-in-law, Janet Lyal, the spouse of John Dein, brother of Archibald, and by John Dein himself, as guilty of some act of theft. Upon this provocation Margaret Barclay raised an action of slander before the church court, which prosecution, after some procedure, the kirk-session discharged by directing a reconciliation between the parties. Nevertheless, although the two women shook hands before the court, yet the said Margaret Barclay declared that she gave her hand only in obedience to the kirk-session, but that she still retained her hatred and illwill against John Dein and his wife, Janet Lyal. About this time the bark of John Dein was

about to sail for France, and Andrew Train, or Tran, provost of the burgh of Irvine, who was an owner of the vessel, went with him to superintend the commercial part of the voyage. Two other merchants of some consequence went in the same vessel, with a sufficient number of mariners. Margaret Barclay, the revengeful person already mentioned, was heard to imprecate curses upon the provost's argosy, praying to God that sea nor saltwater might never bear the ship, and that *partans* (crabs) might eat the crew at the bottom of the sea.

When, under these auspices, the ship was absent on her voyage, a vagabond fellow, named John Stewart, pretending to have knowledge of jugglery, and to possess the power of a spaeman, came to the residence of Tran, the provost, and dropped explicit hints that the ship was lost, and that the good woman of the house was a widow. The sad truth was afterwards learned on more certain information. Two of the seamen, after a space of doubt and anxiety, arrived, with the melancholy tidings that the bark, of which John Dein was skipper and Provost Tran part owner, had been wrecked on the coast of England, near Padstow, when all on board had been lost, except the two sailors who brought the notice. Suspicion of sorcery, in those days easily awakened, was fixed on Margaret Barclay, who had imprecated curses on the ship, and on John Stewart, the juggler, who had seemed to know of the evil fate of the voyage before he could have become acquainted with it by natural means.

Stewart, who was first apprehended, acknowledged that Margaret Barclay, the other suspected person, had applied to him to teach her some magic arts, "in order that she might get gear, kye's milk, love of man, her heart's desire on such persons as had done her wrong, and, finally, that she might obtain the fruit of sea and land." Stewart declared that he denied to Margaret that he possessed the said arts himself, or had the power of communicating them. So far was well; but, true or false, he added a string of circumstances, whether voluntarily declared or extracted by torture, which tended to fix the cause of the loss of the bark on Margaret Barclay. He had come, he said, to this woman's house in Irvine, shortly after the ship set sail from harbour. He went to Margaret's house by night, and found her engaged, with other two women, in making clay figures; one of the figures was made handsome, with fair hair, supposed to represent Provost Tran. They then proceeded to mould a figure of a ship in clay, and during this labour the devil appeared to the company in the shape of a handsome black

lap-dog, such as ladies use to keep. He added that the whole party left the house together, and went into an empty waste-house nearer the seaport, which house he pointed out to the city magistrates. From this house they went to the seaside, followed by the black lap-dog aforesaid, and cast in the figures of clay representing the ship and the men; after which the sea raged, roared, and became red like the juice of madder in a dyer's cauldron.

[Footnote 80: This may remind the reader of Cazotte's "Diable Amoureux."]

This confession having been extorted from the unfortunate juggler, the female acquaintances of Margaret Barclay were next convened, that he might point out her associates in forming the charm, when he pitched upon a woman called Isobel Insh, or Taylor, who resolutely denied having ever seen him before. She was imprisoned, however, in the belfry of the church. An addition to the evidence against the poor old woman Insh was then procured from her own daughter, Margaret Tailzeour, *a child of eight years old*, who lived as servant with Margaret Barclay, the person principally accused. This child, who was keeper of a baby belonging to Margaret Barclay, either from terror or the innate love of falsehood which we have observed as proper to childhood, declared that she was present when the fatal models of clay were formed, and that, in plunging them in the sea, Margaret Barclay her mistress, and her mother Isobel Insh, were assisted by another woman, and a girl of fourteen years old, who dwelt at the town-head. Legally considered, the evidence of this child was contradictory and inconsistent with the confession of the juggler, for it assigned other particulars and *dramatis personæ* in many respects different. But all was accounted sufficiently regular, especially since the girl failed not to swear to the presence of the black dog, to whose appearance she also added the additional terrors of that of a black man. The dog also, according to her account, emitted flashes from its jaws and nostrils to illuminate the witches during the performance of the spell. The child maintained this story even to her mother's face, only alleging that Isobel Insh remained behind in the waste-house, and was not present when the images were put into the sea. For her own countenance and presence on the occasion, and to ensure her secrecy, her mistress promised her a pair of new shoes.

John Stewart, being reexamined and confronted with the child, was easily compelled to allow that the "little smatchet" was there, and to give

that marvellous account of his correspondence with Elfland which we have noticed elsewhere.

The conspiracy thus far, as they conceived, disclosed, the magistrates and ministers wrought hard with Isobel Insh to prevail upon her to tell the truth; and she at length acknowledged her presence at the time when the models of the ship and mariners were destroyed, but endeavoured so to modify her declaration as to deny all personal accession to the guilt. This poor creature almost admitted the supernatural powers imputed to her, promising Bailie Dunlop (also a mariner), by whom she was imprisoned, that, if he would dismiss her, he should never make a bad voyage, but have success in all his dealings by sea and land. She was finally brought to promise that she would fully confess the whole that she knew of the affair on the morrow.

But finding herself in so hard a strait, the unfortunate woman made use of the darkness to attempt an escape. With this view she got out by a back window of the belfry, although, says the report, there were "iron bolts, locks, and fetters on her," and attained the roof of the church, where, losing her footing, she sustained a severe fall and was greatly bruised. Being apprehended, Bailie Dunlop again urged her to confess; but the poor woman was determined to appeal to a more merciful tribunal, and maintained her innocence to the last minute of her life, denying all that she had formerly admitted, and dying five days after her fall from the roof of the church. The inhabitants of Irvine attributed her death to poison.

The scene began to thicken, for a commission was granted for the trial of the two remaining persons accused, namely, Stewart, the juggler, and Margaret Barclay. The day of trial being arrived, the following singular events took place, which we give as stated in the record: —

"My Lord and Earl of Eglintoune (who dwells within the space of one mile to the said burgh) having come to the said burgh at the earnest request of the said justices, for giving to them of his lordship's countenance, concurrence and assistance, in trying of the foresaid devilish practices, conform to the tenor of the foresaid commission, the said John Stewart, for his better preserving to the day of the assize, was put in a sure lockfast booth, where no manner of person might have access to him till the downsitting of the Justice Court, and for avoiding of putting violent hands on himself, he was very strictly guarded and fettered by the arms, as use is. And upon that same day of the assize, about half an hour before the

downsitting of the Justice Court, Mr. David Dickson, minister at Irvine, and Mr. George Dunbar, minister of Air, having gone to him to exhort him to call on his God for mercy for his bygone wicked and evil life, and that God would of his infinite mercy loose him out of the bonds of the devil, whom he had served these many years bygone, he acquiesced in their prayer and godly exhortation, and uttered these words: — "I am so straitly guarded that it lies not in my power to get my hand to take off my bonnet, nor to get bread to my mouth." And immediately after the departing of the two ministers from him, the juggler being sent for at the desire of my Lord of Eglintoune, to be confronted with a woman of the burgh of Air, called Janet Bous, who was apprehended by the magistrates of the burgh of Air for witchcraft, and sent to the burgh of Irvine purposely for that affair, he was found by the burgh officers who went about him, strangled and hanged by the cruik of the door, with a *tait* of hemp, or a string made of hemp, supposed to have been his garter, or string of his bonnet, not above the length of two span long, his knees not being from the ground half a span, and was brought out of the house, his life not being totally expelled. But notwithstanding of whatsoever means used in the contrary for remeid of his life, he revived not, but so ended his life miserably, by the help of the devil his master.

"And because there was then only in life the said Margaret Barclay, and that the persons summoned to pass upon her assize and upon the assize of the juggler who, by the help of the devil his master, had put violent hands on himself, were all present within the said burgh; therefore, and for eschewing of the like in the person of the said Margaret, our sovereign lord's justices in that part particularly above-named, constituted by commission after solemn deliberation and advice of the said noble lord, whose concurrence and advice was chiefly required and taken in this matter, concluded with all possible diligence before the downsitting of the Justice Court to put the said Margaret in torture; in respect the devil, by God's permission, had made her associates who were the lights of the cause, to be their own *burrioes* (slayers). They used the torture underwritten as being most safe and gentle (as the said noble lord assured the said justices), by putting of her two bare legs in a pair of stocks, and thereafter by onlaying of certain iron gauds (bars) severally one by one, and then eiking and augmenting the weight by laying on more gauds, and in easing of her by

offtaking of the iron gauds one or more as occasion offered, which iron gauds were but little short gauds, and broke not the skin of her legs, &c.

"After using of the which kind of *gentle torture*, the said Margaret began, according to the increase of the pain, to cry and crave for God's cause to take off her shins the foresaid irons, and she should declare truly the whole matter. Which being removed, she began at her former denial; and being of new essayed in torture as of befoir, she then uttered these words: 'Take off, take off, and before God I shall show you the whole form!'

"And the said irons being of new, upon her faithfull promise, removed, she then desired my Lord of Eglintoune, the said four justices, and the said Mr. David Dickson, minister of the burgh, Mr. George Dunbar, minister of Ayr, and Mr. Mitchell Wallace, minister of Kilmarnock, and Mr. John Cunninghame, minister of Dalry, and Hugh Kennedy, provost of Ayr, to come by themselves and to remove all others, and she should declare truly, as she should answer to God the whole matter. Whose desire in that being fulfilled she made her confession in this manner, but (*i.e.,* without) any kind of demand, freely, without interrogation; God's name by earnest prayer being called upon for opening of her lips, and easing of her heart, that she, by rendering of the truth, might glorify and magnify his holy name, and disappoint the enemy of her salvation." — *Trial of Margaret Barclay, &c*., 1618.

Margaret Barclay, who was a young and lively person, had hitherto conducted herself like a passionate and high-tempered woman innocently accused, and the only appearance of conviction obtained against her was, that she carried about her rowan-tree and coloured thread, to make, as she said, her cow give milk, when it began to fail. But the *gentle torture* — a strange junction of words — recommended as an anodyne by the good Lord Eglinton — the placing, namely, her legs in the stocks, and loading her bare shins with bars of iron, overcame her resolution; when, at her screams and declarations that she was willing to tell all, the weights were removed. She then told a story of destroying the ship of John Dein, affirming that it was with the purpose of killing only her brother-in-law and Provost Tran, and saving the rest of the crew. She at the same time involved in the guilt Isobel Crawford. This poor woman was also apprehended, and in great terror confessed the imputed crime, retorting the principal blame on Margaret Barclay herself. The trial was then appointed to proceed, when Alexander

Dein, the husband of Margaret Barclay, appeared in court with a lawyer to act in his wife's behalf. Apparently, the sight of her husband awakened some hope and desire of life, for when the prisoner was asked by the lawyer whether she wished to be defended? she answered, "As you please But all I have confest was in agony of torture; and, before God, all I have spoken is false and untrue." To which she pathetically added, "Ye have been too long in coming."

The jury, unmoved by these affecting circumstances, proceeded upon the principle that the confession of the accused could not be considered as made under the influence of torture, since the bars were not actually upon her limbs at the time it was delivered, although they were placed at her elbow ready to be again laid on her bare shins, if she was less explicit in her declaration than her auditors wished. On this nice distinction they in one voice found Margaret Barclay guilty. It is singular that she should have again returned to her confession after sentence, and died affirming it; the explanation of which, however, might be either that she had really in her ignorance and folly tampered with some idle spells, or that an apparent penitence for her offence, however imaginary, was the only mode in which she could obtain any share of public sympathy at her death, or a portion of the prayers of the clergy and congregation, which, in her circumstances, she might be willing to purchase, even by confession of what all believed respecting her. It is remarkable that she earnestly entreated the magistrates that no harm should be done to Isobel Crawford, the woman whom she had herself accused. This unfortunate young creature was strangled at the stake, and her body burnt to ashes, having died with many expressions of religion and penitence.

It was one fatal consequence of these cruel persecutions, that one pile was usually lighted at the embers of another. Accordingly in the present case, three victims having already perished by this accusation, the magistrates, incensed at the nature of the crime, so perilous as it seemed to men of a maritime life, and at the loss of several friends of their own, one of "whom had been their principal magistrate, did not forbear to insist against Isobel Crawford, inculpated by Margaret Barclay's confession. A new commission was granted for her trial, and after the assistant minister of Irvine, Mr. David Dickson, had made earnest prayers to God for opening her obdurate and closed heart, she was subjected to the torture of iron bars

laid upon her bare shins, her feet being in the stocks, as in the case of Margaret Barclay.

She endured this torture with incredible firmness, since she did "admirably, without any kind of din or exclamation, suffer above thirty stone of iron to be laid on her legs, never shrinking thereat in any sort, but remaining, as it were, steady." But in shifting the situation of the iron bars, and removing them to another part of her shins, her constancy gave way; she broke out into horrible cries (though not more than three bars were then actually on her person) of — "Tak aff — tak aff!" On being relieved from the torture, she made the usual confession of all that she was charged with, and of a connexion with the devil which had subsisted for several years. Sentence was given against her accordingly. After this had been denounced, she openly denied all her former confessions, and died without any sign of repentance, offering repeated interruption to the minister in his prayer, and absolutely refusing to pardon the executioner.

This tragedy happened in the year 1613, and recorded, as it is, very particularly and at considerable length, forms the most detailed specimen I have met with of a Scottish trial for witchcraft — illustrating, in particular, how poor wretches, abandoned, as they conceived, by God and the world, deprived of all human sympathy, and exposed to personal tortures of an acute description, became disposed to throw away the lives that were rendered bitter to them by a voluntary confession of guilt, rather than struggle hopelessly against so many evils. Four persons here lost their lives, merely because the throwing some clay models into the sea, a fact told differently by the witnesses who spoke of it, corresponded with the season, for no day was fixed in which a particular vessel was lost. It is scarce possible that, after reading such a story, a man of sense can listen for an instant to the evidence founded on confessions thus obtained, which has been almost the sole reason by which a few individuals, even in modern times, have endeavoured to justify a belief in the existence of witchcraft.

The result of the judicial examination of a criminal, when extorted by such means, is the most suspicious of all evidence, and even when voluntarily given, is scarce admissible without the corroboration of other testimony.

We might here take leave of our Scottish history of witchcraft by barely mentioning that many hundreds, nay perhaps thousands, lost their lives during two centuries on such charges and such evidence as proved the death

of those persons in the trial of the Irvine witches. One case, however, is so much distinguished by fame among the numerous instances which occurred in Scottish history, that we are under the necessity of bestowing a few words upon those celebrated persons, Major Weir and his sister.

The case of this notorious wizard was remarkable chiefly from his being a man of some condition (the son of a gentleman, and his mother a lady of family in Clydesdale), which was seldom the case with those that fell under similar accusations. It was also remarkable in his case that he had been a Covenanter, and peculiarly attached to that cause. In the years of the Commonwealth this man was trusted and employed by those who were then at the head of affairs, and was in 1649 commander of the City-Guard of Edinburgh, which procured him his title of Major. In this capacity he was understood, as was indeed implied in the duties of that officer at the period, to be very strict in executing severity upon such Royalists as fell under his military charge. It appears that the Major, with a maiden sister who had kept his house, was subject to fits of melancholic lunacy, an infirmity easily reconcilable with the formal pretences which he made to a high show of religious zeal. He was peculiar in his gift of prayer, and, as was the custom of the period, was often called to exercise his talent by the bedside of sick persons, until it came to be observed that, by some association, which it is more easy to conceive than to explain, he could not pray with the same warmth and fluency of expression unless when he had in his hand a stick of peculiar shape and appearance, which he generally walked with. It was noticed, in short, that when this stick was taken from him, his wit and talent appeared to forsake him. This Major Weir was seized by the magistrates on a strange whisper that became current respecting vile practices, which he seems to have admitted without either shame or contrition. The disgusting profligacies which he confessed were of such a character that it may be charitably hoped most of them were the fruits of a depraved imagination, though he appears to have been in many respects a wicked and criminal hypocrite. When he had completed his confession, he avowed solemnly that he had not confessed the hundredth part of the crimes which he had committed. From this time he would answer no interrogatory, nor would he have recourse to prayer, arguing that, as he had no hope whatever of escaping Satan, there was no need of incensing him by vain efforts at repentance. His witchcraft seems to have been taken for granted on his own confession, as his indictment was chiefly founded on the same document, in

which he alleged he had never seen the devil, but any feeling he had of him was in the dark. He received sentence of death, which he suffered 12th April, 1670, at the Gallow-hill, between Leith and Edinburgh. He died so stupidly sullen and impenitent as to justify the opinion that he was oppressed with a kind of melancholy frenzy, the consequence perhaps of remorse, but such as urged him not to repent, but to despair. It seems probable that he was burnt alive. His sister, with whom he was supposed to have had an incestuous connexion, was condemned also to death, leaving a stronger and more explicit testimony of their mutual sins than could be extracted from the Major. She gave, as usual, some account of her connexion with the queen of the fairies, and acknowledged the assistance she received from that sovereign in spinning an unusual quantity of yam. Of her brother she said that one day a friend called upon them at noonday with a fiery chariot, and invited them to visit a friend at Dalkeith, and that while there her brother received information of the event of the battle of Worcester. No one saw the style of their equipage except themselves. On the scaffold this woman, determining, as she said, to die "with the greatest shame possible," was with difficulty prevented from throwing off her clothes before the people, and with scarce less trouble was she flung from the ladder by the executioner. Her last words were in the tone of the sect to which her brother had so long affected to belong: "Many," she said, "weep and lament for a poor old wretch like me; but alas! few are weeping for a broken Covenant."

The Scottish prelatists, upon whom the Covenanters used to throw many aspersions respecting their receiving proof against shot from the devil, and other infernal practices, rejoiced to have an opportunity, in their turn, to retort on their adversaries the charge of sorcery. Dr. Hickes, the author of "Thesaurus Septentrionalis," published on the subject of Major Weir, and the case of Mitchell, who fired at the Archbishop of St. Andrews his book called "Ravaillac Redivivus," written with the unjust purpose of attaching to the religious sect to which the wizard and assassin belonged the charge of having fostered and encouraged the crimes they committed or attempted.

It is certain that no story of witchcraft or necromancy, so many of which occurred near and in Edinburgh, made such a lasting impression on the public mind as that of Major Weir. The remains of the house in which he and his sister lived are still shown at the head of the West Bow, which has a gloomy aspect, well suited for a necromancer. It was at different times a

brazier's shop and a magazine for lint, and in my younger days was employed for the latter use; but no family would inhabit the haunted walls as a residence; and bold was the urchin from the High School who dared approach the gloomy ruin at the risk of seeing the Major's enchanted staff parading through the old apartments, or hearing the hum of the necromantic wheel, which procured for his sister such a character as a spinner. At the time I am writing this last fortress of superstitious renown is in the course of being destroyed, in order to the modern improvements now carrying on in a quarter long thought unimprovable.

As knowledge and learning began to increase, the gentlemen and clergy of Scotland became ashamed of the credulity of their ancestors, and witch trials, although not discontinued, more seldom disgrace our records of criminal jurisprudence.

Sir John Clerk, a scholar and an antiquary, the grandfather of the late celebrated John Clerk of Eldin, had the honour to be amongst the first to decline acting as a commissioner on the trial of a witch, to which he was appointed so early as 1678, alleging, drily, that he did not feel himself warlock (that is, conjurer) sufficient to be a judge upon such an inquisition. Allan Ramsay, his friend, and who must be supposed to speak the sense of his many respectable patrons, had delivered his opinion on the subject in the "Gentle Shepherd," where Mause's imaginary witchcraft constitutes the machinery of the poem.

[Footnote 81: See Fountainhall's "Decisions," vol. i. p. 15.]

Yet these dawnings of sense and humanity were obscured by the clouds of the ancient superstition on more than one distinguished occasion. In 1676, Sir George Maxwell, of Pollock, apparently a man of melancholic and valetudinary habits, believed himself bewitched to death by six witches, one man and five women, who were leagued for the purpose of tormenting a clay image in his likeness. The chief evidence on the subject was a vagabond girl, pretending to be deaf and dumb. But as her imposture was afterwards discovered and herself punished, it is reasonably to be concluded that she had herself formed the picture or image of Sir George, and had hid it where it was afterwards found in consequence of her own information. In the meantime, five of the accused were executed, and the sixth only escaped on account of extreme youth.

A still more remarkable case occurred at Paisley in 1697, where a young girl, about eleven years of age, daughter of John Shaw, of Bargarran, was the principal evidence. This unlucky damsel, beginning her practices out of a quarrel with a maidservant, continued to imitate a case of possession so accurately that no less than twenty persons were condemned upon her evidence, of whom five were executed, besides one John Reed, who hanged himself in prison, or, as was charitably said, was strangled by the devil in person, lest he should make disclosures to the detriment of the service. But even those who believed in witchcraft were now beginning to open their eyes to the dangers in the present mode of prosecution. "I own," says the Rev. Mr. Bell in his MS. "Treatise on Witchcraft," "there has been much harm done to worthy and innocent persons in the common way of finding out witches, and in the means made use of for promoting the discovery of such wretches and bringing them to justice; so that oftentimes old age, poverty, features, and ill-fame, with such like grounds not worthy to be represented to a magistrate, have yet moved many to suspect and defame their neighbours, to the unspeakable prejudice of Christian charity; a late instance whereof we had in the west, in the business of the sorceries exercised upon the Laird of Bargarran's daughter, anno 1697 — a time when persons of more goodness and esteem than most of their calumniators were defamed for witches, and which was occasioned mostly by the forwardness and absurd credulity of diverse otherwise worthy ministers of the gospel, and some topping professors in and about the city of Glasgow."

[Footnote 82: Law's "Memorialls," edited by C.K. Sliarpe, Esq.:
Prefatory Notice, p. 93.]

Those who doubted of the sense of the law or reasonableness of the practice in such cases, began to take courage and state their objections boldly. In the year 1704 a frightful instance of popular bigotry occurred at Pittenweem. A strolling vagabond, who affected fits, laid an accusation of witchcraft against two women, who were accordingly seized on, and imprisoned with the usual severities. One of the unhappy creatures, Janet Cornfoot by name, escaped from prison, but was unhappily caught, and brought back to Pittenweem, where she fell into the hands of a ferocious mob, consisting of rude seamen and fishers. The magistrates made no attempts for her rescue, and the crowd exercised their brutal pleasure on the poor old woman, pelted her with stones, swung her suspended on a rope betwixt a ship and the

shore, and finally ended her miserable existence by throwing a door over her as she lay exhausted on the beach, and heaping stones upon it till she was pressed to death. As even the existing laws against witchcraft were transgressed by this brutal riot, a warm attack was made upon the magistrates and ministers of the town by those who were shocked at a tragedy of such a horrible cast, There were answers published, in which the parties assailed were zealously defended. The superior authorities were expected to take up the affair, but it so happened; during the general distraction of the country concerning the Union, that the murder went without the investigation which a crime so horrid demanded. Still, however, it was something gained that the cruelty was exposed to the public. The voice of general opinion was now appealed to, and in the long run the sentiments which it advocates are commonly those of good sense and humanity.

The officers in the higher branches of the law dared now assert their official authority and reserve for their own decision cases of supposed witchcraft which the fear of public clamour had induced them formerly to leave in the hands of inferior judges, operated upon by all the prejudices of the country and the populace.

In 1718, the celebrated lawyer, Robert Dundas of Arniston, then King's Advocate, wrote a severe letter of censure to the Sheriff-depute of Caithness, in the first place, as having neglected to communicate officially certain precognitions which he had led respecting some recent practices of witchcraft in his county. The Advocate reminded this local judge that the duty of inferior magistrates, in such cases, was to advise with the King's Counsel, first, whether they should be made subject of a trial or not; and if so, before what court, and in what manner, it should take place. He also called the magistrate's attention to a report, that he, the Sheriff-depute, intended to judge in the case himself; "a thing of too great difficulty to be tried without very deliberate advice, and beyond the jurisdiction of an inferior court." The Sheriff-depute sends, with his apology, the *precognition* of the affair, which is one of the most nonsensical in this nonsensical department of the law. A certain carpenter, named William Montgomery, was so infested with cats, which, as his servant-maid reported, "spoke among themselves," that he fell in a rage upon a party of these animals which had assembled in his house at irregular hours, and betwixt his Highland arms of knife, dirk, and broadsword, and his professional weapon

of an axe, he made such a dispersion that they were quiet for the night. In consequence of his blows, two witches were said to have died. The case of a third, named Nin-Gilbert, was still more remarkable. Her leg being broken, the injured limb withered, pined, and finally fell off; on which the hag was enclosed in prison, where she also died; and the question which remained was, whether any process should be directed against persons whom, in her compelled confession, she had, as usual, informed against. The Lord Advocate, as may be supposed, quashed all further procedure.

[Footnote 83: The *precognition* is the record of the preliminary evidence on which the public officers charged in Scotland with duties entrusted to a grand jury in England, incur the responsibility of sending an accused person to trial.]

In 1720, an unlucky boy, the third son of James, Lord Torphichen, took it into his head, under instructions, it is said, from a knavish governor, to play the possessed and bewitched person, laying the cause of his distress on certain old witches in Calder, near to which village his father had his mansion. The women were imprisoned, and one or two of them died; but the Crown counsel would not proceed to trial. The noble family also began to see through the cheat. The boy was sent to sea, and though he is said at one time to have been disposed to try his fits while on board, when the discipline of the navy proved too severe for his cunning, in process of time he became a good sailor, assisted gallantly in defence of the vessel against the pirates of Angria, and finally was drowned in a storm.

In the year 1722, a Sheriff-depute of Sutherland, Captain David Ross of Littledean, took it upon him, in flagrant violation of the then established rules of jurisdiction, to pronounce the last sentence of death for witchcraft which was ever passed in Scotland. The victim was an insane old woman belonging to the parish of Loth, who had so little idea of her situation as to rejoice at the sight of the fire which was destined to consume her. She had a daughter lame both of hands and feet, a circumstance attributed to the witch's having been used to transform her into a pony, and get her shod by the devil. It does not appear that any punishment was inflicted for this cruel abuse of the law on the person of a creature so helpless; but the son of the lame daughter, he himself distinguished by the same misfortune, was living so lately as to receive the charity of the present Marchioness of Stafford, Countess of Sutherland in her own right, to whom the poor of her extensive country are as well known as those of the higher order.

Since this deplorable action there has been no judicial interference in Scotland on account of witchcraft, unless to prevent explosions of popular enmity against people suspected of such a crime, of which some instances could be produced. The remains of the superstition sometimes occur; there can be no doubt that the vulgar are still addicted to the custom of scoring above the breath (as it is termed), and other counter-spells, evincing that the belief in witchcraft is only asleep, and might in remote corners be again awakened to deeds of blood. An instance or two may be quoted chiefly as facts known to the author himself.

[Footnote 84: Drawing blood, that is, by two cuts in the form of a cross on the witch's forehead, confided in all throughout Scotland as the most powerful counter charm.]

In a remote part of the Highlands, an ignorant and malignant woman seems really to have meditated the destruction of her neighbour's property, by placing in a cowhouse, or byre as we call it, a pot of baked clay containing locks of hair, parings of nails, and other trumpery. This precious spell was discovered, the design conjectured, and the witch would have been torn to pieces had not a highspirited and excellent lady in the neighbourhood gathered some of her people (though these were not very fond of the service), and by main force taken the unfortunate creature out of the hands of the populace. The formidable spell is now in my possession.

About two years since, as they were taking down the walls of a building formerly used as a feeding-house for cattle, in the town of Dalkeith, there was found below the threshold-stone the withered heart of some animal stuck full of many scores of pins — a counter-charm, according to tradition, against the operations of witchcraft on the cattle which are kept within. Among the almost innumerable droves of bullocks which come down every year from the Highlands for the south, there is scarce one but has a curious knot upon his tail, which is also a precaution lest an evil eye or an evil spell may do the animal harm.

The last Scottish story with which I will trouble you happened in or shortly after the year 1800, and the whole circumstances are well known to me. The dearth of the years in the end of the eighteenth and beginning of this century was inconvenient to all, but distressing to the poor. A solitary old woman, in a wild and lonely district, subsisted chiefly by rearing chickens, an operation requiring so much care and attention that the gentry, and even the farmers' wives, often find it better to buy poultry at a certain

age than to undertake the trouble of bringing them up. As the old woman in the present instance fought her way through life better than her neighbours, envy stigmatized her as having some unlawful mode of increasing the gains of her little trade, and apparently she did not take much alarm at the accusation. But she felt, like others, the dearth of the years alluded to, and chiefly because the farmers were unwilling to sell grain in the very moderate quantities which she was able to purchase, and without which her little stock of poultry must have been inevitably starved. In distress on this account, the dame went to a neighbouring farmer, a very goodnatured, sensible, honest man, and requested him as a favour to sell her a peck of oats at any price. "Good neighbour," he said, "I am sorry to be obliged to refuse you, but my corn is measured out for Dalkeith market; my carts are loaded to set out, and to open these sacks again, and for so small a quantity, would cast my accounts loose, and create much trouble and disadvantage; I dare say you will get all you want at such a place, or such a place." On receiving this answer, the old woman's temper gave way. She scolded the wealthy farmer, and wished evil to his property, which was just setting off for the market. They parted, after some angry language on both sides; and sure enough, as the carts crossed the ford of the river beneath the farmhouse, off came the wheel from one of them, and five or six sacks of corn were damaged by the water. The good farmer hardly knew what to think of this; there were the two circumstances deemed of old essential and sufficient to the crime of witchcraft — *Damnum minatum, et malum secutum*. Scarce knowing what to believe, he hastened to consult the sheriff of the county, as a friend rather than a magistrate, upon a case so extraordinary. The official person showed him that the laws against witchcraft were abrogated, and had little difficulty to bring him to regard the matter in its true light of an accident.

It is strange, but true, that the accused herself was not to be reconciled to the sheriffs doctrine so easily. He reminded her that, if she used her tongue with so much license, she must expose herself to suspicions, and that should coincidences happen to irritate her neighbours, she, might suffer harm at a time when there was no one to protect her. He therefore requested her to be more cautious in her language for her own sake, professing, at the same time, his belief that her words and intentions were perfectly harmless, and that he had no apprehension of being hurt by her, let her wish her worst to him. She was rather more angry than pleased at the well-meaning sheriffs

scepticism. “I would be laith to wish ony ill either to you or yours, sir,” she said; “for I kenna how it is, but something aye comes after my words when I am ill-guided and speak ower fast.” In short, she was obstinate in claiming an influence over the destiny of others by words and wishes, which might have in other times conveyed her to the stake, for which her expressions, their consequences, and her disposition to insist upon their efficacy, would certainly of old have made her a fit victim. At present the story is scarcely worth mentioning, but as it contains material resembling those out of which many tragic incidents have arisen.

So low, in short, is now the belief in witchcraft, that perhaps it is only received by those half-crazy individuals who feel a species of consequence derived from accidental coincidences, which, were they received by the community in general, would go near, as on former occasions, to cost the lives of those who make their boast of them. At least one hypochondriac patient is known to the author, who believes himself the victim of a gang of witches, and ascribes his illness to their charms, so that he wants nothing but an indulgent judge to awake again the old ideas of sorcery.

Letter X

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While the vulgar endeavoured to obtain a glance into the darkness of futurity by consulting the witch or fortune-teller, the great were supposed to have a royal path of their own, commanding a view from a loftier quarter of the same *terra incognita*. This was represented as accessible by several routes. Physiognomy, chiromancy, and other fantastic arts of prediction afforded each its mystical assistance and guidance. But the road most flattering to human vanity, while it was at the same time most seductive to human credulity, was that of astrology, the queen of mystic sciences, who flattered those who confided in her that the planets and stars in their spheres figure forth and influence the fate of the creatures of mortality, and that a sage acquainted with her lore could predict, with some approach to certainty, the events of any man's career, his chance of success in life or in marriage, his advance in favour of the great, or answer any other horary questions, as they were termed, which he might be anxious to propound, provided always he could supply the exact moment of his birth. This, in the sixteenth and greater part of the seventeenth centuries, was all that was necessary to enable the astrologer to erect a scheme of the position of the heavenly bodies, which should disclose the life of the interrogator, or Native, as he was called, with all its changes, past, present, and to come.

Imagination was dazzled by a prospect so splendid; and we find that in the sixteenth century the cultivation of this fantastic science was the serious object of men whose understandings and acquirements admit of no question. Bacon himself allowed the truth which might be found in a well-regulated astrology, making thus a distinction betwixt the art as commonly practised and the manner in which it might, as he conceived, be made a proper use of. But a grave or sober use of this science, if even Bacon could have taught such moderation, would not have suited the temper of those who, inflamed by hopes of temporal aggrandizement, pretended to understand and explain to others the language of the stars. Almost all the

other paths of mystic knowledge led to poverty; even the alchemist, though talking loud and high of the endless treasures his art was to produce, lived from day to day and from year to year upon hopes as unsubstantial as the smoke of his furnace. But the pursuits of the astrologer were such as called for instant remuneration. He became rich by the eager hopes and fond credulity of those who consulted him, and that artist lived by duping others, instead of starving, like others, by duping himself. The wisest men have been cheated by the idea that some supernatural influence upheld and guided them; and from the time of Wallenstein to that of Buonaparte, ambition and success have placed confidence in the species of fatalism inspired by a belief of the influence of their own star. Such being the case, the science was little pursued by those who, faithful in their remarks and reports, must soon have discovered its delusive vanity through the splendour of its professions; and the place of such calm and disinterested pursuers of truth was occupied by a set of men sometimes ingenious, always forward and assuming, whose knowledge was imposition, whose responses were, like the oracles of yore, grounded on the desire of deceit, and who, if sometimes they were elevated into rank and fortune, were more frequently found classed with rogues and vagabonds. This was the more apt to be the case that a sufficient stock of impudence, and some knowledge by rote of the terms of art, were all the store of information necessary for establishing a conjurer. The natural consequence of the degraded character of the professors was the degradation of the art itself. Lilly, who wrote the history of his own life and times, notices in that curious volume the most distinguished persons of his day, who made pretensions to astrology, and almost without exception describes them as profligate, worthless, sharking cheats, abandoned to vice, and imposing, by the grossest frauds, upon the silly fools who consulted them. From what we learn of his own history, Lilly himself, a low-born ignorant man, with some gloomy shades of fanaticism in his temperament, was sufficiently fitted to dupe others, and perhaps cheated himself merely by perusing, at an advanced period of life, some of the astrological tracts devised by men of less cunning, though perhaps more pretence to science, than he himself might boast. Yet the public still continue to swallow these gross impositions, though coming from such unworthy authority. The astrologers embraced different sides of the Civil War, and the king on one side, with the Parliamentary leaders on the other, were both equally curious to know, and eager to believe, what

Lilly, Wharton, or Gadbury had discovered from the heavens touching the fortune of the strife. Lilly was a prudent person, contriving with some address to shift the sails of his prophetic bark so as to suit the current of the time, and the gale of fortune. No person could better discover from various omens the course of Charles's misfortunes, so soon as they had come to pass. In the time of the Commonwealth he foresaw the perpetual destruction of the monarchy, and in 1660 this did not prevent his foreseeing the restoration of Charles II. He maintained some credit even among the better classes, for Aubrey and Ashmole both called themselves his friends, being persons extremely credulous, doubtless, respecting the mystic arts. Once a year, too, the astrologers had a public dinner or feast, where the knaves were patronised by the company of such fools as claimed the title of Philomaths — that is, lovers of the mathematics, by which name were still distinguished those who encouraged the pursuit of mystical prescience, the most opposite possible to exact science. Elias Ashmole, the "most honourable Esquire," to whom Lilly's life is dedicated, seldom failed to attend; nay, several men of sense and knowledge honoured this rendezvous. Congreve's picture of a man like Foresight, the dupe of astrology and its sister arts, was then common in society. But the astrologers of the 17th century did not confine themselves to the stars. There was no province of fraud which they did not practise; they were scandalous as panders, and as quacks sold potions for the most unworthy purposes. For such reasons the common people detested the astrologers of the great as cordially as they did the more vulgar witches of their own sphere.

Dr. Lamb, patronised by the Duke of Buckingham, who, like other overgrown favourites, was inclined to cherish astrology, was in 1640 pulled to pieces in the city of London by the enraged populace, and his maidservant, thirteen years afterwards, hanged as a witch at Salisbury. In the villanous transaction of the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury, in King James's time, much mention was made of the art and skill of Dr. Forman, another professor of the same sort with Lamb, who was consulted by the Countess of Essex on the best mode of conducting her guilty intrigue with the Earl of Somerset. He was dead before the affair broke out, which might otherwise have cost him the gibbet, as it did all others concerned, with the exception only of the principal parties, the atrocious authors of the crime. When the cause was tried, some little puppets were produced in court, which were viewed by one party with horror, as representing the most

horrid spells. It was even said that the devil was about to pull down the courthouse on their being discovered. Others of the audience only saw in them the baby figures on which the dressmakers then, as now, were accustomed to expose new fashions.

The erection of the Royal Society, dedicated to far different purposes than the pursuits of astrology, had a natural operation in bringing the latter into discredit; and although the credulity of the ignorant and uninformed continued to support some pretenders to that science, the name of Philomath, assumed by these persons and their clients, began to sink under ridicule and contempt. When Sir Richard Steele set up the paper called the *Guardian*, he chose, under the title of Nestor Ironside, to assume the character of an astrologer, and issued predictions accordingly, one of which, announcing the death of a person called Partridge, once a shoemaker, but at the time the conductor of an Astrological Almanack, led to a controversy, which was supported with great humour by Swift and other wags. I believe you will find that this, with Swift's Elegy on the same person, is one of the last occasions in which astrology has afforded even a jest to the good people of England.

This dishonoured science has some right to be mentioned in a "Treatise on Demonology," because the earlier astrologers, though denying the use of all necromancy — that is, unlawful or black magic — pretended always to a correspondence with the various spirits of the elements, on the principles of the Rosicrucian philosophy. They affirmed they could bind to their service, and imprison in a ring, a mirror, or a stone, some fairy, sylph, or salamander, and compel it to appear when called, and render answers to such questions as the viewer should propose. It is remarkable that the sage himself did not pretend to see the spirit; but the task of viewer, or reader, was entrusted to a third party, a boy or girl usually under the years of puberty. Dr. Dee, an excellent mathematician, had a stone of this kind, and is said to have been imposed upon concerning the spirits attached to it, their actions and answers, by the report of one Kelly who acted as his viewer. The unfortunate Dee was ruined by his associates both in fortune and reputation. His show-stone or mirror is still preserved among other curiosities in the British Museum. Some superstition of the same kind was introduced by the celebrated Count Cagliostro, during the course of the intrigue respecting the diamond necklace in which the late Marie Antoinette was so unfortunately implicated.

Dismissing this general class of impostors, who are now seldom heard of, we come now briefly to mention some leading superstitions once, perhaps, common to all the countries of Europe, but now restricted to those which continue to be inhabited by an undisturbed and native race. Of these, one of the most beautiful is the Irish fiction which assigns to certain families of ancient descent and distinguished rank the privilege of a Banshie, as she is called, or household fairy, whose office it is to appear, seemingly mourning, while she announces the approaching death of some one of the destined race. The subject has been so lately and beautifully investigated and illustrated by Mr. Crofton Croker and others, that I may dispense with being very particular regarding it. If I am rightly informed, the distinction of a banshie is only allowed to families of the pure Milesian stock, and is never ascribed to any descendant of the proudest Norman or boldest Saxon who followed the banner of Earl Strongbow, much less to adventurers of later date who have obtained settlements in the Green Isle.

Several families of the Highlands of Scotland anciently laid claim to the distinction of an attendant spirit who performed the office of the Irish banshie. Amongst them, however, the functions of this attendant genius, whose form and appearance differed in different cases, were not limited to announcing the dissolution of those whose days were numbered. The Highlanders contrived to exact from them other points of service, sometimes as warding off dangers of battle; at others, as guarding and protecting the infant heir through the dangers of childhood; and sometimes as condescending to interfere even in the sports of the chieftain, and point out the fittest move to be made at chess, or the best card to be played at any other game. Among those spirits who have deigned to vouch their existence by appearance of late years, is that of an ancestor of the family of MacLean of Lochbuy. Before the death of any of his race the phantom-chief gallops along the seabeach near to the castle, announcing the event by cries and lamentations. The spectre is said to have rode his rounds and uttered his death-cries within these few years, in consequence of which the family and clan, though much shocked, were in no way surprised to hear by next accounts that their gallant chief was dead at Lisbon, where he served under Lord Wellington.

Of a meaner origin and occupation was the Scottish Brownie, already mentioned as somewhat resembling Robin Goodfellow in the frolicsome days of Old England. This spirit was easily banished, or, as it was styled,

hired away, by the offer of clothes or food; but many of the simple inhabitants could little see the prudence of parting with such a useful domestic drudge, who served faithfully, without fee and reward, food or raiment. Neither was it all times safe to reject Brownie's assistance. Thus, we are informed by Brand, that a young man in the Orkneys "used to brew, and sometimes read upon his Bible; to whom an old woman in the house said, that Brownie was displeased with that book he read upon, which, if he continued to do, they would get no more service of Brownie; but he, being better instructed from that book, which was Brownie's eyesore and the object of his wrath, when he brewed, would not suffer any sacrifice to be given to Brownie; whereupon the first and second brewings were spoilt, and for no use; for though the wort wrought well, yet in a little time it left off working, and grew cold; but of the third broust, or brewing, he had ale very good, though he would not give any sacrifice to Brownie, with whom afterwards they were no more troubled." Another story of the same kind is told of a lady in Uist, who refused, on religious grounds, the usual sacrifice to this domestic spirit. The first and second brewings failed, but the third succeeded; and thus, when Brownie lost the perquisite to which he had been so long accustomed, he abandoned the inhospitable house, where his services had so long been faithfully rendered. The last place in the south of Scotland supposed to have been honoured, or benefited, by the residence of a Brownie, was Bodsbeck in Moffatdale, which has been the subject of an entertaining tale by Mr. James Hogg, the self-instructed genius of Ettrick Forest.

These particular superstitions, however, are too limited, and too much obliterated from recollection, to call for special discussion. The general faith in fairies has already undergone our consideration; but something remains to be said upon another species of superstition, so general that it may be called proper to mankind in every climate; so deeply rooted also in human belief, that it is found to survive in states of society during which all other fictions of the same order are entirely dismissed from influence. Mr. Crabbe, with his usual felicity, has called the belief in ghosts "the last lingering fiction of the brain."

Nothing appears more simple at the first view of the subject, than that human memory should recall and bring back to the eye of the imagination, in perfect similitude, even the very form and features of a person with whom we have been long conversant, or which have been imprinted in our

minds with indelible strength by some striking circumstances touching our meeting in life. The son does not easily forget the aspect of an affectionate father; and, for reasons opposite but equally powerful, the countenance of a murdered person is engraved upon the recollection of his slayer. A thousand additional circumstances, far too obvious to require recapitulation, render the supposed apparition of the dead the most ordinary spectral phenomenon which is ever believed to occur among the living. All that we have formerly said respecting supernatural appearances in general, applies with peculiar force to the belief of ghosts; for whether the cause of delusion exists in an excited imagination or a disordered organic system, it is in this way that it commonly exhibits itself. Hence Lucretius himself, the most absolute of sceptics, considers the existence of ghosts, and their frequent apparition, as facts so undeniable that he endeavours to account for them at the expense of assenting to a class of phenomena very irreconcilable to his general system. As he will not allow of the existence of the human soul, and at the same time cannot venture to question the phenomena supposed to haunt the repositories of the dead, he is obliged to adopt the belief that the body consists of several coats like those of an onion, and that the outmost and thinnest, being detached by death, continues to wander near the place of sepulture, in the exact resemblance of the person while alive.

We have said there are many ghost stories which we do not feel at liberty to challenge as impostures, because we are confident that those who relate them on their own authority actually believe what they assert, and may have good reason for doing so, though there is no real phantom after all. We are far, therefore, from averring that such tales are necessarily false. It is easy to suppose the visionary has been imposed upon by a lively dream, a waking reverie, the excitation of a powerful imagination, or the misrepresentation of a diseased organ of sight; and in one or other of these causes, to say nothing of a system of deception which may in many instances be probable, we apprehend a solution will be found for all cases of what are called real ghost stories.

In truth, the evidence with respect to such apparitions is very seldom accurately or distinctly questioned. A supernatural tale is in most cases received as an agreeable mode of amusing society, and he would be rather accounted a sturdy moralist than an entertaining companion who should employ himself in assailing its credibility. It would indeed be a solecism in manners, something like that of impeaching the genuine value of the

antiquities exhibited by a goodnatured collector for the gratification of his guests. This difficulty will appear greater should a company have the rare good fortune to meet the person who himself witnessed the wonders which he tells; a wellbred or prudent man will, under such circumstances, abstain from using the rules of cross-examination practised in a court of justice; and if in any case he presumes to do so, he is in danger of receiving answers, even from the most candid and honourable persons, which are rather fitted to support the credit of the story which they stand committed to maintain, than to the pure service of unadorned truth. The narrator is asked, for example, some unimportant question with respect to the apparition; he answers it on the hasty suggestion of his own imagination, tinged as it is with belief of the general fact, and by doing so often gives a feature of minute evidence which was before wanting, and this with perfect unconsciousness on his own part. It is a rare occurrence, indeed, to find an opportunity of dealing with an actual ghost-seer; such instances, however, I have certainly myself met with, and that in the case of able, wise, candid, and resolute persons, of whose veracity I had every reason to be confident. But in such instances shades of mental aberration have afterwards occurred, which sufficiently accounted for the supposed apparitions, and will incline me always to feel alarmed in behalf of the continued health of a friend who should conceive himself to have witnessed such a visitation.

The nearest approximation which can be generally made to exact evidence in this case, is the word of some individual who has had the story, it may be, from the person to whom it has happened, but most likely from his family, or some friend of the family. Far more commonly the narrator possesses no better means of knowledge than that of dwelling in the country where the thing happened, or being well acquainted with the outside of the mansion in the inside of which the ghost appeared.

In every point the evidence of such a second-hand retailer of the mystic story must fall under the adjudged case in an English court. The judge stopped a witness who was about to give an account of the murder upon trial, as it was narrated to him by the ghost of the murdered person. “Hold, sir,” said his lordship; “the ghost is an excellent witness, and his evidence the best possible; but he cannot be heard by proxy in this court. Summon him hither, and I’ll hear him in person; but your communication is mere hearsay, which my office compels me to reject.” Yet it is upon the credit of one man, who pledges it upon that of three or four persons, who have told it

successively to each other, that we are often expected to believe an incident inconsistent with the laws of Nature, however agreeable to our love of the wonderful and the horrible.

In estimating the truth or falsehood of such stories it is evident we can derive no proofs from that period of society when men affirmed boldly, and believed stoutly, all the wonders which could be coined or fancied. That such stories are believed and told by grave historians, only shows that the wisest men cannot rise in all things above the general ignorance of their age. Upon the evidence of such historians we might as well believe the portents of ancient or the miracles of modern Rome. For example, we read in Clarendon of the apparition of the ghost of Sir George Villiers to an ancient dependant. This is no doubt a story told by a grave author, at a time when such stories were believed by all the world; but does it follow that our reason must acquiesce in a statement so positively contradicted by the voice of Nature through all her works? The miracle of raising a dead man was positively refused by our Saviour to the Jews, who demanded it as a proof of his mission, because they had already sufficient grounds of conviction; and, as they believed them not, it was irresistibly argued by the Divine Person whom they tempted, that neither would they believe if one arose from the dead. Shall we suppose that a miracle refused for the conversion of God's chosen people was sent on a vain errand to save the life of a profligate spendthrift? I lay aside, you observe, entirely the not unreasonable supposition that Towers, or whatever was the ghost-seer's name, desirous to make an impression upon Buckingham, as an old servant of his house, might be tempted to give him his advice, of which we are not told the import, in the character of his father's spirit, and authenticate the tale by the mention of some token known to him as a former retainer of the family. The Duke was superstitious, and the ready dupe of astrologers and soothsayers. The manner in which he had provoked the fury of the people must have warned every reflecting person of his approaching fate; and, the age considered, it was not unnatural that a faithful friend should take this mode of calling his attention to his perilous situation. Or, if we suppose that the incident was not a mere pretext to obtain access to the Duke's ear, the messenger may have been impressed upon by an idle dream — in a word, numberless conjectures might be formed for accounting for the event in a natural way, the most extravagant of which is more probable than that the

laws of Nature were broken through in order to give a vain and fruitless warning to an ambitious minion.

It is the same with all those that are called accredited ghost stories usually told at the fireside. They want evidence. It is true that the general wish to believe, rather than power of believing, has given some such stories a certain currency in society. I may mention, as one of the class of tales I mean, that of the late Earl St. Vincent, who watched, with a friend, it is said, a whole night, in order to detect the cause of certain nocturnal disturbances which took place in a certain mansion. The house was under lease to Mrs. Ricketts, his sister. The result of his lordship's vigil is said to have been that he heard the noises without being able to detect the causes, and insisted on his sister giving up the house. This is told as a real story, with a thousand different circumstances. But who has heard or seen an authentic account from Earl St. Vincent, or from his "companion of the watch," or from his lordship's sister? And as in any other case such sure species of direct evidence would be necessary to prove the facts, it seems unreasonable to believe such a story on slighter terms. When the particulars are precisely fixed and known, it might be time to enquire whether Lord St. Vincent, amid the other eminent qualities of a firstrate seaman, might not be in some degree tinged with their tendency to superstition; and still farther, whether, having ascertained the existence of disturbances not immediately or easily detected, his lordship might not advise his sister rather to remove than to remain in a house so haunted, though he might believe that poachers or smugglers were the worst ghosts by whom it was disturbed.

The story of two highly respectable officers in the British army, who are supposed to have seen the spectre of the brother of one of them in a hut, or barrack, in America, is also one of those accredited ghost tales, which attain a sort of brevet rank as true, from the mention of respectable names as the parties who witnessed the vision. But we are left without a glimpse when, how, and in what terms, this story obtained its currency; as also by whom, and in what manner, it was first circulated; and among the numbers by whom it has been quoted, although all agree in the general event, scarcely two, even of those who pretend to the best information, tell the story in the same way.

Another such story, in which the name of a lady of condition is made use of as having seen an apparition in a country-seat in France, is so far better borne out than those I have mentioned, that I have seen a narrative of

the circumstances attested by the party principally concerned. That the house was disturbed seems to be certain, but the circumstances (though very remarkable) did not, in my mind, by any means exclude the probability that the disturbance and appearances were occasioned by the dexterous management of some mischievously-disposed persons.

The remarkable circumstance of Thomas, the second Lord Lyttelton, prophesying his own death within a few minutes, upon the information of an apparition, has been always quoted as a true story. But of late it has been said and published, that the unfortunate nobleman had previously determined to take poison, and of course had it in his own power to ascertain the execution of the prediction. It was no doubt singular that a man, who meditated his exit from the world, should have chosen to play such a trick on his friends. But it is still more credible that a whimsical man should do so wild a thing, than that a messenger should be sent from the dead to tell a libertine at what precise hour he should expire.

To this list other stories of the same class might be added. But it is sufficient to show that such stories as these, having gained a certain degree of currency in the world, and bearing creditable names on their front, walk through society unchallenged, like bills through a bank when they bear respectable indorsations, although, it may be, the signatures are forged after all. There is, indeed, an unwillingness very closely to examine such subjects, for the secret fund of superstition in every man's bosom is gratified by believing them to be true, or at least induces him to abstain from challenging them as false. And no doubt it must happen that the transpiring of incidents, in which men have actually seen, or conceived that they saw, apparitions which were invisible to others, contributes to the increase of such stories — which do accordingly sometimes meet us in a shape of veracity difficult to question.

The following story was narrated to me by my friend, Mr. William Clerk, chief clerk to the Jury Court, Edinburgh, when he first learned it, now nearly thirty years ago, from a passenger in the mail-coach. With Mr. Clerk's consent, I gave the story at that time to poor Mat Lewis, who published it with a ghost-ballad which he adjusted on the same theme. From the minuteness of the original detail, however, the narrative is better calculated for prose than verse; and more especially as the friend to whom it was originally communicated is one of the most accurate, intelligent, and

acute persons whom I have known in the course of my life, I am willing to preserve the precise story in this place.

It was about the eventful year 1800, when the Emperor Paul laid his ill-judged embargo on British trade, that my friend Mr. William Clerk, on a journey to London, found himself in company, in the mail-coach, with a seafaring man of middle age and respectable appearance, who announced himself as master of a vessel in the Baltic trade, and a sufferer by the embargo. In the course of the desultory conversation which takes place on such occasions the seaman observed, in compliance with a common superstition, "I wish we may have good luck on our journey — there is a magpie." "And why should that be unlucky?" said my friend. "I cannot tell you that," replied the sailor; "but all the world agrees that one magpie bodes bad luck — two are not so bad, but three are the devil. I never saw three magpies but twice, and once I had near lost my vessel, and the second I fell from a horse, and was hurt." This conversation led Mr. Clerk to observe that he supposed he believed also in ghosts, since he credited such auguries. "And if I do," said the sailor, "I may have my own reasons for doing so;" and he spoke this in a deep and serious manner, implying that he felt deeply what he was saying. On being further urged, he confessed that, if he could believe his own eyes, there was one ghost at least which he had seen repeatedly. He then told his story as I now relate it.

Our mariner had in his youth gone mate of a slave vessel from Liverpool, of which town he seemed to be a native. The captain of the vessel was a man of a variable temper, sometimes kind and courteous to his men, but subject to fits of humour, dislike, and passion, during which he was very violent, tyrannical, and cruel. He took a particular dislike at one sailor aboard, an elderly man, called Bill Jones, or some such name. He seldom spoke to this person without threats and abuse, which the old man, with the license which sailors take on merchant vessels, was very apt to return. On one occasion Bill Jones appeared slow in getting out on the yard to hand a sail. The captain, according to custom, abused the seaman as a lubberly rascal, who got fat by leaving his duty to other people. The man made a saucy answer, almost amounting to mutiny, on which, in a towering passion, the captain ran down to his cabin, and returned with a blunderbuss loaded with slugs, with which he took deliberate aim at the supposed mutineer, fired, and mortally wounded him. The man was handed down from the yard, and stretched on the deck, evidently dying. He fixed his eyes

on the captain, and said, “Sir, you have done for me, but *I will never leave you*” The captain, in return, swore at him for a fat lubber, and said he would have him thrown into the slave-kettle, where they made food for the negroes, and see how much fat he had got. The man died. His body was actually thrown into the slave-kettle, and the narrator observed, with a *naïveté* which confirmed the extent of his own belief in the truth of what he told, “There was not much fat about him after all.”

The captain told the crew they must keep absolute silence on the subject of what had passed; and as the mate was not willing to give an explicit and absolute promise, he ordered him to be confined below. After a day or two he came to the mate, and demanded if he had an intention to deliver him up for trial when the vessel got home. The mate, who was tired of close confinement in that sultry climate, spoke his commander fair, and obtained his liberty. When he mingled among the crew once more he found them impressed with the idea, not unnatural in their situation, that the ghost of the dead man appeared among them when they had a spell of duty, especially if a sail was to be handed, on which occasion the spectre was sure to be out upon the yard before any of the crew. The narrator had seen this apparition himself repeatedly — he believed the captain saw it also, but he took no notice of it for some time, and the crew, terrified at the violent temper of the man, dared not call his attention to it. Thus they held on their course homeward with great fear and anxiety.

At length, the captain invited the mate, who was now in a sort of favour, to go down to the cabin and take a glass of grog with him. In this interview he assumed a very grave and anxious aspect. “I need not tell you, Jack,” he said, “what sort of hand we have got on board with us. He told me he would never leave me, and he has kept his word. You only see him now and then, but he is always by my side, and never out of my sight. At this very moment I see him — I am determined to bear it no longer, and I have resolved to leave you.”

The mate replied that his leaving the vessel while out of the sight of any land was impossible. He advised, that if the captain apprehended any bad consequences from what had happened, he should run for the west of France or Ireland, and there go ashore, and leave him, the mate, to carry the vessel into Liverpool. The captain only shook his head gloomily, and reiterated his determination to leave the ship. At this moment the mate was called to the deck for some purpose or other, and the instant he got up the

companion-ladder he heard a splash in the water, and looking over the ship's side, saw that the captain had thrown himself into the sea from the quarter-gallery, and was running astern at the rate of six knots an hour. When just about to sink he seemed to make a last exertion, sprung half out of the water, and clasped his hands towards the mate, calling, "By — — , Bill is with me now!" and then sunk, to be seen no more.

After hearing this singular story Mr. Clerk asked some questions about the captain, and whether his companion considered him as at all times rational. The sailor seemed struck with the question, and answered, after a moment's delay, that in general *he conversationed well enough*.

It would have been desirable to have been able to ascertain how far this extraordinary tale was founded on fact; but want of time and other circumstances prevented Mr. Clerk from learning the names and dates, that might to a certain degree have verified the events. Granting the murder to have taken place, and the tale to have been truly told, there was nothing more likely to arise among the ship's company than the belief in the apparition; as the captain was a man of a passionate and irritable disposition, it was nowise improbable that he, the victim of remorse, should participate in the horrible visions of those less concerned, especially as he was compelled to avoid communicating his sentiments with any one else; and the catastrophe would in such a case be but the natural consequence of that superstitious remorse which has conducted so many criminals to suicide or the gallows. If the fellow-traveller of Mr. Clerk be not allowed this degree of credit, he must at least be admitted to have displayed a singular talent for the composition of the horrible in fiction. The tale, properly detailed, might have made the fortune of a romancer.

I cannot forbear giving you, as congenial to this story, another instance of a guilt-formed phantom, which made considerable noise about twenty years ago or more. I am, I think, tolerably correct in the details, though I have lost the account of the trial. Jarvis Matcham — such, if I am not mistaken, was the name of my hero — was pay-sergeant in a regiment, where he was so highly esteemed as a steady and accurate man that he was permitted opportunity to embezzle a considerable part of the money lodged in his hands for pay of soldiers, bounty of recruits (then a large sum), and other charges which fell within his duty. He was summoned to join his regiment from a town where he had been on the recruiting service, and this perhaps under some shade of suspicion. Matcham perceived discovery was

at hand, and would have deserted had it not been for the presence of a little drummer lad, who was the only one of his party appointed to attend him. In the desperation of his crime he resolved to murder the poor boy, and avail himself of some balance of money to make his escape. He meditated this wickedness the more readily that the drummer, he thought, had been put as a spy on him. He perpetrated his crime, and changing his dress after the deed was done, made a long walk across the country to an inn on the Portsmouth road, where he halted and went to bed, desiring to be called when the first Portsmouth coach came. The waiter summoned him accordingly, but long after remembered that, when he shook the guest by the shoulder, his first words as he awoke were: "My God! I did not kill him."

Matcham went to the seaport by the coach, and instantly entered as an able-bodied landsman or marine, I know not which. His sobriety and attention to duty gained him the same good opinion of the officers in his new service which he had enjoyed in the army. He was afloat for several years, and behaved remarkably well in some actions. At length the vessel came into Plymouth, was paid off, and some of the crew, amongst whom was Jarvis Matcham, were dismissed as too old for service. He and another seaman resolved to walk to town, and took the route by Salisbury. It was when within two or three miles of this celebrated city that they were overtaken by a tempest so sudden, and accompanied with such vivid lightning and thunder so dreadfully loud, that the obdurate conscience of the old sinner began to be awakened. He expressed more terror than seemed natural for one who was familiar with the war of elements, and began to look and talk so wildly that his companion became aware that something more than usual was the matter. At length Matcham complained to his companion that the stones rose from the road and flew after him. He desired the man to walk on the other side of the highway to see if they would follow him when he was alone. The sailor complied, and Jarvis Matcham complained that the stones still flew after him and did not pursue the other. "But what is worse," he added, coming up to his companion, and whispering, with a tone of mystery and fear, "who is that little drummer-boy, and what business has he to follow us so closely?" "I can see no one," answered the seaman, infected by the superstition of his associate. "What! not see that little boy with the bloody pantaloons!" exclaimed the secret murderer, so much to the terror of his comrade that he conjured him, if he

had anything on his mind, to make a clear conscience as far as confession could do it. The criminal fetched a deep groan, and declared that he was unable longer to endure the life which he had led for years. He then confessed the murder of the drummer, and added that, as a considerable reward had been offered, he wished his comrade to deliver him up to the magistrates of Salisbury, as he would desire a shipmate to profit by his fate, which he was now convinced was inevitable. Having overcome his friend's objections to this mode of proceeding, Jarvis Matcham was surrendered to justice accordingly, and made a full confession of his guilt But before the trial the love of life returned. The prisoner denied his confession, and pleaded Not Guilty. By this time, however, full evidence had been procured from other quarters. Witnesses appeared from his former regiment to prove his identity with the murderer and deserter, and the waiter remembered the ominous words which he had spoken when he awoke him to join the Portsmouth coach. Jarvis Matcham was found guilty and executed. When his last chance of life was over he returned to his confession, and with his dying breath averred, and truly, as he thought, the truth of the vision on Salisbury Plain. Similar stories might be produced, showing plainly that, under the direction of Heaven, the influence of superstitious fear may be the appointed means of bringing the criminal to repentance for his own sake, and to punishment for the advantage of society.

Cases of this kind are numerous and easily imagined, so I shall dwell on them no further; but rather advert to at least an equally abundant class of ghost stories, in which the apparition is pleased not to torment the actual murderer, but proceeds in a very circuitous manner, acquainting some stranger or ignorant old woman with the particulars of his fate, who, though perhaps unacquainted with all the parties, is directed by a phantom to lay the facts before a magistrate. In this respect we must certainly allow that ghosts have, as we are informed by the facetious Captain Grose, forms and customs peculiar to themselves.

There would be no edification and little amusement in treating of clumsy deceptions of this kind, where the grossness of the imposture detects itself. But occasionally cases occur like the following, with respect to which it is more difficult, to use James Boswell's phrase, "to know what to think."

Upon the 10th of June, 1754, Duncan Terig, *alias* Clark, and Alexander Bain MacDonald, two Highlanders, were tried before the Court of

Justiciary, Edinburgh, for the murder of Arthur Davis, sergeant in Guise's regiment, on the 28th September, 1749. The accident happened not long after the civil war, the embers of which were still reeking, so there existed too many reasons on account of which an English soldier, straggling far from assistance, might be privately cut off by the inhabitants of these wilds. It appears that Sergeant Davis was missing for years, without any certainty as to his fate. At length, an account of the murder appeared from the evidence of one Alexander MacPherson (a Highlander, speaking no language but Gaelic, and sworn by an interpreter), who gave the following extraordinary account of his cause of knowledge: — He was, he said, in bed in his cottage, when an apparition came to his bedside and commanded him to rise and follow him out of doors. Believing his visitor to be one Farquharson, a neighbour and friend, the witness did as he was bid; and when they were without the cottage, the appearance told the witness he was the ghost of Sergeant Davis, and requested him to go and bury his mortal remains, which lay concealed in a place he pointed out in a moorland tract called the Hill of Christie. He desired him to take Farquharson with him as an assistant. Next day the witness went to the place specified, and there found the bones of a human body much decayed. The witness did not at that time bury the bones so found, in consequence of which negligence the sergeant's ghost again appeared to him, upbraiding him with his breach of promise. On this occasion the witness asked the ghost who were the murderers, and received for answer that he had been slain by the prisoners at the bar. The witness, after this second visitation, called the assistance of Farquharson, and buried the body.

Farquharson was brought in evidence to prove that the preceding witness, MacPherson, had called him to the burial of the bones, and told him the same story which he repeated in court. Isabel MacHardie, a person who slept in one of the beds which run along the wall in an ordinary Highland hut, declared that upon the night when MacPherson said he saw the ghost, she saw a naked man enter the house and go towards MacPherson's bed.

Yet though the supernatural incident was thus fortified, and although there were other strong presumptions against the prisoners, the story of the apparition threw an air of ridicule on the whole evidence for the prosecution. It was followed up by the counsel for the prisoners asking, in the cross-examination of MacPherson, "What language did the ghost speak

in?" The witness, who was himself ignorant of English, replied, "As good Gaelic as I ever heard in Lochaber." "Pretty well for the ghost of an English sergeant," answered the counsel. The inference was rather smart and plausible than sound, for, the apparition of the ghost being admitted, we know too little of the other world to judge whether all languages may not be alike familiar to those who belonged to it. It imposed, however, on the jury, who found the accused parties not guilty, although their counsel and solicitor and most of the court were satisfied of their having committed the murder. In this case the interference of the ghost seems to have rather impeded the vengeance which it was doubtless the murdered sergeant's desire to obtain. Yet there may be various modes of explaining this mysterious story, of which the following conjecture may pass for one.

The reader may suppose that MacPherson was privy to the fact of the murder, perhaps as an accomplice or otherwise, and may also suppose that, from motives of remorse for the action, or of enmity to those who had committed it, he entertained a wish to bring them to justice. But through the whole Highlands there is no character more detestable than that of an informer, or one who takes what is called Tascal-money, or reward for discovery of crimes. To have informed against Terig and MacDonald might have cost MacPherson his life; and it is far from being impossible that he had recourse to the story of the ghost, knowing well that his superstitious countrymen would pardon his communicating the commission entrusted to him by a being from the other world, although he might probably have been murdered if his delation of the crime had been supposed voluntary. This explanation, in exact conformity with the sentiments of the Highlanders on such subjects, would reduce the whole story to a stroke of address on the part of the witness.

It is therefore of the last consequence, in considering the truth of stories of ghosts and apparitions, to consider the possibility of wilful deception, whether on the part of those who are agents in the supposed disturbances, or the author of the legend. We shall separately notice an instance or two of either kind.

The most celebrated instance in which human agency was used to copy the disturbances imputed to supernatural beings refers to the ancient palace of Woodstock, when the Commissioners of the Long Parliament came down to dispark what had been lately a royal residence. The Commissioners arrived at Woodstock, 13th October, 1649, determined to wipe away the

memory of all that connected itself with the recollection of monarchy in England. But in the course of their progress they were encountered by obstacles which apparently came from the next world. Their bedchambers were infested with visits of a thing resembling a dog, but which came and passed as mere earthly dogs cannot do. Logs of wood, the remains of a very large tree called the King's Oak, which they had splintered into billets for burning, were tossed through the house, and the chairs displaced and shuffled about. While they were in bed the feet of their couches were lifted higher than their heads, and then dropped with violence. Trenchers "without a wish" flew at their heads of free will. Thunder and lightning came next, which were set down to the same cause. Spectres made their appearance, as they thought, in different shapes, and one of the party saw the apparition of a hoof, which kicked a candlestick and lighted candle into the middle of the room, and then politely scratched on the red snuff to extinguish it. Other and worse tricks were practised on the astonished Commissioners who, considering that all the fiends of hell were let loose upon them, retreated from Woodstock without completing an errand which was, in their opinion, impeded by infernal powers, though the opposition offered was rather of a playful and malicious than of a dangerous cast.

The whole matter was, after the Restoration, discovered to be the trick of one of their own party, who had attended the Commissioners as a clerk, under the name of Giles Sharp. This man, whose real name was Joseph Collins of Oxford, called *Funny Joe*, was a concealed loyalist, and well acquainted with the old mansion of Woodstock, where he had been brought up before the Civil War. Being a bold, active spirited man, Joe availed himself of his local knowledge of trapdoors and private passages so as to favour the tricks which he played off upon his masters by aid of his fellow-domestics. The Commissioners' personal reliance on him made his task the more easy, and it was all along remarked that trusty Giles Sharp saw the most extraordinary sights and visions among the whole party. The unearthly terrors experienced by the Commissioners are detailed with due gravity by Sinclair, and also, I think, by Dr. Plott. But although the detection or explanation of the real history of the Woodstock demons has also been published, and I have myself seen it, I have at this time forgotten whether it exists in a separate collection, or where it is to be looked for.

Similar disturbances have been often experienced while it was the custom to believe in and dread such frolics of the invisible world, and under

circumstances which induce us to wonder, both at the extreme trouble taken by the agents in these impostures, and the slight motives from which they have been induced to do much wanton mischief. Still greater is our modern surprise at the apparently simple means by which terror has been excited to so general an extent, that even the wisest and most prudent have not escaped its contagious influence.

On the first point I am afraid there can be no better reason assigned than the conscious pride of superiority, which induces the human being in all cases to enjoy and practise every means of employing an influence over his fellow-mortals; to which we may safely add that general love of tormenting, as common to our race as to that noble mimick of humanity, the monkey. To this is owing the delight with which every schoolboy anticipates the effects of throwing a stone into a glass shop; and to this we must also ascribe the otherwise unaccountable pleasure which individuals have taken in practising the tricksy pranks of a goblin, and filling a household or neighbourhood with anxiety and dismay, with little gratification to themselves besides the consciousness of dexterity if they remain undiscovered, and with the risk of loss of character and punishment should the imposture be found out.

In the year 1772, a train of transactions, commencing upon Twelfth Day, threw the utmost consternation into the village of Stockwell, near London, and impressed upon some of its inhabitants the inevitable belief that they were produced by invisible agents. The plates, dishes, china, and glass-ware and small movables of every kind, contained in the house of Mrs. Golding, an elderly lady, seemed suddenly to become animated, shifted their places, flew through the room, and were broken to pieces. The particulars of this commotion were as curious as the loss and damage occasioned in this extraordinary manner were alarming and intolerable. Amidst this combustion, a young woman, Mrs. Golding's maid, named Anne Robinson, was walking backwards and forwards, nor could she be prevailed on to sit down for a moment excepting while the family were at prayers, during which time no disturbance happened. This Anne Robinson had been but a few days in the old lady's service, and it was remarkable that she endured with great composure the extraordinary display which others beheld with terror, and coolly advised her mistress not to be alarmed or uneasy, as these things could not be helped. This excited an idea that she had some reason for being so composed, not inconsistent with a degree of connexion with

what was going forward. The afflicted Mrs. Golding, as she might be well termed, considering such a commotion and demolition among her goods and chattels, invited neighbours to stay in her house, but they soon became unable to bear the sight of these supernatural proceedings, which went so far that not above two cups and saucers remained out of a valuable set of china. She next abandoned her dwelling, and took refuge with a neighbour, but, finding his movables were seized with the same sort of St. Vitus's dance, her landlord reluctantly refused to shelter any longer a woman who seemed to be persecuted by so strange a subject of vexation. Mrs. Golding's suspicions against Anne Robinson now gaining ground, she dismissed her maid, and the hubbub among her movables ceased at once and for ever.

This circumstance of itself indicates that Anne Robinson was the cause of these extraordinary disturbances, as has been since more completely ascertained by a Mr. Brayfield, who persuaded Anne, long after the events had happened, to make him her confidant. There was a love story connected with the case, in which the only magic was the dexterity of Anne Robinson and the simplicity of the spectators. She had fixed long horse hairs to some of the crockery, and placed wires under others, by which she could throw them down without touching them. Other things she dexterously threw about, which the spectators, who did not watch her motions, imputed to invisible agency. At times, when the family were absent, she loosened the hold of the strings by which the hams, bacon, and similar articles were suspended, so that they fell on the slightest motion. She employed some simple chemical secrets, and, delighted with the success of her pranks, pushed them farther than she at first intended. Such was the solution of the whole mystery, which, known by the name of the Stockwell ghost, terrified many well-meaning persons, and had been nearly as famous as that of Cock Lane, which may be hinted at as another imposture of the same kind. So many and wonderful are the appearances described, that when I first met with the original publication I was strongly impressed with the belief that the narrative was like some of Swift's advertisements, a jocular experiment upon the credulity of the public. But it was certainly published *bona fide*, and Mr. Hone, on the authority of Mr. Brayfield, has since fully explained the wonder.

Many such impositions have been detected, and many others have been successfully concealed; but to know what has been discovered in many instances gives us the assurance of the ruling cause in all. I remember a

scene of the kind attempted to be got up near Edinburgh, but detected at once by a sheriff's officer, a sort of persons whose habits of incredulity and suspicious observation render them very dangerous spectators on such occasions. The late excellent Mr. Walker, minister at Dunottar, in the Mearns, gave me a curious account of an imposture of this kind, practised by a young country girl, who was surprisingly quick at throwing stones, turf, and other missiles, with such dexterity that it was for a long time impossible to ascertain her agency in the disturbances of which she was the sole cause.

The belief of the spectators that such scenes of disturbance arise from invisible beings will appear less surprising if we consider the common feats of jugglers, or professors of legerdemain, and recollect that it is only the frequent exhibition of such powers which reconciles us to them as matters of course, although they are wonders at which in our fathers' time men would have cried out either sorcery or miracles. The spectator also, who has been himself duped, makes no very respectable appearance when convicted of his error; and thence, if too candid to add to the evidence of supernatural agency, is yet unwilling to stand convicted by cross-examination, of having been imposed on, and unconsciously becomes disposed rather to colour more highly than the truth, than acquiesce in an explanation resting on his having been too hasty a believer. Very often, too, the detection depends upon the combination of certain circumstances, which, apprehended, necessarily explain the whole story.

For example, I once heard a sensible and intelligent friend in company express himself convinced of the truth of a wonderful story, told him by an intelligent and bold man, about an apparition. The scene lay in an ancient castle on the coast of Morven or the Isle of Mull, where the ghost-seer chanced to be resident. He was given to understand by the family, when betaking himself to rest, that the chamber in which he slept was occasionally disquieted by supernatural appearances. Being at that time no believer in such stories, he attended little to this hint, until the witching hour of night, when he was awakened from a dead sleep by the pressure of a human hand on his body. He looked up at the figure of a tall Highlander, in the antique and picturesque dress of his country, only that his brows were bound with a bloody bandage. Struck with sudden and extreme fear, he was willing to have sprung from bed, but the spectre stood before him in the bright moonlight, its one arm extended so as to master him if he attempted

to rise; the other hand held up in a warning and grave posture, as menacing the Lowlander if he should attempt to quit his recumbent position. Thus he lay in mortal agony for more than an hour, after which it pleased the spectre of ancient days to leave him to more sound repose. So singular a story had on its side the usual number of votes from the company, till, upon cross-examination, it was explained that the principal person concerned was an exciseman. After which *eclaircissement* the same explanation struck all present, viz., the Highlanders of the mansion had chosen to detain the exciseman by the apparition of an ancient heroic ghost, in order to disguise from his vigilance the removal of certain modern enough spirits, which his duty might have called upon him to seize. Here a single circumstance explained the whole ghost story.

At other times it happens that the meanness and trifling nature of a cause not very obvious to observation has occasioned it to be entirely overlooked, even on account of that very meanness, since no one is willing to acknowledge that he has been alarmed by a cause of little consequence, and which he would be ashamed of mentioning. An incident of this sort happened to a gentleman of birth and distinction, who is well known in the political world, and was detected by the precision of his observation. Shortly after he succeeded to his estate and title, there was a rumour among his servants concerning a strange noise heard in the family mansion at night, the cause of which they had found it impossible to trace. The gentleman resolved to watch himself, with a domestic who had grown old in the family, and who had begun to murmur strange things concerning the knocking having followed so close upon the death of his old master. They watched until the noise was heard, which they listened to with that strange uncertainty attending midnight sounds which prevents the hearers from immediately tracing them to the spot where they arise, while the silence of the night generally occasions the imputing to them more than the due importance which they would receive if mingled with the usual noises of daylight. At length the gentleman and his servant traced the sounds which they had repeatedly heard to a small store-room used as a place for keeping provisions of various kinds for the family, of which the old butler had the key. They entered this place, and remained there for some time without hearing the noises which they had traced thither; at length the sound was heard, but much lower than it had formerly seemed to be, while acted upon at a distance by the imagination of the hearers. The cause was immediately

discovered. A rat caught in an old-fashioned trap had occasioned this tumult by its efforts to escape, in which it was able to raise the trapdoor of its prison to a certain height, but was then obliged to drop it. The noise of the fall, resounding through the house, had occasioned the disturbance which, but for the cool investigation of the proprietor, might easily have established an accredited ghost story. The circumstance was told me by the gentleman to whom it happened.

There are other occasions in which the ghost story is rendered credible by some remarkable combination of circumstances very unlikely to have happened, and which no one could have supposed unless some particular fortune occasioned a discovery.

An apparition which took place at Plymouth is well known, but it has been differently related; and having some reason to think the following edition correct, it is an incident so much to my purpose that you must pardon its insertion.

A club of persons connected with science and literature was formed at the great sea-town I have named. During the summer months the society met in a cave by the seashore; during those of autumn and winter they convened within the premises of a tavern, but, for the sake of privacy, had their meetings in a summerhouse situated in the garden, at a distance from the main building. Some of the members to whom the position of their own dwellings rendered this convenient, had a pass-key to the garden-door, by which they could enter the garden and reach the summerhouse without the publicity or trouble of passing through the open tavern. It was the rule of this club that its members presided alternately. On one occasion, in the winter, the president of the evening chanced to be very ill; indeed, was reported to be on his deathbed. The club met as usual, and, from a sentiment of respect, left vacant the chair which ought to have been occupied by him if in his usual health; for the same reason, the conversation turned upon the absent gentleman's talents, and the loss expected to the society by his death. While they were upon this melancholy theme, the door suddenly opened, and the appearance of the president entered the room. He wore a white wrapper, a nightcap round his brow, the appearance of which was that of death itself. He stalked into the room with unusual gravity, took the vacant place of ceremony, lifted the empty glass which stood before him, bowed around, and put it to his lips; then replaced it on the table, and stalked out of the room as silent as he had entered it. The company remained deeply

appalled; at length, after many observations on the strangeness of what they had seen, they resolved to dispatch two of their number as ambassadors, to see how it fared with the president, who had thus strangely appeared among them. They went, and returned with the frightful intelligence that the friend after whom they had enquired was that evening deceased.

The astonished party then resolved that they would remain absolutely silent respecting the wonderful sight which they had seen. Their habits were too philosophical to permit them to believe that they had actually seen the ghost of their deceased brother, and at the same time they were too wise men to wish to confirm the superstition of the vulgar by what might seem indubitable evidence of a ghost. The affair was therefore kept a strict secret, although, as usual, some dubious rumours of the tale found their way to the public. Several years afterwards, an old woman who had long filled the place of a sick-nurse, was taken very ill, and on her deathbed was attended by a medical member of the philosophical club. To him, with many expressions of regret, she acknowledged that she had long before attended Mr. — — , naming the president whose appearance had surprised the club so strangely, and that she felt distress of conscience on account of the manner in which he died. She said that as his malady was attended by lightheadedness, she had been directed to keep a close watch upon him during his illness. Unhappily she slept, and during her sleep the patient had awaked and left the apartment. When, on her own awaking, she found the bed empty and the patient gone, she forthwith hurried out of the house to seek him, and met him in the act of returning. She got him, she said, replaced in bed, but it was only to die there. She added, to convince her hearer of the truth of what she said, that immediately after the poor gentleman expired, a deputation of two members from the club came to enquire after their president's health, and received for answer that he was already dead. This confession explained the whole matter. The delirious patient had very naturally taken the road to the club, from some recollections of his duty of the night. In approaching and retiring from the apartment he had used one of the pass-keys already mentioned, which made his way shorter. On the other hand, the gentlemen sent to enquire after his health had reached his lodging by a more circuitous road; and thus there had been time for him to return to what proved his deathbed, long before they reached his chamber. The philosophical witnesses of this strange scene were now as anxious to spread the story as they had formerly been to conceal it,

since it showed in what a remarkable manner men's eyes might turn traitors to them, and impress them with ideas far different from the truth.

Another occurrence of the same kind, although scarcely so striking in its circumstances, was yet one which, had it remained unexplained, might have passed as an indubitable instance of a supernatural apparition.

A Teviotdale farmer was riding from a fair, at which he had indulged himself with John Barleycorn, but not to that extent of defying goblins which it inspired into the gallant Tam o'Shanter. He was pondering with some anxiety upon the dangers of travelling alone on a solitary road which passed the corner of a churchyard, now near at hand, when he saw before him in the moonlight a pale female form standing upon the very wall which surrounded the cemetery. The road was very narrow, with no opportunity of giving the apparent phantom what seamen call a wide berth. It was, however, the only path which led to the rider's home, who therefore resolved, at all risks, to pass the apparition. He accordingly approached, as slowly as possible, the spot where the spectre stood, while the figure remained, now perfectly still and silent, now brandishing its arms and gibbering to the moon. When the farmer came close to the spot he dashed in the spurs and set the horse off upon a gallop; but the spectre did not miss its opportunity. As he passed the corner where she was perched, she contrived to drop behind the horseman and seize him round the waist, a manoeuvre which greatly increased the speed of the horse and the terror of the rider; for the hand of her who sat behind him, when pressed upon his, felt as cold as that of a corpse. At his own house at length he arrived, and bid the servants who came to attend him, "Tak aff the ghaist!" They took off accordingly a female in white, and the poor farmer himself was conveyed to bed, where he lay struggling for weeks with a strong nervous fever. The female was found to be a maniac, who had been left a widow very suddenly by an affectionate husband, and the nature and cause of her malady induced her, when she could make her escape, to wander to the churchyard, where she sometimes wildly wept over his grave, and sometimes, standing on the corner of the churchyard wall, looked out, and mistook every stranger on horseback for the husband she had lost. If this woman, which was very possible, had dropt from the horse unobserved by him whom she had made her involuntary companion, it would have been very hard to have convinced the honest farmer that he had not actually performed part of his journey with a ghost behind him.

There is also a large class of stories of this sort, where various secrets of chemistry, of acoustics, ventriloquism, or other arts, have been either employed to dupe the spectators, or have tended to do so through mere accident and coincidence. Of these it is scarce necessary to quote instances; but the following may be told as a tale recounted by a foreign nobleman known to me nearly thirty years ago, whose life, lost in the service of his sovereign, proved too short for his friends and his native land.

At a certain old castle on the confines of Hungary, the lord to whom it belonged had determined upon giving an entertainment worthy of his own rank and of the magnificence of the antique mansion which he inhabited. The guests of course were numerous, and among them was a veteran officer of hussars, remarkable for his bravery. When the arrangements for the night were made this officer was informed that there would be difficulty in accommodating the company in the castle, large as was, unless some one would take the risk of sleeping in a room supposed to be haunted, and that, as he was known to be above such prejudices, the apartment was in the first place proposed for his occupation, as the person least likely to suffer a bad night's rest from such a cause. The major thankfully accepted the preference, and having shared the festivity of the evening, retired after midnight, having denounced vengeance against any one who should presume by any trick to disturb his repose; a threat which his habits would, it was supposed, render him sufficiently ready to execute. Somewhat contrary to the custom in these cases, the major went to bed, having left his candle burning and laid his trusty pistols, carefully loaded, on the table by his bedside.

He had not slept an hour when he was awakened by a solemn strain of music. He looked out. Three ladies, fantastically dressed in green, were seen in the lower end of the apartment, who sung a solemn requiem. The major listened for some time with delight; at length he tired. "Ladies," he said, "this is very well, but somewhat monotonous — will you be so kind as to change the tune?" The ladies continued singing; he expostulated, but the music was not interrupted. The major began to grow angry: "Ladies," he said, "I must consider this as a trick for the purpose of terrifying me, and as I regard it as an impertinence, I shall take a rough mode of stopping it." With that he began to handle his pistols. The ladies sung on. He then get seriously angry: "I will but wait five minutes," he said, "and then fire without hesitation." The song was uninterrupted — the five minutes were

expired. “I still give you law, ladies,” he said, “while I count twenty.” This produced as little effect as his former threats. He counted one, two, three accordingly; but on approaching the end of the number, and repeating more than once his determination to fire, the last numbers, seventeen — eighteen — nineteen, were pronounced with considerable pauses between, and an assurance that the pistols were cocked. The ladies sung on. As he pronounced the word twenty he fired both pistols against the musical damsels — but the ladies sung on! The major was overcome by the unexpected inefficacy of his violence, and had an illness which lasted more than three weeks. The trick put upon him may be shortly described by the fact that the female choristers were placed in an adjoining room, and that he only fired at their reflection thrown forward into that in which he slept by the effect of a concave mirror.

Other stories of the same kind are numerous and well known. The apparition of the Brocken mountain, after having occasioned great admiration and some fear, is now ascertained by philosophers to be a gigantic reflection, which makes the traveller’s shadow, represented upon the misty clouds, appear a colossal figure of almost immeasurable size. By a similar deception men have been induced, in Westmoreland and other mountainous countries, to imagine they saw troops of horse and armies marching and countermarching, which were in fact only the reflection of horses pasturing upon an opposite height, or of the forms of peaceful travellers.

A very curious case of this kind was communicated to me by the son of the lady principally concerned, and tends to show out of what mean materials a venerable apparition may be sometimes formed. In youth this lady resided with her father, a man of sense and resolution. Their house was situated in the principal street of a town of some size. The back part of the house ran at right angles to an Anabaptist chapel, divided from it by a small cabbage-garden. The young lady used sometimes to indulge the romantic love of solitude by sitting in her own apartment in the evening till twilight, and even darkness, was approaching. One evening, while she was thus placed, she was surprised to see a gleamy figure, as of some aerial being, hovering, as it were, against the arched window in the end of the Anabaptist chapel. Its head was surrounded by that halo which painters give to the Catholic saints; and while the young lady’s attention was fixed on an object so extraordinary, the figure bent gracefully towards her more than once, as

if intimating a sense of her presence, and then disappeared. The seer of this striking vision descended to her family, so much discomposed as to call her father's attention. He obtained an account of the cause of her disturbance, and expressed his intention to watch in the apartment next night. He sat accordingly in his daughter's chamber, where she also attended him. Twilight came, and nothing appeared; but as the gray light faded into darkness, the same female figure was seen hovering on the window; the same shadowy form, the same pale light-around the head, the same inclinations, as the evening before. "What do you think of this?" said the daughter to the astonished father. "Anything, my dear," said the father, "rather than allow that we look upon what is supernatural." A strict research established a natural cause for the appearance on the window. It was the custom of an old woman, to whom the garden beneath was rented, to go out at night to gather cabbages. The lantern she carried in her hand threw up the refracted reflection of her form on the chapel window. As she stooped to gather her cabbages the reflection appeared to bend forward; and that was the whole matter.

Another species of deception, affecting the credit of such supernatural communications, arises from the dexterity and skill of the authors who have made it their business to present such stories in the shape most likely to attract belief. Defoe — whose power in rendering credible that which was in itself very much the reverse was so peculiarly distinguished — has not failed to show his superiority in this species of composition. A bookseller of his acquaintance had, in the trade phrase, rather overprinted an edition of "Drelincourt on Death," and complained to Defoe of the loss which was likely to ensue. The experienced bookmaker, with the purpose of recommending the edition, advised his friend to prefix the celebrated narrative of Mrs. Veal's ghost, which he wrote for the occasion, with such an air of truth, that although in fact it does not afford a single tittle of evidence properly so called, it nevertheless was swallowed so eagerly by the people that Drelincourt's work on death, which the supposed spirit recommended to the perusal of her friend Mrs. Bargrave, instead of sleeping on the editor's shelf, moved off by thousands at once; the story, incredible in itself, and unsupported as it was by evidence or enquiry, was received as true, merely from the cunning of the narrator, and the addition of a number of adventitious circumstances, which no man alive could have conceived as having occurred to the mind of a person composing a fiction.

It did not require the talents of Defoe, though in that species of composition he must stand unrivalled, to fix the public attention on a ghost story. John Dunton, a man of scribbling celebrity at the time, succeeded to a great degree in imposing upon the public a tale which he calls the Apparition Evidence. The beginning of it, at least (for it is of great length), has something in it a little new. At Mynehead, in Somersetshire, lived an ancient gentlewoman named Mrs. Leckie, whose only son and daughter resided in family with her. The son traded to Ireland, and was supposed to be worth eight or ten thousand pounds. They had a child about five or six years old. This family was generally respected in Mynehead; and especially Mrs. Leckie, the old lady, was so pleasant in society, that her friends used to say to her, and to each other, that it was a thousand pities such an excellent, good-humoured gentlewoman must, from her age, be soon lost to her friends. To which Mrs. Leckie often made the somewhat startling reply: "Forasmuch as you now seem to like me, I am afraid you will but little care to see or speak with me after my death, though I believe you may have that satisfaction." Die, however, she did, and after her funeral was repeatedly seen in her personal likeness, at home and abroad, by night and by noonday.

One story is told of a doctor of physic walking into the fields, who in his return met with this spectre, whom he at first accosted civilly, and paid her the courtesy of handing her over a stile. Observing, however, that she did not move her lips in speaking, or her eyes in looking round, he became suspicious of the condition of his companion, and showed some desire to be rid of her society. Offended at this, the hag at next stile planted herself upon it, and obstructed his passage. He got through at length with some difficulty, and not without a sound kick, and an admonition to pay more attention to the next aged gentlewoman whom he met. "But this," says John Dunton, "was a petty and inconsiderable prank to what she played in her son's house and elsewhere. She would at noonday appear upon the quay of Mynehead, and cry, 'A boat, a boat, ho! a boat, a boat, ho!' If any boatmen or seamen were in sight, and did not come, they were sure to be cast away; and if they did come, 'twas all one, they were cast away. It was equally dangerous to please and displease her. Her son had several ships sailing between Ireland and England; no sooner did they make land, and come in sight of England, but this ghost would appear in the same garb and likeness as when she was alive, and, standing at the mainmast, would blow with a whistle, and though it were never so great a calm, yet immediately there would arise a most

dreadful storm, that would break, wreck, and drown the ship and goods; only the seamen would escape with their lives — the devil had no permission from God to take them away. Yet at this rate, by her frequent apparitions and disturbances, she had made a poor merchant of her son, for his fair estate was all buried in the sea, and he that was once worth thousands was reduced to a very poor and low condition in the world; for whether the ship were his own or hired, or he had but goods on board it to the value of twenty shillings, this troublesome ghost would come as before, whistle in a calm at the mainmast at noonday, when they had descried land, and then ship and goods went all out of hand to wreck; insomuch that he could at last get no ships wherein to stow his goods, nor any mariner to sail in them; for knowing what an uncomfortable, fatal, and losing voyage they should make of it, they did all decline his service. In her son's house she hath her constant haunts by day and night; but whether he did not, or would not own if he did, see her, he always professed he never saw her. Sometimes when in bed with his wife, she would cry out, 'Husband, look, there's your mother!' And when he would turn to the right side, then was she gone to the left; and when to the left side of the bed, then was she gone to the right; only one evening their only child, a girl of about five or six years old, lying in a ruckle-bed under them, cries out, 'Oh, help me, father! help me, mother! for grandmother will choke me!' and before they could get to their child's assistance she had murdered it; they finding the poor girl dead, her throat having been pinched by two fingers, which stopped her breath and strangled her. This was the sorest of all their afflictions; their estate is gone, and now their child is gone also; you may guess at their grief and great sorrow. One morning after the child's funeral, her husband being abroad, about eleven in the forenoon, Mrs. Leckie the younger goes up into her chamber to dress her head, and as she was looking into the glass she spies her motherin-law, the old beldam, looking over her shoulder. This cast her into a great horror; but recollecting her affrighted spirits, and recovering the exercise of her reason, faith, and hope, having cast up a short and silent prayer to God, she turns about, and bespeaks her: 'In the name of God, mother, why do you trouble me?' 'Peace,' says the spectrum; 'I will do thee no hurt.' 'What will you have of me?' says the daughter," &c. Dunton, the narrator and probably the contriver of the story, proceeds to inform us at length of a commission which the wife of Mr. Leckie receives from the ghost to deliver to Atherton, Bishop of Waterford, a guilty and unfortunate

man, who afterwards died by the hands of the executioner; but that part of the subject is too disagreeable and tedious to enter upon.

[Footnote 86: “Apparition Evidence.”]

So deep was the impression made by the story on the inhabitants of Mynehead, that it is said the tradition of Mrs. Leckie still remains in that port, and that mariners belonging to it often, amid tempestuous weather, conceive they hear the whistle-call of the implacable hag who was the source of so much mischief to her own family. However, already too desultory and too long, it would become intolerably tedious were I to insist farther on the peculiar sort of genius by which stories of this kind may be embodied and prolonged.

I may, however, add, that the charm of the tale depends much upon the age of the person to whom it is addressed; and that the vivacity of fancy which engages us in youth to pass over much that is absurd, in order to enjoy some single trait of imagination, dies within us when we obtain the age of manhood, and the sadder and graver regions which lie beyond it. I am the more conscious of this, because I have been myself at two periods of my life, distant from each other, engaged in scenes favourable to that degree of superstitious awe which my countrymen expressively call being *eerie*.

On the first of these occasions I was only ninteeen or twenty years old, when I happened to pass a night in the magnificent old baronial castle of Glammis, the hereditary seat of the Earls of Strathmore. The hoary pile contains much in its appearance, and in the traditions connected with it, impressive to the imagination. It was the scene of the murder of a Scottish king of great antiquity; not indeed the gracious Duncan, with whom the name naturally associates itself, but Malcolm the Second. It contains also a curious monument of the peril of feudal times, being a secret chamber, the entrance of which, by the law or custom of the family, must only be known to three persons at once, viz., the Earl of Strathmore, his heir apparent, and any third person whom they may take into their confidence. The extreme antiquity of the building is vouched by the immense thickness of the walls, and the wild and straggling arrangement of the accommodation within doors. As the late Earl of Strathmore seldom resided in that ancient mansion, it was, when I was there, but half-furnished, and that with movables of great antiquity, which, with the pieces of chivalric armour hanging upon the walls, greatly contributed to the general effect of the

whole. After a very hospitable reception from the late Peter Proctor, Esq., then seneschal of the castle, in Lord Strathmore's absence, I was conducted to my apartment in a distant corner of the building. I must own, that as I heard door after door shut, after my conductor had retired, I began to consider myself too far from the living and somewhat too near the dead. We had passed through what is called "The King's Room," a vaulted apartment, garnished with stags' antlers and similar trophies of the chase, and said by tradition to be the spot of Malcolm's murder, and I had an idea of the vicinity of the castle chapel.

In spite of the truth of history, the whole night-scene in Macbeth's castle rushed at once upon my mind, and struck my imagination more forcibly than even when I have seen its terrors represented by the late John Kemble and his inimitable sister. In a word, I experienced sensations which, though not remarkable either for timidity or superstition, did not fail to affect me to the point of being disagreeable, while they were mingled at the same time with a strange and indescribable kind of pleasure, the recollection of which affords me gratification at this moment.

In the year 1814 accident placed me, then past middle life, in a situation somewhat similar to that which I have described.

I had been on a pleasure voyage with some friends around the north coast of Scotland, and in that course had arrived in the saltwater lake under the castle of Dunvegan, whose turrets, situated upon a frowning rock, rise immediately above the waves of the loch. As most of the party, and I myself in particular, chanced to be well known to the Laird of Macleod, we were welcomed to the castle with Highland hospitality, and glad to find ourselves in polished society, after a cruise of some duration. The most modern part of the castle was founded in the days of James VI.; the more ancient is referred to a period "whose birth tradition notes not." Until the present Macleod connected by a drawbridge the site of the castle with the mainland of Skye, the access must have been extremely difficult. Indeed, so much greater was the regard paid to security than to convenience, that in former times the only access to the mansion arose through a vaulted cavern in a rock, up which a staircase ascended from the seashore, like the buildings we read of in the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe.

Such a castle, in the extremity of the Highlands, was of course furnished with many a tale of tradition, and many a superstitious legend, to fill occasional intervals in the music and song, as proper to the halls of

Dunvegan as when Johnson commemorated them. We reviewed the arms and ancient valuables of this distinguished family — saw the dirk and broadsword of Rorie Mhor, and his horn, which would drench three chiefs of these degenerate days. The solemn drinking-cup of the Kings of Man must not be forgotten, nor the fairy banner given to Macleod by the Queen of Fairies; that magic flag which has been victorious in two pitched fields, and will still float in the third, the bloodiest and the last, when the Elfin Sovereign shall, after the fight is ended, recall her banner, and carry off the standard-bearer.

Amid such tales of ancient tradition I had from Macleod and his lady the courteous offer of the haunted apartment of the castle, about which, as a stranger, I might be supposed interested. Accordingly, I took possession of it about the witching hour. Except perhaps some tapestry hangings, and the extreme thickness of the walls, which argued great antiquity, nothing could have been more comfortable than the interior of the apartment; but if you looked from the windows the view was such as to correspond with the highest tone of superstition. An autumnal blast, sometimes driving mist before it, swept along the troubled billows of the lake, which it occasionally concealed, and by fits disclosed. The waves rushed in wild disorder on the shore, and covered with foam the steep piles of rock, which, rising from the sea in forms something resembling the human figure, have obtained the name of Macleod's Maidens, and in such a night seemed no bad representatives of the Norwegian goddesses called Choosers of the Slain, or Riders of the Storm. There was something of the dignity of danger in the scene; for on a platform beneath the windows lay an ancient battery of cannon, which had sometimes been used against privateers even of late years. The distant scene was a view of that part of the Quillan mountains which are called, from their form, Macleod's Dining-Tables. The voice of an angry cascade, termed the Nurse of Rorie Mhor, because that chief slept best 'in its vicinity, was heard from time to time mingling its notes with those of wind and wave. Such was the haunted room at Dunvegan, and as such it well deserved a less sleepy inhabitant. In the language of Dr. Johnson, who has stamped his memory on this remote place, "I looked around me, and wondered that I was not more affected; but the mind is not at all times equally ready to be moved." In a word, it is necessary to confess that, of all I heard or saw, the most engaging spectacle was the comfortable bed, in which I hoped to make amends for some rough nights on shipboard,

and where I slept accordingly without thinking of ghost or goblin till I was called by my servant in the morning.

From this I am taught to infer that tales of ghosts and demonology are out of date at forty years and upwards; that it is only in the morning of life that this feeling of superstition "comes o'er us like a summer cloud," affecting us with fear which is solemn and awful rather than painful; and I am tempted to think that, if I were to write on the subject at all, it should have been during a period of life when I could have treated it with more interesting vivacity, and might have been at least amusing if I could not be instructive. Even the present fashion of the world seems to be ill suited for studies of this fantastic nature; and the most ordinary mechanic has learning sufficient to laugh at the figments which in former times were believed by persons far advanced in the deepest knowledge of the age.

I cannot, however, in conscience carry my opinion of my countrymen's good sense so far as to exculpate them entirely from the charge of credulity. Those who are disposed to look for them may, without much trouble, see such manifest signs, both of superstition and the disposition to believe in its doctrines, as may render it no useless occupation to compare the follies of our fathers with our own. The sailors have a proverb that every man in his lifetime must eat a peck of impurity; and it seems yet more clear that every generation of the human race must swallow a certain measure of nonsense. There remains hope, however, that the grosser faults of our ancestors are now out of date; and that whatever follies the present race may be guilty of, the sense of humanity is too universally spread to permit them to think of tormenting wretches till they confess what is impossible, and then burning them for their pains.

THE END.

Various Articles and Essays

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RELIQUES OF ROBERT BURNS

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We opened a book bearing so interesting a title with no little anxiety. Literary reliques vary in species and value almost as much as those of the Catholic or of the antiquary. Some deserve a golden shrine for their intrinsic merit, some are valued from the pleasing recollections and associations with which they are combined, some, reflecting little honour upon their unfortunate author, are dragged by interested editors from merited obscurity. The character of Burns, on which we may perhaps hazard some remarks in the course of this article, was such as to increase our apprehensions. The extravagance of genius with which this wonderful man was gifted, being in his later and more evil days directed to no fixed or general purpose, was, in the morbid state of his health and feelings, apt to display itself in hasty sallies of virulent and unmerited severity: sallies often regretted by the bard himself; and of which justice to the living and to the dead, alike demanded the suppression. Neither was this anxiety lessened, when we recollected the pious care with which the late excellent Dr. Currie had performed the task of editing the works of Burns. His selection was limited as much by respect to the fame of the living as of the dead. He dragged from obscurity none of those satirical effusions, which ought to be as ephemeral as as the transient offences which called them forth. He excluded every thing approaching to license, whether in morals or in religion, and thus rendered his collection such, as doubtless Burns himself, in his moments of sober reflection, would have most highly approved. Yet applauding, as we do most highly applaud, the leading principles of Dr. Currie's selection, we are aware that they sometimes led him into fastidious and over-delicate rejection of the bard's most spirited and happy effusions. A thin octavo published at Glasgow in 1801, under the title of *Poems ascribed to Robert Burns the Ayrshire bard,* furnishes valuable proofs of this assertion. It contains, among a good deal of rubbish, some of his most brilliant poetry. A cantata in particular, called *The Jolly Beggars,* for humorous description and nice discrimination of character, is inferior to no poem of the same length in the whole range of English poetry. The scene, indeed, is laid in the very lowest department of low life, the actors being a

set of strolling vagrants, met to carouse, and barter their rags and plunder for liquor in a hedge alehouse; — yet even in describing the movements of such a group, the native taste of the poet has never suffered his pen to slide into any thing coarse or disgusting. The extravagant glee and outrageous frolic of the beggars are ridiculously contrasted with their maimed limbs, rags, and crutches — the sordid and squalid circumstances of their appearance are judiciously thrown into the shade. Nor is the art of the poet less conspicuous in the individual figures, than in the general mass. The festive vagrants are distinguished from each other by personal appearance and character, as much as any fortuitous assembly in the higher orders of life. The group, it must be observed, is of Scottish character, and doubtless our northern brethren are mere familiar with its varieties than we are; yet the distinctions are to well marked to escape even the Southron. The most prominent persons are a maimed soldier and his female companion, a hackneyed follower of the camp, a stroller, late the consort of an Highland ketterer or sturdy beggar, — "but weary fa' the waefu' woodie!" — Being now at liberty, she becomes an object of rivalry between a "pigmy scraper with his fiddle" and a strolling tinker. The latter, a desperate bandit, like most of his profession, terrifies the musician out of the field, and is preferred by the damsel of course. A wandering ballad-singer, with a brace of doxies, is last introduced upon the stage. Each of these mendicants sings a song in character, and such a collection of humorous lyrics, connected by vivid poetical description, is not, perhaps, to be paralleled in the English language. As the collection and the poem are very little known in England, and as it is certainly apposite to the Reliques of Robert Burns, we venture to transcribe the concluding ditty, chanted by the ballad-singer at the request of the company, whose "mirth and fun have now grown fast and furious," and set them above all sublunary terrors of jails, stocks, and whipping-posts. It is certainly far superior to any thing in the *Beggar's Opera,* where alone we could expect to find its parallel.

"Then ou're again, the jovial thrang
The poet did request,
To loose his pack an' wale a sang,
A ballad o' the best:

He rising, rejoicing

Between his twa Deborahs,
Looks round him, an' found them
Impatient for the chorus,

Air.

See! the smoking bowl before us,
Mark our jovial ragged ring!
Round and round take up the chorus.
And in raptures let us sing.

Chorus.

A fig for those by law protected!
Liberty's a glorious feast!
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.

What is title? what is treasure?
What is reputation's care?
If we lead a life of pleasure.
'Tis no matter how or where!
A fig, *etc.*

With the ready trick and fable,
Round we wander all the day;
And at night, in barn or stable,
Hug our doxies on the hay. A fig, *etc.*

Does the train-attended carriage
Through the country lighter rove?
Does the sober bed of marriage
Witness brighter scenes of love?
A fig, *etc.*

Life is all a variorum,
We regard not how it goes,

Let them cant about decorum
Who have characters to lose.
A fig, *etc.*

Here's to budgets, bags, and wallets!
Here's to all the wandering train!
Here's our ragged *brats and callets*!
One and all cry out, Amen!
A fig, etc."

We are at a loss to conceive any good reason why Dr. Currie did not introduce this singular and humorous cantata into his collection. It is true, that in one or two passages the muse has trespassed slightly upon decorum, where, in the language of Scottish song,

"High kilted was she
As she gaud ower the lea."

Something, however, is to be allowed to the nature of the subject and something to the education of the poet; and if, from veneration to the names of Swift and Dryden we tolerate the grossness of the one, and the indelicacy of the other, the respect due to that of Burns may surely claim indulgence for a few light strokes of broad humour. The same collection contains *Holy Willie's Prayer,* a piece of satire more exquisitely severe than any which Burns afterwards wrote, but unfortunately cast in a form too daringly profane to be received into Dr. Currie's collection.

Knowing that these, and hoping that other compositions of similar spirit and tenor might yet be recovered, we were induced to think that some of them, at least, had found a place in the collection now given to the public by Mr. Cromek; but he has neither risked the censure, nor laid claim to the applause, which might have belonged to such an undertaking. The contents of the volume before us are more properly gleanings than relics — the refuse and sweepings of the shop, rather than the commodities which might be deemed contraband. Yet even these scraps and remnants contain articles of curiosity and value, tending to throw light on the character of one of the most singular men by whose appearance our age has been distinguished.

The first portion of the volume contains nearly two hundred pages of letters, addressed by Burns to various individuals, written in various tones

of feeling and modes of mind — in some instances exhibiting all the force of the writer's talents, in others only valuable because they bear his signature. The avidity with which the reader ever devours this species of publication, has been traced to the desire of seeing the mind and opinions of celebrated men in their open and undisguised moments, and of perusing and appreciating their thoughts while the gold is yet rude ore, ere it is refined and manufactured into polished sentences or sounding stanzas. But, notwithstanding these fair pretences, we doubt if this appetite can be referred to any more honourable source than the love of anecdote and private history. In fact, letters — at least these of a general and miscellaneous kind — very rarely contain the real opinions of the writer. If an author sits down to the task of formally composing a work for the use of the public, he has previously considered his subject, and made up his mind both on the opinions he is to express, and on the mode of supporting them. But the same man usually writes a letter only because the letter must be written — is probably never more at a loss than when looking for a subject — and treats it, when found, rather so as to gratify his correspondent, than communicate his own feelings. The letters of Burns, although containing passages of great eloquence, and expressive of the intense fire of his disposition, are not exceptions from this general rule. They bear occasionally strong marks of affectation, with a tinge of pedantry rather foreign from the bard's character and education. The following paragraphs illustrate both the excellences and faults of his epistolary composition. Nothing can be more humorously imagined and embodied than the sage group of Wisdom and Prudence in the first, while the affectation of the second amounts to absolute rant.

"Do tell that to Lady M'Kenzie, that she may give me credit for a little wisdom. 'I, Wisdom, dwell with Prudence.' What a blessed fireside! — How happy should I be to pass a winter evening under their venerable roof! and smoke a pipe of tobacco, or drink water-gruel with them! What solemn, lengthened laughter-quashing gravity of phiz! What sage remarks on the good-for-nothing sons and daughters of indiscretion and folly! and what frugal lessons, as we straitened the fireside circle, on the uses of poker and tongs!"

"Miss N. is very well, and begs to be remembered in the old way to you. I used all my eloquence, all the persuasive flourishes of the hand, and heart-melting modulations of periods in my power, to urge her out to Hervieston,

but all in vain. My rhetoric seems quite to have lost its effect on the lovely half of mankind. I have seen the day — but that is as a ‘tale of other years;’ — in my conscience I believe that my heart has been so oft on fire, that it is absolutely vitrified. I look on the sex with something like the admiration with which I regard the starry sky in a frosty December night. I admire the beauty of the Creator’s workmanship; I am charmed with the wild but graceful eccentricity of their motions, and — wish them good night. I mean this with respect to a certain passion *dont j’ai eu l’honneur d’être un miserable esclave:* as for friendship, you and Charlotte have given me pleasure, permanent pleasure, ‘which the world cannot give, nor take away’ I hope; and which will outlast the heavens and the earth.”

In the same false taste, Burns utters such tirades as this: —

“Whether, in the way of my trade, I can be of any service to the Rev. Doctor, * is, I fear, very doubtful. Ajax’s shield

Dr. M’Gill, of Ayr. The poet gives the best illustration of this letter on one addressed to Mr. Graham. — *Dr. Currie’s* edition. No. 86. — *S.*

consisted, I think, of seven bull hides and a plate of brass, which altogether set Hector’s utmost force at defiance. Alas! I am not a Hector, and the worthy Doctor’s foes are as securely armed as Ajax was. Ignorance, superstition, bigotry, stupidity, malevolence, self-conceit, envy — all strongly bound in a massy frame of brazen impudence. Good God, sir! to such a shield, humour is the peck of a sparrow, and satire the pop-gun of a schoolboy. Creation-disgracing *scelerats* such as they, God only can mend, and the devil only can punish. In the comprehending way of Caligula, I wish they had all but one neck. I feel impotent as a child to the ardour of my wishes! O for a withering curse to blast the germins of their wicked machinations. O for a poisonous tornado, winged from the torrid zones of Tartarus, to sweep the spreading crop of their villanous contrivances to the lowest hell!”

These passages, however, in which the author seems to have got the better of the man, in which the desire of shining, and blazing, and thundering, supersedes the natural expressions of feeling, and passion, are less frequent in the letters of Burns than perhaps of any other professed writer. Burns was, in truth, the child of passion and feeling. His character was not simply that of a peasant exalted into notice by uncommon literary attainments, but bore a stamp which must have distinguished him in the highest as in the lowest situation in life. To ascertain what was his natural

temper and disposition, and how far it was altered or modified by the circumstances of birth, education, and fortune, might be a subject for a long essay; but to mark a few distinctions is all that can be here expected from us.

We have said that Robert Burns was the child of impulse and feeling. Of the steady principle which cleaves to that which is good, he was unfortunately divested by the violence of those passions which finally wrecked him. It is most affecting to add, that while swimming, struggling, and finally yielding to the torrent, he never lost sight of the beacon which ought to have guided him to land, yet never profited by its light.

We learn his opinion of his own temperament in the following emphatic burst of passion: —

"God have mercy on me! a poor d — d incautious, duped, unfortunate fool! The sport, the miserable victim, of rebellious pride, hypochondriac imagination, agonizing sensibility, and bedlam passions!"

"Come, stubborn pride and unshrinking resolution, accompany me through this to me miserable world!" In such language did this powerful but untamed mind express the irritation of prolonged expectation and disappointed hope, which slight reflection might have pointed out as the common fate of mortality. Burns neither acknowledged adversity as the "tamer of the human breast," nor knew the golden curb which discretion hangs upon passion. He even appears to have felt a gloomy pleasure in braving the encounter of evils which prudence might have avoided, and to have thought that there could be no pleasurable existence between the extremes of licentious frenzy and of torpid sensuality. "There are two only creatures that I would envy — A horse in his wild state traversing the forests of Asia, and an oyster on some of the desert shores of Europe. The one has not a wish without enjoyment, the other has neither wish nor fear." When such a sentiment is breathed by such a being, the lesson is awful: and if pride and ambition were capable of being taught, they might hence learn that a well-regulated mind and controlled passions are to be prized above all the glow of imagination, and all the splendour of genius.

We discover the same stubborn resolution rather to endure with patience the consequences of error, than to own and avoid it in future, in the poet's singular choice of a pattern of fortitude.

"I have bought a pocket Milton, which I carry perpetually about with me, in order to study the sentiments — the dauntless magnanimity, the

intrepid, unyielding independence, the desperate daring, and noble defiance of hardship, in that great personage, Satan."

Nor was this a rash or precipitate choice, for in a more apologetic mood he expresses the same opinion of the same personage.

"My favourite feature in Milton's Satan is his manly fortitude in supporting what cannot be remedied — in short, the wild, broken fragments of a noble, exalted mind in ruins. I meant no more by saying he was a favourite hero of mine."

With this lofty and unbending spirit were connected a love of independence and a hatred of control amounting almost to the sublime rant of Almanzor.

> "He was as free as Nature first made man,
> Ere the base laws of servitude began,
> When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

In general society Burns often permitted his determination of vindicating his personal dignity to hurry him into unjustifiable resentment of slight or imagined neglect. He was ever anxious to maintain his post in society, and to extort that deference which was readily paid to him by all from whom it was worth claiming. This ill-judged jealousy of precedence led him often to place his own pretensions to notice in competition with those of the company who, he conceived, might found theirs on birth or fortune. On such occasions it was no easy task to deal with Burns. The power of his language, the vigour of his satire, the severity of illustration with which his fancy instantly supplied him, bore down all retort. Neither was it possible to exercise over the poet that restraint which arises from the chance of further personal consequences. The dignity, the spirit, the indignation of Burns was that of a plebeian — of a high-souled plebeian indeed — of a citizen of Rome or Athens; but still of a plebeian, untinged with the slightest shade of that spirit of chivalry which since the feudal times, has pervaded the higher ranks of European society. This must not be imputed to cowardice, for Burns was no coward. But the lowness of his birth, and habits of society, prevented rules of punctilious delicacy from making any part of his education; nor did he, it would seem, see any thing so rational in the practice of duelling, as afterwards to adopt or to affect the sentiments of the higher ranks upon that subject. A letter to Mr. Clarke written after a quarrel

upon political topics has these remarkable, and we will add manly expressions.

"From the expressions Capt. — - made use of to me, had I had nobody's welfare to care for but my own, we should certainly have come, according to the manners of the world, to the necessity of murdering one another about the business. The words were such as, generally, I believe, end in a brace of pistols; but I am still pleased to think that I did not ruin the peace and welfare of a wife and a family of children in a drunken squabble."

In this point, therefore, the pride and high spirit of Burns differed from those of the world around him. But if he wanted that chivalrous sensibility of honour which places reason upon the sword's point, he had delicacy of another sort, which those who boast most of the former do not always possess in the same purity. Although so poor as to be ever on the very brink of absolute ruin, looking forwards now to the situation of a foot-soldier, now to that of a common beggar, as no unnatural consummation of his evil fortune; Burns was, in pecuniary transactions, as proud and independent as if possessed of a prince's revenue. Bred a peasant, and preferred to the degrading situation of a common exciseman, neither the influence of the low-minded crowd around him, nor the gratification of selfish indulgence, nor that contempt of futurity, which has characterised so many of his poetical brethren, ever led him to incur or endure the burden of pecuniary obligation. A very intimate friend of the poet, from whom he used occasionally to borrow a small sum for a week or two, once ventured to hint that the punctuality with which the loan was always replaced at the appointed time was unnecessary and unkind. The consequence of this hint was the interruption of their friendship for some weeks, the bard disdaining the very thought of being indebted to a human being one farthing beyond what he could discharge with the most rigid punctuality. It was a less pleasing consequence of this high spirit, that Burns was utterly inaccessible to all friendly advice. To lay before him his errors, or to point out their consequences, was to touch a string that jarred every feeling within him. On such occasions, his, like Churchill's, was

> "The mind which, starting, heaves the heartfelt groan,
> And hates the form she knows to be her own."

It is a dreadful truth, that, when racked and tortured by the well-meant and warm expostulations of an intimate friend, he at length started up in a

paroxysm of frenzy, and, drawing a sword-cane, which he usually wore, made an attempt to plunge it into the body of his adviser — the next instant he was with difficulty withheld from suicide.

Yet this ardent and irritable temperament had its periods, not merely of tranquillity, but of the most subduing tenderness. In the society of men of taste, who could relish and understand his conversation, or whose rank in life was not so much raised above his own as to require, in his opinion, the assertion of his dignity, he was eloquent, impressive, and instructing. But it was in female circles that his powers of expression displayed their utmost fascination. In such, where the respect demanded by rank was readily paid as due to beauty or accomplishment; where he could resent no insult, and vindicate no claim of superiority, his conversation lost all its harshness, and often became so energetic and impressive, as to dissolve the whole circle into tears. The traits of sensibility which, told of another, would sound like instances of gross affectation, were so native to the soul of this extraordinary man, and burst from him so involuntarily, that they not only obtained full credence as the genuine feelings of his own heart, but melted into unthought of sympathy all who witnessed them. In such a mood they were often called forth by the slightest and most trifling occurrences; an ordinary engraving, the wild turn of a simple Scottish air, a line in an old ballad, were, like “the field mouse’s nest” and “the uprooted daisy,” sufficient to excite the sympathetic feelings of Burns. And it was wonderful to see those who, left to themselves, would have passed over such trivial circumstances without a moment’s reflection, sob over the picture, when its outline had been filled up by the magic art of his eloquence.

The political predilections, for they could hardly be termed principles, of Burns, were entirely determined by his feelings. At his first appearance, he felt, or affected, a propensity to jacobitism. Indeed, a youth of his warm imagination, and ardent patriotism, brought up in Scotland thirty years ago, could hardly escape this bias. The side of Charles Edward was the party, not surely of sound sense and sober reason, but of romantic gallantry and high achievement. The inadequacy of the means by which that prince attempted to regain the crown, forfeited by his fathers, the strange and almost poetical adventures which he underwent, the Scottish martial character honoured in his victories, and degraded and crushed in his defeat, the tales of the veterans who had followed his adventurous standard, were all calculated to impress upon the mind of a poet a warm interest in the cause of the house of

Stuart. Yet the impression was not of a very serious cast; for Burns himself acknowledges in one of these letters, that, "to tell the matter of fact, except when my passions were heated by some accidental cause, my jacobitism was merely by way of *vive la bagatelle,*" p. 240. The same enthusiastic ardour of disposition swayed Burns in his choice of political tenets, when the country was agitated by revolutionary principles. That the poet should have chosen the side on which high talents were most likely to procure celebrity; that he to whom the factitious distinctions of society were always odious, should have listened with complacence to the voice of French philosophy, which denounced them as usurpations on the rights of man, was precisely the thing to be expected. Yet we cannot but think that if his superiors in the Excise department had tried the experiment of soothing rather than of irritating his feelings, they might have spared themselves the disgrace of rendering desperate the possessor of such uncommon talents. For it is but too certain, that from the moment his hopes of promotion were utterly blasted, his tendency to dissipation hurried him precipitately into those excesses which shortened his life. We doubt not, that in that awful period of national discord he had done and said enough to deter, in ordinary cases, the servants of government from countenancing an avowed partisan of faction. But this partisan was Burns! — Surely the experiment of lenity might have been tried, and perhaps successfully. The conduct of Mr. Graham of Fintray, our poet's only shield against actual dismission, and consequent ruin, reflects the highest credit upon that gentleman. We may dismiss these reflections on the character of Burns with his own beautiful lines —

> "I saw thy pulse's maddening play,
> Wild send thee pleasure's devious way,
> By passion driven:
> But yet the light that led astray,
> Was light from heaven."

The second part of this volume contains a number of memoranda by Burns, concerning the Scottish songs and music published by Johnson, in six volumes 8vo. — Many of these appear to us exceedingly trifling. They might indeed have adorned, with great propriety, a second edition of the work in question, or any other collection of Scottish songs; but, separated from the verses to which they relate, how can any one be interested in

learning that *Down the Burn Davie* was the composition of David Maigh, keeper of bloodhounds to the Laird of Riddell; that *Tarry woo* was, in the opinion of Burns, a "very pretty song;" or even that the author of *Polwarth on the Green* was "Captain John Drummond MacGrigor, of the family of Bochaldie?" Were it of consequence, we might correct the valuable information thus conveyed, in one or two instances, and enlarge it in many others. But it seems of more importance to mark the share which the poet himself took in compiling or embellishing this collection of traditional poetry, especially as it has not been distinctly explained either by Dr. Currie or Mr. Cromek. Tradition, generally speaking, is a sort of perverted alchymy which converts gold into lead. All that is abstractedly poetical, all that is above the comprehension of the merest peasant, is apt to escape in frequent recitation; and the *lacunæ,* thus created, are filled up either by lines from other ditties, or from the mother wit of the reciter or singer. The injury, in either case, is obvious and irreparable. But with all these disadvantages, the Scottish songs and tunes preserved for Burns that inexpressible charm which they have ever afforded to his countrymen. He entered into the idea of collecting their fragments with all the zeal of an enthusiast; and few, whether serious or humorous, pass through his hands without receiving some of those magic touches, which, without greatly altering the song, restored its original spirit, or gave it more than it had ever possessed. So dexterously are these touches combined with the ancient structure, that the *rifaccimento,* in many instances, could scarcely have been detected, without the avowal of the bard himself. Neither would it be easy to mark his share in the individual ditties. Some he appears entirely to have re-written; to others he added supplementary stanzas; in some he retained only the leading lines and the chorus, and others he merely arranged and ornamented. For the benefit of future antiquaries, however, we may observe that many of the songs, claimed by the present editor as the exclusive composition of Burns, were, in reality, current long before he was born. Let us take one of the best examples of his skill in imitating the old ballad. — *M'Pherson's Lament* was a wellknown song many years before the Ayrshire Bard wrote those additional verses which constitute its principal merit. This noted freebooter was executed at Inverness, about the beginning of the last century. When he came to the fatal tree, he played the tune to which he has bequeathed his name upon a favourite violin, and holding up the instrument, offered it to any one of his clan who would undertake to play the tune over

his body at his lykewake: as none answered, he dashed it to pieces on the executioner's head, and flung himself from the ladder. The following are the wild stanzas, grounded, however, upon some traditional remains, *

We have heard some of these recited, particularly one which begins —

> "Now farewell, house, and farewell, friends,
> And farewell, wife and bairns,
> There's nae repentance in my heart,
> The fiddle's in my arms" —
> — *S.*

which Burns has put into the mouth of this desperado: —

"M'Pherson's Farewell

> "Farewell, ye dungeons dark and strong,
> The wretch's destiny!
> M'Pherson's time will not be long
> On yonder gallows tree.
> Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
> Sae dauntingly gaed he,
> He play'd a spring, and danced it round,
> Below the gallows tree.
>
> O what is death put parting breath? —
> On mony a bloody plain
> I've dared his face, and in this place
> I scorn him yet again!
> Sae rantingly, *etc.*
>
> Untie these bands from off my hands,
> And bring to me my sword;
> And there's no man in all Scotland,
> But I'll brave him at a word.
> Sae rantingly, *etc.*
>
> I've lived a life of sturt and strife;
> I die by treacherie:

It burns my heart I must depart
And not avenged be.
Sae rantingly, *etc.*

Now farewall light, thou sunshine bright,
And all beneath the sky!
May coward shame distain his name,
The wretch that dares not die!
Sae rantingly, etc."

How much Burns delighted in the task of eking out the ancient melodies of his country, appears from the following affecting passage in a letter written to Mr. Johnson shortly before his death.

"You are a good, worthy, honest fellow, and have a good right to live in this world — because you deserve it. Many a merry meeting this publication has given us, and possibly it may give us more, though, alas! I fear it. This protracting, slow, consuming illness which hangs over me, will, I doubt much, my ever dear friend, arrest my sun before he has well reached his middle career, and will turn over the Poet to far other and more important concerns than studying the brilliancy of wit, or the pathos of sentiment! However, hope is the cordial of the human heart, and I endeavour to cherish it as well as I can."

Notwithstanding the spirit of many of the lyrics of Burns, and the exquisite sweetness and simplicity of others, we cannot but deeply regret that so much of his time and talents was frittered away in compiling and composing for musical collections. There is sufficient evidence both in the edition of Dr. Currie, and in this supplemental volume, that even the genius of Burns could not support him in the monotonous task of writing love verses on heaving bosoms and sparkling eyes, and twisting them into such rhythmical forms, as might suit the capricious evolutions of Scotch reels, ports and strathspeys. Besides, this constant waste of his fancy and power of verse in small and insignificant compositions, must necessarily have had no little effect in deterring him from undertaking any grave or important task. Let no one suppose that we undervalue the songs of Burns. When his soul was intent on suiting a favourite air with words humorous or tender, as the subject demanded, no poet of our tongue ever displayed higher skill in marrying melody to immortal verse. But the writing of a series of songs for

large musical collections degenerated into a slavish labour, which no talents could support, led to negligence, and above all, diverted the poet from his grand plan of dramatic composition.

To produce a work of this kind, neither perhaps a regular tragedy or comedy, but something partaking of the nature of both, seems to have been long the cherished wish of Burns. He had even fixed on the subject, which was an adventure in low life, said to have happened to Robert Bruce, while wandering in danger and disguise after being defeated by the English. The Scottish dialect would have rendered such a piece totally unfit for the stage: but those who recollect the masculine and lofty tone of martial spirit which glows in the poem of Bannockburn, will sigh to think what the character of the gallant Bruce might have proved under the hand of Burns! It would undoubtedly have wanted that tinge of chivalrous feeling which the manners of the age, no less than the disposition of the monarch, imperiously demanded; but this deficiency would have been more than supplied by a bard who could have drawn from his own perceptions the unbending energy of a hero, sustaining the desertion of friends, the persecution of enemies, and the utmost malice of disastrous fortune. The scene, too, being partly laid in humble life, admitted that display of broad humour and exquisite pathos, with which he could interchangeably and at pleasure adorn his cottage views. Nor was the assemblage of familiar sentiments incompatible in Burns with those of the most exalted dignity. In the inimitable tale of Tam o' Shanter, he has left us sufficient evidence of his ability to combine the ludicrous with the awful and even the horrible. No poet, with the exception of Shakspeare, ever possessed the power of exciting the most varied and discordant emotions with such rapid transitions. His humorous description of the appearance of Death (in the poem on Dr. Hornbook) borders on the terrific, and the witches' dance, in the Kirk of Alloway, is at once ludicrous and horrible. Deeply must we then regret those avocatious which diverted a fancy so varied and so vigorous, joined with language and expressions suited to all its changes, from leaving a more substantial monument to his own fame and to the honour of his country.

The next division is a collection of fugitive sentences and commonplaces, extracted partly from the memorandum book of the poet, and partly, we believe, from letters which could not be published in their entire state. Many of these appear to be drawn from a small volume, entitled "Letters to Clarinda, by Robert Burns," which was printed at Glasgow, but

afterwards suppressed. To these, the observations which we offered on the bard's letters in general, apply with additional force for in such a selection, the splendid patches, the showy, declamatory, figurative effusions of sentimental affectation, are usually the choice of the editor. Respect for the mighty dead, prevents our quoting instances in which Burns has degraded his natural eloquence by these meretricious ornaments. Indeed his style is sometimes so forced and unnatural, that we must believe he knew to whom he was writing, and that an affectation of enthusiasm in platonic love and devotion, was more likely to be acceptable to the fair Clarinda, than the true language of feeling. The following loose and laboured passage shows that the passion of *Sylvander* (a name sufficient of itself to damn a whole file of loveletters) had more of vanity than of real sentiment: —

"What trifling silliness is the childish fondness of the everyday children of the world! 'Tis the unmeaning toying of the younglings of the fields and forests; but where sentiment and fancy unite their sweets; where taste and delicacy refine; where wit adds the flavour, and good sense gives strength and spirit to all, what a delicious draught is the hour of tender endearment! — beauty and grace in the arms of truth and honour, in all the luxury of mutual love!"

The last part of the work comprehends a few original poems — epistles, prologues, and songs, — by which, if the author's reputation had not been previously established, we will venture to say it would never have risen above the common standard. At the same time there are few of them that do not, upon minute examination, exhibit marks of Burns's hand, though not of his best manner. The following exquisitely affecting stanza contains the essence of a thousand love tales: —

> "Had we never loved sae kindly,
> Had we never loved sae blindly,
> Never met or never parted,
> We had ne'er been brokenhearted."

There are one or two political songs, which, for any wit or humour they contain, might have been very well omitted. The satirical effusions of Burns, when they related to persons or subjects removed from his own sphere of observation, were too vague and too coarse to be poignant. There are a few attempts at *English* verse, in which, as usual, Burns falls beneath himself. This is the more remarkable, as the sublimer passages of his

"Saturday Night," "Vision," and other poems of celebrity, always swell into the language of classic English poetry. But although in these flights he naturally and almost unavoidably assumed the dialect of Milton and Shakspeare, he never seems to have been completely at his ease when he had not the power of descending at pleasure into that which was familiar to his oar, and to his habits. In the one case, his use of the English was voluntary, and for a short time; but when assumed as a primary and indispensable rule of composition, the comparative penury of rhymes, and the want of a thousand emphatic words which his habitual acquaintance with the Scottish supplied, rendered his expression confined and embarrassed. No man ever had more command of this ancient Doric dialect than Burns. He has left a curious testimony of his skill, in a letter to Mr. Nicol, published in this volume; an attempt to read a sentence of which, would break the teeth of most modern Scotchmen.

Three or four letters from William Burns, a brother of the poet, are introduced for no purpose that we can guess, unless to show that he wrote and thought like an ordinary journeyman saddler. We would readily have believed, without positive proof, that the splendid powers of the poet were not imparted to the rest of his family.

We scarcely know, upon the whole, in what terms we ought to dismiss Mr. Cromek. If the reputation of Burns alone be considered, this volume cannot add to his fame; and it is too well fixed to admit of degradation. The Cantata already mentioned, is indeed the only one of his productions not published by Dr. Currie, which we consider as not merely justifying, but increasing his renown. It is enough to say of the very best of those now published, that they take nothing from it. What the public may gain by being furnished with additional means of estimating the character of this wonderful and self-taught genius, we have already endeavoured to state. We know not whether the family of the poet will derive any advantage from this publication of his remains. If so, it is the best apology for their being given to the world; if not, we have no doubt that the editor, as he is an admirer of Chaucer, has read of a certain pardoner, who

> "with his *relics* when that he fond
> A poor persone dwelling up on lond,
> Upon a day he gat him more moneie
> Than that the persone got in monethes tweie."

LIFE AND WORKS OF JOHN HOME

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The memory of Mr. Home, as an author, depends, in England, almost entirely upon his celebrated tragedy of Douglas, which not only retains the most indisputable possession of the stage, but produces a stronger effect on the feelings of the audience, when the parts of Douglas and Lady Randolph are well filled, than almost any tragedy since the days of Otway. There maybe something of chance in having hit upon a plot of such general interest, and no author has been more fortunate in seeing the creatures of his imagination personified by the first performers which England could produce. But it is certain, that to be a favourite with those whose business it is to please the public, a tragedy must possess, in a peculiar degree, the means of displaying their powers to advantage; and it is equally clear, that the subject of Douglas, however felicitous in itself, was well suited to the talents of the writer, who treated it so as to enable them to accomplish a powerful effect on the feelings of successive generations of men.

It must be interesting, therefore, to the public, to know the history and character of that rarest of all writers in the present age — a successful tragic author; by which, we understand, one whose piece has not only received ephemeral success, but has established itself on the stage as one of the best acting plays in the language. There is also much of interest about Home himself, as his character is drawn, and his habits described, in the essay prefixed to these volumes, by the venerable author of the *Man of Feeling,* who, himself very far advanced in life, * still cherishes the love of letters, and condescends

* Mr. Mackenzie died at Edinburgh, 14th January, 1831, in his 86th year. See *ante,* pp. 343—347. A monument, bearing an appropriate inscription, has since been erected to his memory in the Greyfriars' churchyard of Edinburgh. — Ed.

to please at once and instruct those of the present day, who are attached to such pursuits, by placing before them a lively picture of those predecessors at whose feet he was brought up.

Neither is it only to Scotland that these annals are interesting. There were men of literature in Edinburgh before she was renowned for romances,

reviews, and magazines —

"Vixerunt fortes ante Agamemnona;"

and a single glance at the authors and men of science who dignified the last generation, will serve to show that, in those days, there were giants in the North. The names of Hume, Robertson, Fergusson, stand high in the list of British historians. Adam Smith was the father of the economical system in Britain, and his standard work will long continue the text-book of that science. Dr. Black, as a chemist, opened that path of discovery which has since been prosecuted with such splendid success. Of metaphysicians, Scotland boasted, perhaps, but too many: to Hume and Fergusson we must add Reid, and, though younger, yet of the same school, Mr. Dugald Stewart. In natural philosophy, Scotland could present Professor Robison, James Watt, whose inventions have led the way to the triumphs of human skill over the elements, and Clerk, of Eldin, who taught the British seaman the road to assured conquest. Others we could mention; but these form a phalanx, whose reputation was neither confined to their narrow, poor, and rugged native country, nor to England and the British dominions, but known and respected wherever learning, philosophy, and science were honoured.

It is to this distinguished circle, or, at least, to the greater part of its members, that Mr. Mackenzie introduces his readers; and they must indeed be void of curiosity who do not desire to know something more of such men than can be found in their works, and especially when the communication is made by a contemporary so well entitled to ask, and so well qualified to command, attention. We will endeavour, in the first place, to give some account of Mr. Home's life and times, as we find them detailed by this excellent biographer, and afterwards more briefly advert to his character as an author.

Mr. John Home was the son of Mr. Alexander Home, town-clerk of Leith. His grandfather was a son of Mr. Home, of Floss, a lineal descendant of Sir James Home, of Coldingknowes, ancestor of the present Earl of Home. The poet, as is natural to a man of imagination, was tenacious of being descended from a family of rank, whose representatives were formerly possessed of power scarcely inferior to that of the great Douglasses, and wellnigh as fatal both to the crown and to themselves. We have seen a copy of verses addressed by Home to Lady Kinloch, of Gilmerton, in which he contrasts his actual situation with his ancient

descent. They begin nearly thus, — for it must be noticed we quote from memory:

> "Sprung from the ancient nobles of the land,
> Upon the ladder's lowest round I stand:"

and the general tone and spirit are those of one who feels himself by birth and spirit placed above a situation of dependence to which for the time he was condemned. The same family pride glances out in our author's History of the Rebellion of 1745, in the following passage:

"At Dunbar the Earl of Home joined Sir John Cope. He was then an officer in the Guards, and thought it a duty to offer his service, when the king's troops were in the field. He came to Dunbar, attended by one or two servants. There were not wanting persons upon this occasion to make their remarks, and observe the mighty change which little more than a century had produced in Scotland.

"It was known to every body, who knew any thing of the history of their country, that the ancestors of this noble lord (once the most powerful peers in the south of Scotland) could at a short warning, have raised in their own territories a body of men, whose approach that Highland army, which had got possession of the capital of Scotland (and was preparing to fight the whole military force in that kingdom) would not have dared to wait." — Vol. iii., pp. 76, 77.

This love or pride of family was the source of another peculiarity in Mr. Home. Aristotle mentions the mispronouncing of a man's name as one of the most disagreeable of insults; and nobody, we believe, is very fond of having his name misspelled; but Home was peculiarly sensible on this point. The word is uniformly, in Scotland, pronounced *Hume,* and in ancient documents we have seen it written *Heume, Hewme,* and *Hoome;* but the principal branch of the family have long used the present orthography of *Home.* To *Home* the poet rigidly stuck fast and firm; and *Home* he on all occasions defended as the only legitimate shape, to the great entertainment of his friend David (the historian) whose branch of the family (that of Ninewells) had for some, or for no reason, preferred the orthography of *Hume,* to which the philosopher, though caring, as may be supposed, very little about the matter, naturally adhered. On one occasion, when the poet was high in assertion on this important subject, the historian proposed to

settle the question by casting dice which should adopt the other's mode of spelling their name: —

" 'Nay,' says John, 'this is a most extraordinary proposal indeed, Mr. Philosopher — for if you lose, you take your own name, and if I lose, I take another man's name.' " — Vol. i., p. 164.

Before we leave this subject, we may mention to our readers, that the family pride which is often among the Scotch found descending to those who are in such humble situations as to render it ridiculous, has, perhaps, more of worldly prudence in it than might at first be suspected. A Clifford or a Percy, reduced in circumstances, feels a claim of long descent unsuitable to his condition, unavailing in assisting his views in life, and ridiculous as contrasted with them. He therefore sinks, and endeavours to forget, pretensions which his son or grandson altogether loses sight of. On the contrary, the system of entails in Scotland, their extent, and their perpetual endurance, naturally recommend to a Home, or a Douglas, to preserve an account of his genealogy, in case of some event occurring which may make him *heir of tailzie* to a good estate. And while this attention to pedigree may conduce to some contingent advantage, it influences naturally the feelings of the young *Hidalgos* upon whom it is inculcated, and who soon learn to prize the *genus et proavos,* as being flattering to their vanity, as well as what may, by possibility, tend to advance their fortune. A certain number of calculable chances would have made the author of Douglas the Earl of Home; and, indeed, an epidemic among the Scottish peerage (which Heaven forefend!) would make wild changes when the great roll is next called in Holyrood. Like every thing, in short, in this motley world, the family pride of the north country has its effects of good and of evil. It often leads to a degree of care being bestowed on the education of these juvenile *gentillatres,* which might otherwise have been neglected; and forms, at the same time an excitement to honourable struggles for independence, and to manly resolutions of adopting the behaviour and sentiments of men of honour, though fortune has denied the means of supporting the figure of gentlemen otherwise. On the other hand, and with less happy dispositions, it sometimes occasions an incongruous alliance of pride and poverty, and exhibits the national character in a point of view equally arrogant and ridiculous.

To return to our subject: — John Home, educated for the Scots Presbyterian Church, soon distinguished himself among his contemporaries

at college, and ranked with Robertson, Hugh Blair, Adam Ferguson, who attended the same seminary, and others mentioned by Mr. Mackenzie, distinguished by their sense, learning, and talents, although they did not attain, or contend for, literary celebrity. Our author obtained his license to preach the gospel, as a probationer for the ministry (which is equivalent to taking deacon's orders in England,) in the eventful year, still emphatically distinguished in Scotland as the fortyfive. The character of the times, however, furnished our young poet with employment more congenial to his temper than the peaceful and retired duties of the profession he had chosen. "The land was burning;" the young Chevalier had landed in the Highlands, with only seven followers, and came to try a desperate cast for the crown which his ancestors had lost. The character of Home at this period is thus described by his elegant biographer:

"His temper was of that warm susceptible kind which is caught with the heroic and the tender, and which is more fitted to delight in the world of sentiment than to succeed in the hustle of ordinary life, This is a disposition of mind well suited to the poetical character; and, accordingly, all his earliest companions agree that Mr. Home was from his childhood delighted with the lofty and heroic ideas which embody themselves in the description or narrative of poetry. One of them, nearly a coeval of Mr. Home's, Dr. A. Ferguson, says in a letter to me, that Mr. Home's favourite model of a character, on which, indeed, his own was formed, was that of Young Norval, in his tragedy of Douglas, one endowed with chivalrous valour and romantic generosity, eager for glory beyond every other object, and, in the contemplation of future fame, entirely regardless of the present objects of interest or ambition." — Vol. i., pp. 6, 7.

For such a character as this to sit inactive when arms were clashing around him, was impossible. John Home's profession as a Presbyterian clergyman, his political opinions, and those of his family, decided the cause which he was to espouse, and he became one of the most active and eager members of a corps of volunteers, formed for the purpose of defending Edinburgh against the expected assault of the Highlanders. Under less strong influence of education and profession, which was indeed irresistible, it is possible he might have made a less happy option; for the feeling, the adventure, the romance, the poetry, all that was likely to interest the imagination of a youthful poet — all, in short, save the common sense, prudence, and sound reason of the national dispute — must be allowed to

have lain on the side of the Jacobites. Indeed, although mortally engaged against them, Mr. Home could not, in the latter part of his life, refrain from tears when mentioning the gallantry and misfortunes of some of the unfortunate leaders in the Highland army; and we have ourselves seen his feelings and principles divide him strangely when he came to speak upon such topics.

The body of the corps of volunteers, with which Mr. Home was associated, consisted of about from four to five hundred; many, doubtless, were gallant young men, students from the university and so forth — but by far the greater part were citizens, at an age unfit to take up arms, without previous habit and experience. They had religious zeal and political enthusiasm to animate them; but these, though they make a prodigious addition to the effect of discipline cannot supply its place. Cromwell's enthusiasts beat all the nobility and gentry of England; but the same class of men, not having the advantage of similar training, fled at Bothwell Bridge, without even waiting to see their enemy. Many of the Edinburgh corps were, moreover, *Oneyers* and *Moneyers,* as Falstaff says, men whose words upon 'Change would go much farther than their blows in battle. Most had shops to be plundered, houses to be burned, children to be brained with Lochaber axes, and wives, daughters, and favourite handmaidens to be treated according to the rules of war. When, therefore, it was proposed to the volunteers to march out of the city together with what was called the *Edinburgh Regiment*, — a very indifferent body of men, who had been levied and embodied for the nonce, — and supported by two regular regiments of dragoons, called Gardiner's and Hamilton's, which were expected to hear the brunt of the battle, — we are informed by a contemporary author, * that —

* We quote from a pamphlet entitled A True Account of the Behaviour and Conduct of Archibald Stewart, Esq., late Lord Provost of Edinburgh, in a *Letter to a Friend;* London, 1748; a production which there is strong evidence, both external and internal, for attributing to the pen of David Hume. — *S.*

"The provost had no power to order the volunteers out of town: he only *consented* that as many as pleased should be allowed to march out. But it seems they had as little inclination to go as he had power to order them. A few of them made a faint effort, but 'tis said, met with opposition from some of the *zealously affected,* who represented to them the infinite value of

their lives in comparison of those ruffians, the Highlanders: — this opposition they were never able to overcome."

The arrangement, however, was made; the dragoons were paraded on the *High Street,* and the fire-bell rang for the volunteers to assemble, a signal for which the provost was afterwards highly censured, perhaps because, instead of rousing the hearts of the volunteers like the sound of a trumpet, it rather reminded them of a passing-knell. They did assemble, however; but their relations (according to our poet's account) assembled also, mixed in their ranks, and while the men reasoned and endeavoured to dissuade their friends from so rash an adventure, the women expostulated, complained, and wept, embracing their husbands, sons, and brothers, and by the force of their tears and entreaties, melting down the fervour of their resolutions. At last the battalion was ordered to move towards *the Westport,* when, behold the officers complained that their men would not follow, while the men declared that their officers would not lead the way. The bravest hearts were cast down by the general consternation. We remember an instance of a stout Whig and a very worthy man, a writing-master by occupation, who had ensconced his bosom beneath a professional cuirass, consisting of two quires of long foolscap writing-paper; and, doubtful that even this defence might be unable to protect his valiant heart from the claymores, amongst which its impulses might carry him, had written on the outside, in his best flourish, "This is the body of J — — M — — ; pray give it Christian burial." Even this hero, prepared as one practised how to die, could not find it in his heart to accompany the devoted battalion farther than the door of his own house, which stood conveniently open about the head of *the Lawn Market.* The descent of *the Bow* presented localities and facilities equally convenient for desertion; and the pamphleteer, whom we have already quoted, assures us that a friend of his, who had made a poetical description of the march of the volunteers from the Lawn Market to the Westport, when they went out, or, more properly, seemed to be about to go out, to meet the ruthless rebels, had invented a very magnificent simile to illustrate his subject. "He compared it to the course of the Rhine, which, rolling pompously its waves through fertile fields, instead of augmenting in its course, is continually drawn off by a thousand canals, and at last becomes a small rivulet, which loses itself in the sands before it reaches the ocean."

The behaviour of the doughty dragoons themselves, "whose business it was to die," was even less edifying than that of the citizen volunteers, whose business it was, as Fluellen says to Pistol, "to live and eat their victuals;" and though it leads us something off our course, yet, as Mr. Home's history of the *fortyfive* forms a part of the work now before us, the following lively description (from the pen, it is believed, of his distinguished friend David) will not be altogether impertinent to the subject, and may probably amuse the reader. After remarking that cavalry ought to have the same advantage over irregular infantry, which veteran infantry possess over cavalry, and that particularly in the case of Highlanders, whom they encounter with their own weapon, the broadsword, and who neither formed platoons, nor had bayonets, or any other long weapon, to withstand a charge — after noticing, moreover, that if it were too sanguine to expect a victory, Brigadier Fowke, who commanded two regiments of cavalry, might, at least, have made a leisurely and regular retreat, though he had advanced within a musketshot of his enemy, before a column that could not turn out five mounted horsemen, he proceeds thus : —

"Before the rebels came within sight of the King's forces, before they came within three miles' distance of them, orders were issued to the dragoons to wheel, which they immediately did with the greatest order and regularity imaginable. As it is known that nothing is more beautiful than the evolutions and movements of cavalry, the spectators stood in expectation what fine warlike manœuvre they might terminate in; when new orders were immediately issued to retreat, they immediately obeyed and began to march in the usual pace of cavalry. Orders were repeated every furlong to quicken their pace, and both precept and example concurring, they quickened it so well that, before they reached Edinburgh, they had quickened it to a pretty smart gallop. They passed in inexpressible hurry and confusion through the narrow lanes at Barefoot's parks, in the sight of all the north part of the town, to the infinite joy of the disaffected, and equal grief and consternation of all the other inhabitants, They rushed like a torrent down to Leith, where they endeavoured to draw breath; but some unlucky boy (I suppose a Jacobite in his heart) calling to them that the Highlanders were approaching, they immediately took to their heels again, and galloped to Prestonpans, about six miles farther. There, in a literal sense, *timor eddidit alas,* their fear added wings, I mean to the rebels. For otherwise, they could not possibly have imagined that these formidable

enemies could be within several miles of them. But at Prestonpans the same alarm was repeated. The Philistines be upon thee, Sampson! They galloped to North Berwick, and being now about twenty miles on the other side of Edinburgh, they thought they might safely dismount from their horses and look out for victuals. Accordingly, like the ancient Grecian heroes, each began to kill and dress his provisions: *egit amor dabis atque pugnæ;* they were actuated by the desire of supper and of battle. The sheep and turkies of North Berwick paid for this warlike disposition. But behold the uncertainty of human happiness! When the mutton was just ready to be put upon the table, they heard, or thought they heard, the same cry of the Highlanders. Their fear proved stronger than their hunger, they again got on horseback, but were informed time enough of the falseness of the alarm to prevent the spoiling of their meal. By such rudiments as these the dragoons were instructed, till at last they became so perfect at their lesson, that at the battle of Preston they could practise it of themselves, though even there the same good example was not wanting. I have seen an Italian opera, called *Cesare in Egitto,* or Cæsar in Egypt, where, in the first scene, Cæsar is introduced in a great hurry, giving orders to his soldiers, *fugge, fugge, allo scampo* — fly, fly, to your heels. This is a proof that the commander at the Coltbridge is not the first hero that gave such orders to his troops." *

* Account of the Behaviour, etc., of Archibald Stewart, Esq. — *S.*

While the regular troops were thus in hasty retreat, John Home and some few others of his more zealous brethren among the volunteers, were trying to overcome apprehensions in the corps at large, similar to those which drove the dragoons eastward, but which had the contrary effect of detaining the citizens within the circuit of their walls. Poets being "of imagination all compact," are supposed to be more accessible than other men to the passion of fear; but there are numerous exceptions, and one scarcely wonders that the author of *Douglas* should have resembled, in that part of his character, the father of Grecian tragedy, thus described by Home's friend, Collins, in the Ode to Fear: —

> "Yet he the bard, who first invoked thy name,
> Disdain'd at Marathon thy power to feel,
> For not alone be nursed the poet's flame,
> But raised from virtue's hand the patriot's steel."

In spite, however, of exhortation and example, the volunteers gave up their arms, and it only remained for Home, and the few who retained spirit enough for such an enterprise, to sally out and unite themselves with Sir John Cope, who had, as the song says, just —

> "landed at Dunbar
> Right early in the morning."

John Home determined, however, to carry some intelligence, at least, which might be useful, and, for this purpose, he ventured to visit the bivouac of Prince Charles's army, which was in what is called the King's park, in a hollow, lying betwixt the two hills — Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags. Food had been just served out, and, as they were sitting in ranks on the ground, he had an opportunity of counting this handful of half-armed mountaineers, who came to overturn an established government, and to change the destinies of a mighty empire. They did not exceed two thousand men; and Home's description of their appearance, as he gave it to Sir John Cope, is no unfavourable example of his prose style of composition.

"The general asked what sort of appearance they made, and how they were armed. The volunteer *(i.e. Home himself)* answered, that most of them seemed to be strong, active, and hardy men: that many of them were of a very ordinary size, and, if clothed like Lowcountry men, would (in his opinion) appear inferior to the King's troops; but the Highland garb favoured them much, as it showed their naked limbs, which were strong and muscular: that their stern countenances, and bushy uncombed hair, gave them a fierce, barbarous, and imposing aspect. As to their arms, he said that they had no cannon or artillery of any sort, but one small iron gun which he had seen without a carriage, lying upon a cart, drawn by a little Highland horse; that about 1400 or 1200 of them were armed with firelocks and broadswords; that their firelocks were not similar or uniform, but of all sorts and sizes, muskets, fusees, and fowling pieces; that some of the rest had firelocks without swords, and some of them swords without firelocks that many of their swords were not Highland broadswords, but French; that a company or two (about 100 men,) had each of them in his hand the shaft of a pitchfork, with the blade of a scythe fastened to it, somewhat like the weapon called the Lochaber axe, which the town-guard soldiers carry; but all of them, he added, would be soon provided with firelocks, as the arms belonging to the Trained Bands of Edinburgh had fallen into their hands. Sir

John Cope dismissed the volunteer, with many compliments for bringing him such certain and accurate intelligence." — Vol. iii., pp. 75, 76.

Of the zealous services of the few but faithful volunteers who did leave Edinburgh, Mr. Home gives us a slight account; but we cannot help rendering it a little more particular, having heard it more than once from the lips of a man of equal worth and humour, and a particular intimate of the author of *Douglas.* We firmly believe, though we cannot say it with absolute certainty, that Mr. Home was of the party, now reduced to five or six, whose proceedings we are about to describe.

We will not be quite so particular as our venerable informer, in describing the marchings and countermarchings which the determined squad made through East Lothian, calling at every alehouse of reputation, to drink success to the Protestant cause, and endeavouring to collect news of Sir John Cope and his army. Indeed it would be rather tedious, as our authority, though very entertaining, was something minute in the narrative, and spared us not a single *rizard* haddock, which went to recruit their bodily strength, or a single chopin of twopenny, or mutchkin of brandy, which served to support their manly spirit for the approaching conflict. At length, they joined Sir John Cope and offered their service. Poor Johnnie, the object of so much satire and ridicule, was, in fact, by no means either a coward or a bad soldier, or even a contemptible general upon ordinary occasions. He was a pudding-headed, thick-brained sort of person, who could act well enough in circumstances with which he was conversant, especially as he was perfectly acquainted with the routine of his profession, and had been often engaged in action, without ever, until the fatal field of Preston, having shown sense enough to run away. On the present occasion, he was, as sportsmen say, at fault. He well knew that the highroad from Edinburgh to the south lies along the coast, and it seems never to have occurred to him that it was possible the Highlanders might choose, even by preference, to cross the country and occupy the heights, at the bottom of which the public road takes its course, and thus have him and his army in so far at their mercy, that they might avoid, or bring on battle, at their sole pleasure. On the contrary, Sir John trusted that their Highland courtesy would induce them, if they moved from Edinburgh, to come by the very road on which he was advancing towards that city, and thus meet him on equal terms. Under this impression, the general sent two of the volunteers, who chanced to be mounted, and knew the country, to observe the coast road, especially

towards Musselburgh. They rode on their exploratory expedition, and, coming to that village, which is about six miles from Edinburgh, avoided the bridge, to escape detection, and crossed the Esk, it being then low water, at a place nigh its junction with the sea. Unluckily there was, at the opposite side, a snug, thatched tavern, kept by a cleanly old woman, called Lucky F — — , who was eminent for the excellence of her oysters and sherry. The patrol were both *bon vivants* — one of them, whom we remember in the situation of a senator, as it is called, of the college of justice, was unusually so, and a gay, witty, agreeable companion besides. Luckie's sign, and the heap of oyster-shells deposited near her door, proved as great a temptation to this vigilant forlorn-hope as the wine-house to the Abbess of Andouillet's muleteer. They had scarcely got settled at some right *pandores,* with a bottle of sherry as an accompaniment, when, as some Jacobite devil would have it, an unlucky North Country lad, a writer's (i.e. attorney's) apprentice, who had given his indentures the slip, and taken the white cockade, chanced to pass by on his errand to join Prince Charlie. He saw the two volunteers through the window, knew them, and guessed their business; he saw the tide would make it impossible for them to return along the sands as they had come. He, therefore, placed himself in ambush upon the steep, narrow, impracticable bridge, which was then, and for many years afterwards, the only place of crossing the Esk: "and how he contrived it," our narrator used to proceed, "I never could learn; but the courage and assurance of the province from which he came, are proverbial. In short, the Norland whipper-snapper surrounded and made prisoners of my two poor friends, before they could draw a trigger." Here our excellent friend was apt to make a pause, and hurry to the scene of slaughter which the field exhibited in the afternoon. A little cross-examination, however, easily brought out the termination of the campaign, so far as concerned our faithful remnant of volunteers now reduced to five or six.

When the party which marched with Cope's army had arrived at the spot where the battle took place on the next morning, it was natural that they should quarter themselves in the house of the father of our narrator (a clergyman,) which was in the immediate vicinity of the destined field. Our friend, as was no less natural, recollected a small scantling of madeira, and it was judged prudent to anticipate the order of the next day by drinking it up themselves. They then went to bed, desiring the maidservant to call them at sunrise, or how much sooner the battle should begin. But, alas! the first

edge of the sun's disk that rose above the ocean saw both the beginning and the end of the fray, and the volunteers had just dreamed that they heard a cannon shot or two, when the mother of our friend burst into his room, imploring him to hide his arms, for the King's army was totally routed. "We bustled up in a hurry," said our friend, "scarcely thinking the tidings possible; when, from the window, I could see the dragoons, whose nerves had never recovered the Canter of Coltbrigg, as that retreat was called, in full rout, pursued by the whole cavalry of the Highland army, consisting of Lord Elcho, Sir Peter Threipland, and two or three gentlemen, with their grooms." "In short," as our friend expressed himself, "the dragoons and Highlanders divided the honours of the day, and on that occasion, at least, the race was to the swift, and the battle to the strong." The sleepers, thus unpleasantly alarmed, were now obliged to conceal or surrender their arms, and employ what remained of their zeal in attending to the wounded, who were brought into the clergyman's house in great numbers, dreadfully mangled by the broadswords. One of the volunteers (for two of the corps actually were in the battle, after all the impediments which oysters, sherry, and old madeira had thrown in their way) received thirty wounds, yet recovered. His name was Myrie, a Creolian by birth, and a student of medicine at the college of Edinburgh. His comrade, Campbell, escaped by speed of horse. Hence, the verses on the volunteers, in the satiric ballad which old Skirwing (father of Skirving the artist) wrote upon this memorable conflict: —

> "Of a' the gang nane stood the bane
> But twa, and ane was ta'en man,
> For Campbail rade, but Myrie staid,
> And sure he paid the kain * man.

* Literally, "paid the rent;" equivalent to the English phrase of "paid the reckoning." — S.

> Fell skelps he got, was worse than shot,
> From the sharp-edged claymore man."

If the author of *Douglas* was, as we believe, one of the party of sleepers thus unpleasantly awakened, the unexpected issue of the combat, and the

ghastly spectacle of the wounded, did not prevent him from again engaging — and that scarcely under more fortunate auspices—in the same service.

The town of Glasgow raised a body of volunteers, in which Home obtained the situation of lieutenant. This regiment joined General Hawley on the 13th of January, 1746, and our author was present in the action near Falkirk, which seems to have been as confused an affair as can well be imagined. Hawley had not a better head, and certainly a much worse heart than Sir John Cope, who was a humane, goodtempered man. The new general ridiculed severely the conduct of his predecessor, and remembering that he had seen, in 1715, the left wing of the Highlanders broken by a charge of the Duke of Argyle's horse, which came upon them across a morass, he resolved to manœuvre in the same manner. He forgot, however, a material circumstance — that the morass at Sheriffmuir was hard frozen, which made some difference in favour of the cavalry. Hawley's manœuvre, as commanded and executed, plunged a great part of his dragoons up to the saddle-laps in a bog, where the Highlanders cut them to pieces with so little trouble, that, as one of the performers assured us, the feat was as easy as slicing *bacon.* The gallantry of some of the English regiments beat off the Highland charge on another point, and, amid a tempest of wind and rain which has been seldom equalled, the field presented the singular prospect of two armies flying different ways at the same moment. The King's troops, however, ran fastest and farthest, and were the last to recover their courage; indeed, they retreated that night to Falkirk, leaving their guns, burning their tents, and striking a new panic into the British nation, which was but just recovering from the flutter excited by what, in olden times, would have been called the Raid of Derby. In the drawingroom which took place at Saint James's on the day the news arrived, all countenances were marked with doubt and apprehension, excepting those of George the Second, the Earl of Stair, and Sir John Cope, who was radiant with joy at Hawley's discomfiture. Indeed, the idea of the two generals was so closely connected, that a noble peer of Scotland, upon the same day, addressed Sir John Cope by the title of General Hawley, to the no small amusement of those who heard the *qui pro quo.*

Mr. Home had some share in this action. The Glasgow regiment, being newly levied, was not honoured with a place in the line, though it certainly could not have behaved worse than some who held that station; they were drawn up beside some cottages on the left of the dragoons, and seem to

have stood fast when the others went off. Presently afterwards General Hawley rode past them, in the midst of a disorderly crowd of horse and foot, and he himself apparently considerably discomposed; for he could give no answer to Mr. Home, who asked him for orders, and was solicitous to know whether any regiments were standing, and where they were; but, pointing to a fold for cattle, he desired the volunteers to get in there, and so rode down the hill, the confusion becoming general. After remaining where they had been imprisoned, rather than posted, and behaving with considerable spirit, * Lieutenant Home, his captain,

Home, in his own History, is silent on the behaviour of the Glasgow regiment, but not so a metrical chronicler, who wrote a history of the insurrection in doggrel verse indeed, but sufficiently accurate. This author, who is, indeed, no other than Dugald Grahame, bellman of Glasgow, says that the Highlanders, having beaten the horse —

> "The south side being fairly won,
> They faced north, as had been done;
> Where next stood, to bide the crush,
> The volunteers, who zealous,
> Kept firing close, till near surrounded,
> And by the flying horse confounded:
> They suffer'd sair into this place,
> No Highlander pitied their case:
> 'You cursed militia,' they did swear,
> 'What a devil did bring you here?' "
> History of the Rebellion in 1745—1746. — *S.*

and a few of his men, were taken upon their retreat; they were used with little courtesy by the Highlanders, who made allowances for the opposition which they experienced from the redcoats, but could not see what interest the militia or volunteers had in the matter. Accordingly, when the prisoners, being lodged in gaol at Falkirk, and neglected in the general hurry, became clamorous for provisions — the sergeant of their guard very soberly asked them "what occasion they could possibly have for supper, since they were to be hanged in the morning."

Their doom, however, was milder: they were imprisoned in the old castle of Doune, on the north side of the Forth, built by one of the Dukes of Albany, and their place of confinement was near the top of that very lofty

building. Nevertheless, five or six of the prisoners, Home being of the number, proposed the hazardous experiment of an attempt to escape by descending from the battlements, a height of seventy feet, by means of a rope constructed out of slips of their blankets, which they tore up for that purpose. The issue of the attempt vindicates what we have said of Home's courage and spirit: we will, therefore, give it in his own words : —

"When every thing was adjusted, they went up to the battlements, fastened the rope, and about one o'clock in the morning began to descend. The two officers, with Robert Douglas, and one of the men taken up as spies, got down very well; but the fifth man, one of the spies, who was very tall and big, coming down in a hurry, the rope broke with him just as his feet touched the ground. The lieutenant (Home himself,) standing by the wall of the castle, called to the volunteer, whose turn it was to come down next, not to attempt it; for that twenty or thirty feet were broken off from the rope. Notwithstanding this warning, which he heard distinctly, he put himself upon the rope, and coming down as far as it lasted, let go his hold: his friend Douglas and the lieutenant (who were both above the middle size,) as soon as they saw him upon the rope (for it was moonlight) put themselves under him, to break his fall, which in part they did; but falling from so great a height, he brought them both to the ground, dislocated one of his ancles, and broke several of his ribs. In this extremity the lieutenant raised him from the ground and taking him upon his back, for he was slender and not very tall, carried him towards the road which led to Alloa. When the lieutenant was not able to go any farther with his burden, other two of the company, holding each of them one of Mr. Barrow's arms, helped him to hop along upon one leg. In this manner they went on very slowly, a mile or so; but thinking that, at the rate they proceeded, they would certainly be overtaken, they resolved to call at the first house they should come to. When they came to a house, they found a friend; for the landlord, who rented a small farm, was a Whig, and as soon as he knew who they were, ordered one of his sons to bring a horse from the stable, take the lame gentleman behind him, and go as far as his assistance was necessary. Thus equipped, they went on by Alloa to Tullyallan, a village near the sea, where they hired a boat to carry them off to the Vulture sloop-of-war, which was lying at anchor in the Frith of Forth. Captain Falconer of the Vulture received them very kindly, and gave them his barge to carry them to Queensferry." — Vol. iii,, pp. 172—174.

The volunteer who suffered on this occasion was Thomas Barrow. This is the mutual friend of Home and Collins, “the cordial youth” referred to in the ode on the Highland superstitions, addressed by the latter to the former poet. When Mr. Home’s connexion with the great enabled him to serve his friends, Barrow was not forgotten; and Barrow repaid the obligation by making Home acquainted with Collins, who, in consequence, delighted with the legends of mystery which Home repeated to him, composed that beautiful ode, which is certainly one of the most pleasing and poetical of his compositions.

We are now done with Mr Home’s military exploits and hazards, on which we have, perhaps, dwelt too long, though it must be remembered that our author was the historiographer of that period. His studies were resumed “and chiefly,” says his biographer, were “such as to lead his mind to that lofty and martial sentiment the swell of which is one of the nurses of poetry.”

“Amidst his classical and poetical reading, however, Mr. Home occupied himself not only in the studies of ethics and divinity, but also in the composition of sermons. But even at these moments, it would seem as if his mind was constrained, not changed, from its favourite bent; for, on the backs, or blank interstices of the papers containing some of his earliest composed sermons, there are passages of poetry, written in a more or less perfect state, as the inspiration or leisure of the moment prompted or allowed.” — Vol. i., p. 23.

Mr. Home was appointed in the year 1746 minister of Athelstoneford, in East Lothian, a locality which he has not forgotten in his celebrated tragedy, having fixed the apprehended descent of the Danes

> “near to that place where the sea-rock immense,
> Amazing Bass, looks o’er a fertile land.”

Mr. Home’s leisure, although his clerical duties were not only regularly, but strictly attended to, naturally induced him to indulge his poetical taste, and without, perhaps, suspecting the scandal the choice might occasion, to direct it towards dramatic composition. Admiring Plutarch, as that biographer must be admired by all who have the least pretension to poetical imagination, and being, as Mr. Mackenzie informs us, attached, like most other young men of ardent minds, to the republican form of government, he selected from the storehouse of the old Grecian the story of Agis, without,

perhaps, minutely inquiring whether the subject had enough of general interest in itself to support the dialogue through five acts, or was likely to be much improved by the ordinary receipt of a love-intrigue, awkwardly dovetailed into the general plot.

About the end of 1749 he went to London, and tendered his play to Garrick; but the author, at that time, was an unknown Scottish clergyman, and the manager, whose interest was always best secured by distinction, patronage, or literary reputation at least, declined bringing the piece forward. Under the feelings of mortification to find neglect

> "his only meed,
> (And heavy falls it on so proud a head,)"

the unsuccessful tragedian made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Shakspeare, and there wrote a copy of verses, imploring the deceased bard to transmute him into a marble image, and fix him beside his monument, since he had not obtained the opportunity of fascinating the public by tragic powers resembling his own.

On Home's return to Scotland, he continued his dramatic labours under better auspices. The old ballad of Gil Morrice supplied him with a plot of simple, yet engrossing and general interest, upon which the tragedy of *Douglas* was composed, amidst the universal applause of the literary associates of the author, which circle already comprehended the first order of Edinburgh literati — Lord Elibank, David Hume, Mr. Wedderburn, Dr. Adam Ferguson, *etc.* A second journey to London — a second application to Garrick, met with a similar rebuff as in the case of *Agis:* the manager pronounced the play totally unfit for the stage. There might, indeed, be another reason for this rejection: Garrick was naturally partial to those pieces in which he himself could appear to advantage, and, though not more than forty years of age, he was scarcely, in 1755, the natural representative of the stripling Douglas.

The friends of the author were of a different opinion from the English manager, and determined to try the experiment of a play written by a Scotsman, and produced for the first time, on a provincial stage — so that of Edinburgh was now to be termed. Its reception of *Douglas,* as appears from the following account by Mr. Mackenzie, was as brilliant as the author's friends, nay, the author himself, could have desired : —

“Dr. Carlyle, who sometimes witnessed the rehearsals, expresses, in his Memoirs, * his surprise and admiration at the

* Unfortunately, we believe, for the public, these Memoirs are still in MS. From what we have heard, they abound in very curious matter. — *S.*

acting of Mrs. Ward who performed Lady Randolph. Digges was the Douglas of the piece, his supposed father was played by Hayman, and Glenalvon, by Love; actors of very considerable merit, and afterwards of established reputation on the London stage. But Mrs. Ward’s beauty (for she was very beautiful) and feeling, tutored with the most zealous anxiety by the author and his friends, charmed and affected the audience as much, perhaps as has ever been accomplished by the very superior actresses of after-times. I was then a boy, but of an age to be sometimes admitted as a sort of page to the tea drinking parties of Edinburgh. I have a perfect recollection of the strong sensation which *Douglas* excited among its inhabitants. The men talked of the rehearsals; the ladies repeated what they had heard of the story; some had procured as a great favour, copies of the most striking passages, which they recited at the earnest request of the company. I was present at the representation; the applause was enthusiastic; but a better criterion of its merits was the tears of the audience, which the tender part of the drama drew forth unsparingly. ‘The town,’ says Dr. Carlyle (and I can vouch how truly,) ‘was in an uproar of exultation, that a Scotchman should write a tragedy of the first rate, and that its merits were first submitted to them.’ “ — Vol. i., pp. 37—40.

But, with the voice of praise arose, in startling disunion, a loud note of censure. Betwixt the two parties which divide the Church of Scotland, one (to which it maybe easily believed John Home did *not* belong) was, and in some degree still is, distinguished by a certain shade of Puritanism, which, when arising from a sincerely scrupulous conscience, and combined with a Christian charity towards those who may differ in opinion, merits, not merely pardon, but profound respect — but is not entitled to the same indulgence when it assumes to itself an intolerant character. These zealous professors, above all other men, abhorring the doctrines of Rome nominally, did not, perhaps, very far depart from them in principle, when they affirmed it was the duty of a sincere Christian to abstain from certain harmless pleasures, indifferent, nay, moral in themselves. They allowed their followers to gorge upon beef and pudding on fast-days, as well as holidays; but dancing, music, dramatic representation, and other lighter amusements,

though as harmless, when practised with moderation, as food to the palate, were sternly interdicted.

It must be, indeed, admitted that the practice of the stage had been, during the preceding century, such as gave the censors much room to argue, from the abuse, against even the use of the theatre. It is not, however, our purpose here to enter into a controversy, which has, in a manner, died away of itself, but which existed, at the time we treat of, in all the gall of bitterness. In such a temper of the public mind, it was not wonderful that the appearance of a tragedy, written by a Presbyterian clergyman, and attended and applauded by many of his brethren, and those of great reputation for learning and talents, should appear to many like a "waxing dim of the fine gold," — an innovation on the strictness of principle and purity of manners esteemed essential to the Church of Scotland.

"The Presbytery of Edinburgh published a solemn admonition on the subject, beginning with expressions of deep regret at the growing irreligion of the times, particularly the neglect of the *Sabbath;* * but calculated chiefly to warn all

* "Yet at that time in Edinburgh there was much more regard to the sacredness of Sunday than now. I was then a boy, and I well remember the reverential silence of the streets, and the tip-toe kind of fear with which, when any accident prevented my attendance on church, I used to pass through them. What would the Presbytery have said now, when, in the time of public worship on a Sunday, not only are the public walks crowded, but idle and blackguard boys bawl through the streets, and splash us with their games there? — an indecency of which, though no friend to puritanical preciseness, and still less to religious persecution, I rather think the police ought to take cognizance." — *Note by Mr. Mackenzie.*

persons within their bounds, especially the young, and those who had the charge of youth, against the danger of frequenting stage-plays and theatrical entertainments, of which the Presbytery set forth the immoral and pernicious tendency, at considerable length.

"This step of the Presbytery, like all other overstrained proceedings of that nature, provoked resistance and ridicule on the part of the public. The wags poured forth parodies, epigrams, and songs. These were, in general, not remarkable for their wit or pleasantry, though some of them were the productions of young men, afterwards eminent in letters or in station." — Vol. i., p. 42.

We have a collection of these productions on our table at this moment; and it must be owned that it contains more trash and nonsense than could have been expected to have been produced by a general controversy in the eighteenth century. Here follows a specimen, taken where the book chanced to open : —

"It is agreed upon, by sober pagans themselves, that play-actors are the most profligate wretches, and vilest vermin, that hell ever vomited out; that they are the filth and garbage of the earth, the scum and stain of human nature, the excrement's and refuse of all mankind, the pests and plagues of human society; the debauchers of men's minds and morals; unclean beasts, idolatrous papists or atheists, and the most horrid and abandoned villains that ever the sun shone upon."

Truly these are very bitter words; the zeal of such a controversialist is like that imputed by Dryden to Jeremy Collier, which, if it had not eaten the disputants up, must be allowed to have devoured all sense of decency and good manners. Of course there were other censures, expressed in a decent and moderate tone; yet it is astonishing how many circumstances were unfairly brought in. The general accusation of a clergyman's having written the death of Lady Randolph, — a catastrophe which may be fairly imputed to insanity, produced by extreme grief, — was said to imply a vindication of suicide; and some other passages were wiredrawn in the same way to produce inferences, which no man of candour can suppose were within the thoughts of the writer. Among these instances of want of candour and misconstruction, we do not include the objections made to a solemn prayer addressed to the Deity by one of the personages in the piece. The act of adoration is highly unfitted for mimic representation, and Mr Home's error — however remote any notion of irreverence may have been from his mind, — was visited with, we think, deserved reprehension.

Upon the whole, the high Calvinistical party prevailed so far, that the author had no chance of escaping the highest censures of his Church, if not the sentence of deprivation, save by voluntarily resigning his charge. His parishioners at Athelstoneford parted with their pastor with such regret, that, when he preached his farewell sermon, there was not a dry eye in the church. And,

"at a subsequent period," says Mr. Mackenzie, " when he retired from active life, and built a house in East Lothian, near the parish where he had once been minister, his former parishioners, as Lord Haddington informed

me, insisted on leading the stones for the building, and would not yield to his earnest importunity to pay them any compensation for their labour." — Vol. i., p. 34.

Home's professional friends and companions did not escape the censures of the Church, for the encouragement they had given his dramatic labours. The chief among these was Dr. Carlyle, for a long period clergyman at Musselburgh, whose character was as excellent as his conversation was amusing and instructive, and whose person and countenance, even at a very advanced age, were so lofty and commanding as to strike every artist with his resemblance to the Jupiter Tonans of the Pantheon. It was stated in aggravation of this reverend gentleman's crime in attending the theatre, that two rude or intoxicated young men having entered the box, and behaved uncivilly to some ladies, the doctor took the trouble of turning them out, which his great personal strength enabled him to do with little resistance or disturbance. He underwent a rebuke which did not sit very heavy on him. Similar measures of punishment were dealt out to other *play-haunters,* as those clergymen were termed who had ventured, however unfrequently, into the precincts of a theatre. But the effect on the public mind was, like all proceedings in which the punishment is disproportioned to the offence, more unfavourable to the judges than to the accused. The public, considering the whole dialogue and tendency of Mr. Home's play of *Douglas* as favourable to virtuous and honourable feeling, did not sympathize with the extreme horror expressed at what the Presbytery of Glasgow called "the *melancholy fact* that there should have been a tragedy written by a minister of the Church of Scotland;" and the ultimate consequence of the whole debate was a considerable increase of liberality on the part of the churchmen, many of whom now attend the theatre, though rarely, and when the entertainment is suited to their character; and it is to be hoped that the discussion may have produced on the other side an increased sense of decency respecting the representations on the stage. When Mrs. Siddons first acted in Edinburgh, in 1784, the General Assembly, or Convocation of the Church of Scotland, which was then sitting, had some difficulty in procuring a full attendance of its members on the nights when she performed. And wherefore should this be matter either of scandal or of censure, if the sentiments of Dr. Adam Fergusson are just, as expressed in a letter to Mr. Mackenzie, on the subject of Home's dramatic composition —

"Theatrical compositions, like every other human production, are, in the abstract, not more laudable or censurable than any other species of composition, but are either good or bad, moral or immoral, according to the management or the effect of the individual tragedy or comedy we are to see represented, or to peruse." — Vol. i., pp.75, 76.

Driven from his own profession by the fanaticism of his brethren, Home had no difficulty, such was his extended reputation, in obtaining one in the world's eye more distinguished, which placed him contiguous to greatness, rendered him intimate with state-affairs, and might, had that been the object of his ambition, have been the means of accumulating wealth. He was warmly patronized by Lord Bute, then prime minister, and, notwithstanding his unpopularity, possessed of considerable learning and taste. The access to the London stage was now open to the favourite of the favourite. Garrick, indeed, persisted in not bringing out *Douglas,* but that play appeared with great success upon the rival stage of Covent Garden, where the silver-tongued Barry represented the hero of the piece; and soon after, the manager of Drury Lane, with many protestations of his admiration of the merits of the piece and genius of the author, brought out the play of *Agis,* which he had formerly neglected. The manager, however, had made the worse choice. Inferior to *Douglas,* especially in having no point of predominant interest, no grappling-iron to secure the attention of the audience — even the talents of Garrick could not give to *Agis much vitality. Its stately declamation was heard with cold inattention, and, contrary to the hopes of the author, and prognostication of the experienced manager, after a flash of success, it was withdrawn from the stage. Several other tragedies of Mr. Home's were afterwards exhibited, but none, save Douglas,* with remarkable applause, and one or two with marked disapprobation. The cause of such repeated failures, after such splendid success, we may afterwards advert to.

Mr. Home was now formally installed in Lord Bute's family as private secretary, and his biographer hints that his lordship's choice was determined more by the desire of enjoying the poet's agreeable conversation, than by any expectation of deriving assistance from him in transacting public business. Home was indeed, like many other bards, in every respect the reverse of a man of method, indifferent to loss of time, and averse from all regularity and form, which are necessary to the management of affairs. When, on some occasion, he had lent his friend Adam Fergusson £200,

upon a note of hand, and could not redeliver the *voucher* on receiving payment of the money, he gave an acknowledgment in terms too poetical to be very good in law; “If ever the note appears,” said the letter of acknowledgment, “it will be of no use but to show what a foolish, thoughtless, inattentive fellow I am.” On the other hand, his conversation while in the prime of life, must have been highly entertaining. When those of the present generation knew him, age had brought its usual infirmities of repetition and prolixity, but still his discourse was charming. “He came into a company,” says one of his contemporaries, “like a sunbeam into a darkened room: his excellent temper and unaffected cheerfulness, his absence from every thing like reserve or formality, giving light to every eye and colour to every cheek. Yet Home’s conversation could neither be termed sprightly nor witty. In his comic humour it was characterised by a flow of easy pleasantry, of that species which indicates the speaker willing to please or be pleased at the lightest rate; and in his higher mood his thoughts, naturally turned to such subjects, were without affectation, formed on the sublime and beautiful in poetry, the dignified and the virtuous in history, the romantic and interesting in tradition, upon whatever is elevating and inspiring in humanity.” Such conversation, flowing naturally and unaffectedly from a high imagination and extensive reading, is found to carry along with its tide and influence even the men of phlegmatic minds, who might, *à priori,* be regarded as incapable to appreciate and enjoy it. The late excellent King George III. was then under the charge of the Earl of Bute who was his chief preceptor. The turn of his understanding was towards strong sense and useful information — the gods had not made him poetical — nevertheless, he loved the person and conversation of Home, of whom he naturally saw much. On his accession to the throne, that sovereign, of his own free motion, settled upon the poet a pension of £300; an office connected with Scotland, called Conservator of Scots Privileges at Campvere, added as much more to his income, and that was all the fortune with which he returned to Scotland when Lord Bute retired from office. He had also a lease of a farm on very advantageous terms from his former patron and friend Sir David Kinloch of Gilmerton, where he built a house, as has been already mentioned. In 1770, he married the daughter of Mr. Home, a friend and relative of his own, whose delicate health gave his affectionate disposition frequent cause of apprehension, but who nevertheless survived him. They had no family.

In 1778, Mr. Home again indulged his passion for military affairs by entering into the South Fencibles, a regiment raised by Henry Duke of Buccleuch, in which he had for comrades the present Earl of Haddington, William Adam, M.P. (now lord high commissioner of the Jury Court of Scotland,) and others who were well qualified to approve his merit and delight in his society. A fall from horseback, the second severe accident of the kind, interrupted his military career, and the contusion which he received in his head had a material influence on his future life. This accident was accompanied by something resembling a concussion of the brain. "He recovered the accident as far as his bodily health was concerned," says Mr. Mackenzie, "but his mind was never restored to its former vigour, nor regained its former vivacity." We may add that his subsequent compositions, though displaying flashes of his genius, never showed it in a continued and sustained flight.

It was, however, only the pressing remonstrances of his friends which could induce Mr. Home, after this accident, to resign the *military* mode of life to which he had been so much attached, and to retire into a quiet and settled privacy of life. After the year 1779 he settled in Edinburgh, where he was the object of general respect and veneration. He mingled in society to the last, and though his memory was impaired respecting late events, it seemed strong and vigorous when his conversation turned on those which had occupied his attention at an early period. The following account of an entertainment at his house in Edinburgh, we received from a literary gentleman of Scotland, who was then beginning to attract the attention of the public. He was honoured with the notice of Mr. Home from some family circumstances, but chiefly from the kindly feeling which the veteran still preserved towards all who seemed disposed to turn their attention to Scottish literature. There were seven male guests at table, of whom five were coeval with the landlord — then upwards of eighty-four. A bachelor gentleman of fifty was treated as what is called the *Boots,* and went through the duty of ringing the bell, carving the joint, and discharging the other functions usually imposed on the youngest member of the company. Our friend, who was not much above thirty, was considered too much of a boy to be trusted with any such charge of the ceremonial, and, in fact, his very presence in this venerable assembly seemed to be altogether forgotten, while, it may be supposed, he was much more anxious to listen to their conversation than to interrupt it by talking himself. The very entertainment

seemed antediluvian, though excellent. There were dishes of ancient renown, and liquors unknown almost to the present day. A capper-caelzie, or cock of the wood, which has been extinct in Scotland for more than a century, was presented on the board as a homage to the genius of Mr. Home, sent from the pine-forests of Norway. *The cup,* or cold tankard, which he recommended particularly, was after an ancient Scottish receipt. The claret, still the favourite beverage of the poet, was excellent, and, like himself, of venerable antiquity, but preserving its spirit and flavour. The subjects of their conversation might be compared to that held by ghosts, who, sitting on their midnight tombs, talk over the deeds they have done and witnessed while in the body. The *fortyfive* was a remarkable epoch, and called forth remarks and anecdotes without number. The former civil turmoils of the years 1715 and 1718 were familiar to some of those present. The conversation of these hale ancients had nothing of the weakness of age, though a little of its garrulity. They seemed the Nestors of their age; men whose gray hairs only served

"To mark the heroes born in better days."

Mr. Home, from the consequences of his accident, was, perhaps, the most broken of the party. But, on his own ground, his memory was entire, his conversation full both of spirit and feeling. One story of the evening our correspondent recollects. Mr. Home, beginning it in a voice somewhat feeble, rose into strength of articulation with the interest of the story. The names of the parties concerned, and the place where the incident took place, our informer has unhappily forgotten. What he does remember we shall give in his own words:

"A person of high Scottish descent, the son of one of Caledonia's most eminent nobility, exiled on account of his taking part with the house of Stuart, had entered into foreign service, and risen to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He was stationed in the advanced post destined to protect the trenches which the army to which he was attached had opened before a large and well-garrisoned town. Some appearances in the besieged place induced the Scottish officer to conjecture that a strong sortie would he made in the course of the night. He went to the tent of Prince — — , commanderin-chief of the army, to communicate the intelligence, and to request that a support to the advance might he held in readiness. The prince, engaged in writing despatches, did not even raise his head from the paper, but answered, in a haughty tone, 'Je suis fâché.' The Scotchman, whose

sense of his own consequence did not permit him to believe that this answer could be addressed to him, advanced nearer to the prince, and began to repeat what he had said. The prince then raised his head, looked scornfully at the officer, and reiterated ‘Je suis fâché de vous et de vous petite affaires.’ — ‘De moi et de mes petites affaires!’ — said the colonel, completely roused by the insult — ‘petit prince que vous êtes!’ The prince, as brave as insolent, readily agreed to waive his privilege as commander-in-chief, and give the officer so gratuitously insulted the satisfaction his honour required. ‘But’ (continued Mr. Home, his large light eyes suffused with tears, which flowed involuntarily as he told the conclusion,) ‘the brave gentleman lived not to receive the promised atonement. He returned to his post — the expected sortie took place, the advanced guard were cut to pieces, and among them, in the morning, was found the body of our unfortunate and gallant countryman, who had spent his last breath in the unequal combat to which the arrogance of his general had exposed him.’ “

Mr. Mackenzie has, we think, omitted to give some description of Mr. Home’s person and countenance, about which, nevertheless, our readers may entertain a rational curiosity. We ourselves only remember what a Scottish poet of eminence has called

“Home’s pale ghost just gliding from the stage.”

But his picture by Raeburn * enables us to say

* In Miss Fergusson’s collection at Huntley-burn. — S.

that his exterior, in his younger years, must have been impressive, if not handsome. His features are happily animated with the expression of a poet, whose eye, overlooking the uninteresting and everyday objects around, is bent to pursue the flight of his imagination through the dim region of past events, or the yet more mysterious anticipations of futurity.

Respecting his personal habits, we can add little to what has been told by his elegant and affectionate biographer. We remember only, that, with the natural vanity of an author, he was regular, while his strength permitted, in attendance upon the theatre when any actor of eminence represented Douglas. He had his own favourite seat beside the scenes, and, willing to be pleased by those who were desirous to give pleasure, his approbation was consequently rather measured out according to the kindness of his feelings than the accuracy of his critical judgment.

Undisturbed by pain, and after a long and lingering decay, he late and slowly approached the conclusion of life’s drama. His esteemed friend Lord

Haddington was one of the last friends whom he was able to receive. After looking at his lordship wistfully for some time, the kindness of his heart seemed to awaken his slumbering powers of recollection; he smiled, and pressed the friendly hand that was extended towards him, with a silent assurance of his tender remembrance. He died the 5th September 1808, in the eighty-sixth year of his age. It was impossible to lament the extinction of the wasted taper; yet there was a general feeling that Home's death closed an era in the literary history of Scotland, and dissolved a link which, though worn and frail, seemed to connect the present generation with that of their fathers.

We have promised to take, in the second place, some notice of the literary society of Scotland at the time when Home was so important a member of it, and which has been so interestingly treated by Mr. Mackenzie, who, in his own connexion with the preceding age, must be perhaps addressed as *Ultime Scotorum*.

Hospitality was at that time a distinguished feature in Scottish society; Mr. Home's income was chiefly employed in it. "His house," according to his friend Adam Fergusson, "was always as full of his friends as it could hold, fuller than, in modern manners, it could be made to hold." The form and show of the entertainment were little attended to; that would have thrown a dulness upon the freedom of intercourse, for the guest took with goodwill that which the landlord found most easy to present. The science of the gastronome was unknown. The Scottish manners were, indeed, emerging from the Egyptian darkness of the preceding age, when a dame of no small quality, the worshipful Lady Pumphraston, buttered a pound of green tea sent her as an exquisite delicacy, dressed it as condiment to a rump of salted beef, and complained that no degree of boiling would render these foreign greens tender. Yet the farm, with the poultry-yard and the dovecot, added to the supplies furnished by the gun and fishingrod, furnished a plentiful, if not an elegant table. French wine and brandy were had at a cheap rate, chiefly by infractions of the revenue laws, at which the government were contented to wink, rather than irritate a country in which there was little money and much disaffection. It only remained to find as many guests as the table would hold, and the social habits of the country rendered that seldom difficult. For beds many shifts were made, and the prospect of a dance in particular reconciled damsels to sleep in the proportion of half a dozen to each apartment, while their gallant partners

would be sometimes contented with an outhouse, a barn, or a hayloft. It is not, however, of the general state of society which we have to speak, but of that of a more distinguished character.

Mr. Mackenzie, with a partiality natural to his age and his country, speaks highly of the literary society of Scotland at this time, and even ventures, in some respects, to give it a preference over that of the sister country. He enlarges, in his own elegant language, upon the —

"Free and cordial communication of sentiments, the natural play of fancy and good-humour, which prevailed among the circle of men whom I have described. It was very different from that display of learning — that prizefighting of wit, which distinguished a literary circle of our sister country, of which we have some authentic and curious records. There all ease of intercourse was changed for the pride of victory; and the victors, like some savage combatants, gave no quarter to the vanquished. This may, perhaps, be accounted for, more from the situation than the dispositions of the principal members of that society. The literary circle of London was a sort of sect, a *caste* separate from the ordinary professions and habits of common life. They were traders in talent and learning, and brought, like other traders, samples of their goods into company with a jealousy of competition which prevented their enjoying as much as otherwise they might, any excellence in their competitors." — Vol. i., pp. 22, 23.

Without examining how far the Scottish literati might gain or lose by being knitted almost exclusively together in their own peculiar sect, we may take the liberty of running over the names of three or four persons, the most distinguished of the circle, with such trifling anecdotes as may throw additional light on Mr. Mackenzie's pleasing picture. We may add, that our biographer, reading his sketch of Mr. Home's Life before a learned body, *

* The Royal Society of Edinburgh; of which Mr. Mackenzie is secretary. — *S.*

many of them the relations or surviving friends of the deceased worthies of whom he spoke, was bound, by a certain natural delicacy, not to represent, except in a very mitigated view, the foibles of the distinguished persons of whom he spoke. We, on the contrary, claim a right to portray with a broader pencil; our information is of a popular nature; and, being so, it is rather wonderful it has furnished us with so few of the darker colours. We can only pretend to paint the northern sages in Tristram Shandy's point of view — that is, according to their hobbyhorses.

The celebrated David Hume, the philosopher and historian, was certainly the most distinguished person in the cycle. That he was most unhappy in permitting the acuteness of his talents, and the pride arising from the consciousness of possessing them, to involve him in a maze of sceptical illusions, is most undeniable; as well as that he was highly culpable in giving to the world the miserable results of his leisure. Mr. Mackenzie states, in mitigation, not in exculpation, that the great Pyrrhonist —

"had, in the language which the Grecian historian applies to an illustrious Roman, two minds, one which indulged in the metaphysical scepticism which his genius could invent, but which it could not always disentangle; another, simple, natural, and playful, which made his conversation delightful to his friends, and even frequently conciliated men whose principles of belief, his philosophical doubts if they had not power to shake, had grieved and offended. During the latter period of his life, I was frequently in his company amidst persons of genuine piety, and I never heard him venture a remark at which such men, or ladies — still more susceptible than men — could take offence. His goodnature and benevolence prevented such an injury to his hearers: it was unfortunate that he often forgot what injury some of his writings might do to his readers." — Vol. i., pp. 20, 21.

Mr. David Hume's intimacy with his namesake and friend, John, was of the closest kind, and suffered no interruption. It was, indeed, an instance among many, that friendships are formed more from a general similarity in temper and disposition, than from a turn to the same studies and pursuits. David Hume was no good judge of poetry; had little feeling for it; and examined it by the hackneyed rules of criticism; which, having crushed a hundred poets, will never, it may be prophesied, create, or assist in creating, a single one. John Home's disposition was excursive and romantic — that of David, both from nature and habit, was subtle, sceptical; and he, far from being inclined to concede a temporary degree of faith to *la douce chimère,* was disposed to reason away even the realities which were subjected to his examination. The poet's imagination tends to throw a halo on the distant objects — the sophistry of the metaphysician shrouded them with a mist which, unlike other northern mists, not only obscured but dwarfed their real dimensions. The one saw more, the other saw less, than was actually visible. Yet this very difference tended to bind the two friends, for such they

were *usque ad aras,* in a more intimate union. John Home by no means spared his friend's metaphysical studies. The discourse turning one evening upon a young man, previously of irreproachable conduct, having robbed his master, and eloped with a considerable sum, John Home accounted for his unexpected turpitude, by the nature of the culprit's studies, which had chiefly lain in *Boston's Fourfold State* (a treatise of deep Calvinistical divinity) and *Hume's Essays.* The philosopher was somewhat nettled at the jest, probably on account of the singular conjunction of the two works.

On the other hand, John was often the butt of his friend's jests, on account of his romantic disposition for warlike enterprise, his attachment to the orthography of his name, and similar peculiarities, indicative of a warm and susceptible imagination.

Upon some occasion, when General Fletcher mentioned the inconvenience which he had experienced from the rudeness and restiveness of a postilion, John Home exclaimed, in a Drawcansir tone, "Where were your pistols?" This created a general laugh; and next day, as Mr. Home was about to set off for a visit to Dr. Carlyle, at Musselburgh, he received a letter, with a large parcel: the import bore that his friends and wellwishers could not think of his taking so dangerous a journey without being suitably armed, and the packet being opened, was found to contain a huge pair of pistols, such as are sold at stalls to be *fairings* for children, made of gingerbread, and adorned with gilding.

When David Hume was suffering under the long and lingering illness which led him inch by inch to his grave, his friend John, with the most tender and solicitous attention, attended him on a journey to Bath, which it was supposed might be of temporary service, though a cure was impossible. When his companion's travelling pistols (not those of the savoury materials above mentioned) were handed into the carriage, the historian made an observation at once humorous and affecting. "You shall have your humour, John, and fight with as many highwaymen as you please; for I have too little of life left to be an object worth saving." With more profound raillery he supposed that he himself, John Home, and Adam Fergusson, who studied Roman history with Roman feeling and Roman spirit, had been Sovereigns of three adjacent states and John Home thus states in one of his letters the result of his friend's reflections: —

"He knew very well, he said (having often disputed the point with us,) the great opinion we had of military virtues as essential to every state; that

from these sentiments rooted in us, he was certain he would be attacked and interrupted in his projects of cultivating, improving, and civilizing mankind by the arts of peace; that he comforted himself with reflecting, that from our want of economy and order in our affairs, we should be continually in want of money; whilst he would have his finances in excellent condition, his magazines well filled, and naval stores in abundance; but that his final stroke of policy, upon which he depended, was to give one of us a large subsidy to fall upon the other, which would infallibly secure to him peace and quiet and, after a long war, would probably terminate in his being master of all the three kingdoms." — Vol. i., pp. 181, 182.

We are disposed more to question the taste of the joke which, in David Hume's last will, alludes to two of his friend's foibles. The grave, and its appurtenances of epitaphs and testaments, are subjects, according to Samuel Johnson, on which wise men think with awe and gravity; yet there is something affecting in the concluding allusion to the undisturbed friendship of those whom death was about to part. The bequest we allude to is contained in the following codicil: —

"I leave to my friend, Mr. John Home, of Kilduff, ten dozen of my old claret, at his choice; and one single bottle of that other liquor called port. I also leave to him six dozen of port, provided that he attests under his hand, *signed John Hume,* that he has himself alone finished that bottle at two sittings. By this concession, he will at once terminate the only two differences that ever arose between us concerning temporal matters." — Vol. i., p. 163.

The subject of the name has been already mentioned. The bequest of wine alludes to John Home's partiality to claret, on which he wrote a wellknown epigram, when the high duties were enforced against Scotland. * There is much more

* The government had long connived at a practice of importing claret into Scotland, under the mitigated duties applicable to the liquor called Southampton port. The epigram of John Home was as follows: —

"Firm and erect the Caledonian stood,
Old was his mutton, and his claret good;
'Let him drink port,' an English statesman cried
He drank the poison, and his spirit died." — *S.*

that is interesting and curious respecting David Hume in this piece of biography, which contains also several of his original letters.

Dr. Adam Fergusson, the author of the *History of the Roman Republic,* and distinguished besides as a moral philosopher, was a distinguished member of the literary society in which the poet Home, and the philosopher Hume, made such a figure. The son of a clergyman at Logierait, in Athol, he was himself destined to the Church, took orders, and went as chaplain to the Black Watch, or 42d Highland regiment, when that corps was first sent to the continent. As the regiment advanced to the battle of Fontenoy, the commanding officer, Sir Robert Monro, was astonished to see the chaplain at the head of the column, with a broadsword drawn in his hand. He desired him to go to the rear with the surgeons, a proposal which Adam Fergusson spurned. Sir Robert at length told him that his commission did not entitle him to be present in the post which he had assumed. "D — n my commission," said the warlike chaplain, throwing it towards his colonel. It may easily be supposed that the matter was only remembered as a good jest; but the future historian of Rome shared the honours and dangers of that dreadful day, where, according to the account of the French themselves, "the Highland furies rushed in upon them with more violence than ever did a sea driven by a tempest."

Professor Adam Fergusson's subsequent history is well known. He recovered from a decided shock of paralysis in the sixtieth year of his life; from which period he became a strict Pythagorean in his diet, eating nothing but vegetables, and drinking only water or milk. He survived till the year 1816, when he died in full possession of his mental faculties, at the advanced age of ninety-three. The deep interest which he took in the eventful war had long seemed to be the main tie that connected him with passing existence; and the news of Waterloo acted on the aged patriot as a *nunc dimittis.* From that hour the feeling that had almost alone given him energy decayed, and he avowedly relinquished all desire for prolonged life. It is the belief of his family that he might have remained with them much longer, had he desired to do so, and continued the exercise which had hitherto promoted his health. Long after his eightieth year he was one of the most striking old men whom it was possible to look at. His firm step and ruddy cheek contrasted agreeably and unexpectedly with his silver locks; and the dress which he usually wore, much resembling that of the Flemish peasant, gave an air of peculiarity to his whole figure. In his conversation,

the mixture of original thinking with high moral feeling and extensive learning; his love of country; contempt of luxury; and, especially, the strong subjection of his passions and feelings to the dominion of his reason, made him, perhaps, the most striking example of the Stoic philosopher which could be seen in modern days. His house, while he continued to reside in Edinburgh, was a general point of reunion among his friends particularly of a Sunday, where there generally met, at a hospitable dinner-party, the most distinguished literati of the old time who still remained, with such young persons as were thought worthy to approach their circle, and listen to their conversation. The place of his residence was an insulated house, at some distance from the town, which its visitors (notwithstanding its internal comforts) chose to call, for that reason, Kamtschatka.

Two constant attendants on this weekly symposium were the chemical philosophers Dr. Black and Dr. Hutton. They were particular friends, though there was something extremely opposite in their external appearance and manner. They were both indeed, tall and thin; but there all personal similarity ended. Dr. Black spoke with the English pronunciation, with punctilious accuracy of expression, both in point of manner and matter. His dress was of the same description, regulated, in some small degree, according to the rules which formerly imposed a formal and full-dress habit on the members of the medical faculty. The geologist was the very reverse of this. His dress approached to a quaker's in simplicity; and his conversation was conducted in broad phrases, expressed with a broad Scotch accent, which often heightened the humour of what he said. The difference of manner sometimes placed the two philosophers in whimsical contrast with each other. We recollect an anecdote, entertaining enough, both on that account, and as showing how difficult it is for philosophy to wage a war with prejudice.

It chanced that the two doctors had held some discourse together upon the folly of abstaining from feeding on the testaceous creatures of the land, while those of the sea were considered as delicacies. Wherefore not eat snails? — they are well known to be nutritious and wholesome — even sanative in some cases. The epicures of olden times enumerated among the richest and raciest delicacies, the snails which were fed in the marble quarries of Lucca; the Italians still hold them in esteem. In short, it was determined that a gastronomic experiment should be made at the expense of the snails. The snails were procured, dieted for a time, then stewed for the

benefit of the two philosophers; who had either invited no guest to their banquet, or found none who relished in prospect the *pièce de résistance.* A huge dish of snails was placed before them; but philosophers are but men after all; and the stomachs of both doctors began to revolt against the proposed experiment. Nevertheless, if they looked with disgust on the snails, they retained their awe for each other; so that each, conceiving the symptoms of internal revolt peculiar to himself, began with infinite exertion to swallow, in very small quantities, the mess which he internally loathed. Dr. Black, at length, "showed the white feather," but in a very delicate manner, as if to sound the opinion of his messmate : — "Doctor," he said, in his precise and quiet manner, "Doctor — do you not think that they taste a little — a very little, green?" — "D — d green, d — d green, indeed — tak them awa', tak them awa'," vociferated Dr. Hutton, starting up from table, and giving full vent to his feelings of abhorrence. And so ended all hopes of introducing snails into the modern *cuisine;* and thus philosophy can no more cure a nausea, than honour can set a broken limb.

Lord Elibank (Patrick, remembered in Scotland by the name of the Clever Lord) was one of the most remarkable amongst this remarkable society. He was distinguished by the liveliness of his conversation and the acuteness of his understanding, and many of his *bon-mots* are still preserved. When, for example, he was first told of Johnson's celebrated definition of the word *oats,* as being the food of men in Scotland, and horses in England, he answered with happy readiness, "Very true; and where will you find such horses and such men?" Lord Elibank indulged greatly in paradoxes, which he was wont to defend with much ingenuity. He piqued himself, at the same time, on his worldly prudence; so much so, as to reply to some one who told him of Mr. Home's having got a pension, at the suggestion of the King himself, — "it is nobly done; but it is as impossible for the King to make John Home or Adam Fergusson rich, as it would be for his Majesty to make me poor." Lord Elibank, with John Home, David Hume, Fergusson, and others, were members of a convivial association called the *Poker Club,* because its purpose was to stir up and encourage the public spirit of Scotland, the people of which were then much exasperated at not being permitted to raise a militia in the same manner as England. Dr. Fergusson, upon the occasion, composed a continuation of Arbuthnot's satirical *History of John Bull,* which he entitled the *History of Margaret, otherwise called Sister Peg.* The work was distinguished for

humour and satire; and led to a curious jest on the part of David Hume. He had been left out of the secret, as not being supposed a good counsel-keeper, and he took his revenge by gravely writing a letter to Dr. Carlyle, claiming the work as his own, with an air of sober reality, which, had the letter been found after any lapse of time, would have appeared an indubitable proof of his being really the author. We have not room to insert this piece of literary persiflage, but refer the reader to vol. i., p. 155.

The Poker Club served its purpose; and, many years afterwards, symptoms of discontent on the subject of the militia were to be found in Scotland. Burns says of his native country —

> "Lang time she's been in fractious mood,
> Her lost militia fired her blood,
> De'il ner they never mair do good,
> Play'd her that pliskie."

Most of the members of the Poker were fast friends to the Hanoverian dynasty, though opposed to the actual Administration, on account of the neglect, and, as they accounted it, the affront put upon their native country. Lord Elibank, however, had, in all probability, ulterior views; for, notwithstanding his talents and his prudence, his love of paradox, perhaps, had induced him to place himself at the head of the scattered remnant of Jacobites, from which party every person else was taking the means of deserting. It is now ascertained by documents among the Stuart papers, that he carried on a correspondence with the Chevalier, which was not suspected by his most intimate friends.

We have heard of a meeting of the Poker Club, which was convoked long after it had ceased to have regular existence, when its remaining members were far advanced in years. The experiment was not successful. Those who had last met in the full vigour of health and glow of intellect, taking an eager interest in the passing events of the world, seemed now, in each other's eyes, cold, torpid, inactive, loaded with infirmities, and occupied with the selfish care of husbanding the remainder of their health and strength, rather than in the gaiety and frolic of a convivial evening. Most had renounced even the moderate worship of Bacchus, which, on former occasions, had seldom been neglected. The friends saw their own condition reflected in the persons of each other, and became sensible that the time of convivial meetings was passed. The abrupt contrast betwixt

what they had been, and what they were, was too unpleasant to be endured, and the Poker Club never met again. This, it may be alleged, is a contradiction of what we have said concerning the Nestorian banquet at John Home's, formerly noticed. But the circumstances were different. The gentlemen then alluded to had kept near to each other in the decline as well as the ascent of life, met frequently, and were become accustomed to the growing infirmities of each other, as each had to his own. But the Poker Club, most of whom had been in full strength when the regular meetings were discontinued, found themselves abruptly reassembled as old and broken men, and naturally agreed with the Gaelic bard that age "is dark and unlovely." *

* See a list of the members of the Poker Club in the Appendix to Tytler's Life of Lord Kames. — Ed.

One or two gossiping paragraphs on the subject of Adam Smith, whose distinguished name may render the most trifling notices concerning him matter of some interest, and we will then release our courteous reader from our recollections on the subject of these old Northern Lights. Dr. Smith is well known to have been one of the most absent men living. It was, indeed, an attribute which, if any where, might have been matched in the society we speak of, of whom several, particularly John Home and General Fletcher Campbell, were extremely addicted to fits of absence. But those of the great Economist were abstraction itself. Mr. Mackenzie placed in his hand the beautiful tale of *La Roche,* in which he introduces Mr. David Hume, for the express purpose of knowing whether there was any thing in it which Mr. Hume's surviving friends could think hurtful to his memory. Dr. Smith read and highly approved of the MS.; but, on returning it to Mr. Mackenzie, only expressed his surprise that Mr. Hume should never have mentioned *the anecdote* to him. When walking in the street, Adam had a manner of talking and laughing to himself, which often attracted the notice and excited the surprise of the passengers. He used himself to mention the ejaculation of an old market-woman, "Hegh, sirs!" shaking her head as she uttered it; to which her companion answered, having echoed the compassionate sigh, "and he is well put on too!" expressing their surprise that a decided lunatic, who, from his dress, appeared to be a gentleman, should be permitted to walk abroad. — In a private room his demeanour was equally remarkable; and we shall never forget one particular evening, when he put an elderly maiden lady, who presided at the tea-table, to sore confusion, by neglecting

utterly her invitations to be seated, and walking round and round the circle, stopping ever and anon to steal a lump from the sugar basin, which the venerable spinster was at length constrained to place on her own knee, as the only method of securing it from his most uneconomical depredations. His appearance mumping the eternal sugar, was something indescribable.

We had the following anecdotes from a colleague of Dr. Smith, who, as is well known, was a commissioner of the Board of Customs. That board had in their service, as porter, a stately person, who, dressed in a huge scarlet gown or cloak, covered with frogs of worsted lace, and holding in his hand a staff about seven feet high, as an emblem of his office, used to mount guard before the Customhouse when a board was to be held. It was the etiquette that, as each commissioner entered, the porter should go through a sort of salute with his staff of office, resembling that which officers used formerly to perform with their spontoon, and then marshal the dignitary to the hall of meeting. This ceremony had been performed before the great Economist perhaps five hundred times. Nevertheless one day, as he was about to enter the Customhouse, the motions of this janitor seem to have attracted his eye without their character or purpose reaching his apprehension, and on a sudden he began to imitate his gestures, as a recruit does those of his drill-sergeant. The porter, having drawn up in front of the door, presented his staff as a soldier does his musket; the commissioner, raising his cane, and holding it with both hands by the middle, returned the salute with the utmost gravity. The inferior officer, much amazed, recovered his weapon, wheeled to the right, stepping a pace back to give the commissioner room to pass, lowering his staff at the same time, in token of obeisance. Dr. Smith, instead of passing on, drew up on the opposite side, and lowered his cane at the same angle. The functionary, much out of consequence, next moved up stairs, with his staff advanced, while the author of the *Wealth of Nations* followed with his bamboo in precisely the same posture, and his whole soul apparently wrapped up in the purpose of placing his foot exactly on the same spot of each step which had been occupied by the officer who preceded him. At the door of the hall, the porter again drew off, saluted with his staff, and bowed reverentially. The philosopher again imitated his motions, and returned his bow with the most profound gravity. When the Doctor entered the apartment, the spell under which he seemed to act was entirely broken, and our informant, who, very much amused, had followed him the whole way, had some difficulty to

convince him that he had been doing any thing extraordinary. Upon another occasion, having to sign an official minute or mandate, Adam Smith was observed to be unusually tedious, when the same person, peeping over his shoulder, discovered that he was engaged, not in writing his own name, but in imitating, as nearly as possible, the signature of his brother in office, who had held the pen before him. These instances of absence equal the abstractions of the celebrated Dr. Harvey; but whoever has read the deep theories and abstruse calculations contained in the *Wealth of Nations* must readily allow that a mind habitually employed in such themes, must necessarily be often rapt far above the sublunary occurrences of everyday life.

We are now approaching the third subject proposed in our Review, the consideration of John Home's character as an author, founded on the present edition of his collected works. Our criticism on his poetical character need not be very minute, for his chef-d'œuvre, *Douglas,* is known to every one, and his other dramatic labours are scarcely known at all. Upon the merits of the first, every reader has already made up his mind, and on those of the others we might, perhaps, find it difficult to procure an attentive hearing. Still, however, some mark of homage is due to, perhaps, the most popular tragic author of modern times; and we must pay suit and service, were it only with a peppercorn.

We have said already that *Douglas* owes a great part of its attractions to the interest of the plot, which, however, is by no means a probable one. There is something overstrained in the twenty years spent by Lady Randolph in deep and suppressed sorrow; nor is it natural, though useful certainly to the poet, that her regrets should turn less on the husband of her youth, than upon the new-born child whom she had scarcely seen. There is something awkward in her sudden confidence to Anna, as is pointed out by David Hume. "The spectator," says the critic, "is apt to suspect it was done in order to instruct him; a very good end, but which might have been obtained by a careful and artificial conduct of the dialogue." This is all unquestionably true; but the spectator should, and, indeed, must, make considerable allowances, if he expects to receive pleasure from the drama. He must get his mind, according to Tony Lumpkin's phrase, into "a concatenation accordingly;" since he cannot reasonably expect that scenes of deep and complicated interest shall be placed before him, in close succession, without some force being put upon ordinary probability; and the

question is not, how far you have sacrificed your judgment in order to accommodate the fiction, but rather what is the degree of delight you have received in return. Perhaps, in this point of view, it is scarcely possible for a spectator to make such sacrifices for greater pleasure than we have enjoyed, in seeing Lady Randolph personified by the inimitable Siddons. Great as that pleasure was on all occasions, it was increased in a manner which can hardly be conceived when her son (the late Mr. H. Siddons) supported his mother in the character of Douglas, and when the full overflowing of maternal tenderness was authorised, nay, authenticated and realized, by the actual existence of the relationship. There will, and must be, on other occasions, some check of the feeling, however virtuous and tender, when a woman of feeling and delicacy pours her maternal caresses on a performer who, although to be accounted her son for the night is, in reality, a stranger. But in the scenes we allude to, that chilling obstacle was removed; and while Lady Randolph exhausted her tenderness on the supposed Douglas, the mother was, in truth, indulging the same feelings towards her actual son. It may be erroneous to judge this way of a drama which can hardly be again illustrated by such powers, exercised under circumstances so exciting to the principal performer, and so nearly approaching to reality. Yet, even in an abstract view, we agree with Mr. Mackenzie that the chief scene between Lady Randolph and Old Norval, in which the preservation and existence of Douglas is discovered, has no equal in modern, and scarcely a superior in the ancient drama. It is certainly one of the most effective which the English stage has to boast; and we learn with pleasure, but without surprise, that, though many other parts of the play were altered before its representation, we have this masterpiece exactly as it was thrown off in the original sketch.

"Thus it is," says the accomplished editor, "that the fervid creation of genius and fancy strikes out what is so excellent as well as vivid, as not to admit of amendment, and which, indeed, correction would spoil instead of improving. This is the true inspiration of the poet, which gives to criticism, instead of borrowing from it, its model and its rule and which, it is possible, in some diffident authors, the terrors of criticism may have weakened or extinguished." — Vol. i., p. 93.

It is justly remarked by Mr Mackenzie, that the intense interest excited by the scene of the discovery occasions some falling off in the two last acts; yet this is not so great as to injure the effect of the play when the parts are suitably supported. Mrs. Siddons indeed, (we cannot help identifying her

with Lady Randolph,) gave such terrible interest to the concluding scene, that we can truly say the decay of interest, which is certainly felt both in perusing the drama and in seeing it only moderately well performed, was quite imperceptible.

In a general point of view, the interest of *Douglas* is of a kind which addresses itself to the bosom of every spectator. The strength of maternal affection is a feeling which all the audience have had the advantage of experiencing, which such mothers as are present have themselves exercised, and which moves the general mind more deeply than even distresses arising from the passion of love — one too frequently produced on the stage not to become, in some degree, hackneyed and uninteresting.

The language of the piece is beautiful. "Mrs. Siddons told me," says the editor, "that she never found any *study"* (which, in the technical language of the stage, means the getting verses by heart) "so easy as that of *Douglas,* which is one of the best criterions of excellence in the dramatic style."

The character of *Douglas,* enthusiastic, romantic, desirous of honour, careless of life and every other advantage where glory lay in the balance, flowed freely from the author's heart, to which such sentiments were the most familiar.

The structure of the story somewhat resembles that of Voltaire's *Mérope,* but is as simple and natural as that of the French author is complicated and artificial. *Mérope* came out about 1743, and Mr. Home may, therefore, easily have seen it. But he has certainly derived his more simple and natural tale from the old ballad. In memory of this, the tune of *Gil Morrice,* a simple and beautiful air, is, in Scotland at least, always played while the curtain rises.

The poetical moral of the piece is justly observed by Mr. Mackenzie to have captivated all who, before its representation in Scotland, happened to hear any part of it recited. He gives us his own authority, as bearing witness that some of the most striking passages, and particularly the opening soliloquy, were got by heart and repeated by fair lips for the admiration of the tea-tables of Edinburgh.

> "And you, fair dames of merry England,
> As fast your tears did pour;" —

We have the evidence of the accomplished Earl of Haddington, that he remembers the celebrated Lady Hervey (the beautiful Molly Lapelle of

Pope and Gay) weeping like an infant over the manuscript of *Douglas*.

It may, perhaps, seem strange that the author, in his preceding tragedy of *Agis,* and in his subsequent dramatic efforts, so far from attaining similar excellence, never even approached to the success of *Douglas;* yet good reasons can be assigned for his failure, without imputing it, during his best years at least, to a decay of genius.

Agis was a tragedy the interest of which turned, at first, exclusively upon politics, a subject which men are fiercely interested in, if connected with the party-questions agitating their own country at the time; but which, when the same refers to the forgotten revolutions of a distant country and a remote period, are always caviare to the million. Addison, indeed, succeeded in his splendid poem of *Cato;* but both the name and history were so generally known as to facilitate greatly its interest with the public. Besides, the author was at the head of the literature of his day, and not unskilled in the art of indoctrinating the readers of the *Spectator* in the knowledge necessary to understand *Cato.* But the history of *Agis* and the fortunes of Sparta were familiar only to scholars; and it was difficult to interest the audience at large in the revolutions of a country which they knew only by name. The Ephori and the double kings of Lacedæmon must have been puzzling to a common audience, even at the outset. Both *Cato* and *Agis,* but particularly the latter, suffered by the ingrafting of a love-intrigue, commonplace and cumbersome, as well as unnecessary, upon the principal plot; which, on the contrary, it ought in either case to have been the business of the author to keep constantly under the view of the audience, and to illustrate and enhance by every subordinate aid in his power; yet *Agis,* from the ease of the dialogue and beauty of the declamation, and being also, according to the technical phrase, *strongly cast* — for Garrick played Lysander, and Mrs. Cibber, Evanthe — was, for some representations, favourably received; and, had it been written in French, it would probably have been permanently successful on the Parisian stage. In this and other pieces the author seems to have suffered in the eyes of his countrymen by attending too much to the advice of David Hume, in such cases surely an incompetent judge, who entreats him, for heaven's sake, "to read Shakspeare, but get Racine and Sophocles by heart." — (Vol. i., p. 100.) The critic had not sufficiently considered how much the British stage differs both from the French and the Grecian in the structure and character of the entertainments there exhibited.

The *Siege of Aquileia* was acted for the first time in 1760. Garrick expected the most unbounded success, and he himself played the principal character. It failed, however, from an objection thus stated by Mr. Mackenzie : —

"Most, or indeed almost all, the incidents are told to, not witnessed by, the spectators, who, in England beyond any ether country, are swayed by the Horatian maxim, and feel very imperfectly these incidents which are not 'oculis subiecta fidelibus.' It rather languished, therefore, in the representation, though supported by such admirable acting, and did not run so many nights as the manager confidently expected." — Vol. i., p. 58.

As we have made few quotations from Mr. Home's poetry, we may observe that the description of an ominous dream in this play almost rivals in effect the celebrated vision in *Sardanapalus:* —

> "*Æmil.* What evil omens has Cornelia seen?
> *Corn.* 'Tis strange to tell; but, as I slumbering lay,
> About that hour when glad Aurora springs
> To chase the lagging shades, methought I was
> In Rome, and full of peace the city seem'd;
> My mind oblivious, too, had lost its care.
> Serene I stepp'd along the lofty hall
> Embellish'd with the statues of our fathers,
> When suddenly an universal groan
> Issued at once from every marble breast.
> Aghast I gazed around! when slowly down
> From their high pedestals I saw descend
> The murder'd Gracchi. Hand in hand the brothers
> Stalk'd towards me. As they approach'd more near,
> They were no more the Gracchi, but my sons,
> Paulus and Titus. At that dreadful change
> I shriek'd and waked. But never from my mind
> The spectacle shall part. Their rueful eyes!
> Their cheeks of stone! the look of death and woe!
> So strange a vision ne'er from fancy rose.
> The rest, my lord, this holy priest can tell." — Vol. ii., pp. 17, 18.

The *Fatal Discovery* was brought out in 1769; but, as the prejudice against the Scotch was then general, and John Home was obnoxious, not only as a North Briton, but as a friend and *protégé* of the obnoxious Earl of Bute, Garrick prudently procured an Oxford student to officiate as godfather to the play. The temporary success of the piece brought out the real author from behind his screen. When Home avowed the piece, Garrick's fears were realized, and its popularity terminated; and we believe the most zealous Scotchman would hardly demand, in this instance, a reversal of the public judgment. Mr. Mackenzie has a more favourable opinion, upon more accurate consideration, perhaps, than it has been in our power to give to the subject. The play is written in the false gallop of Ossianic composition, to which we must avow ourselves by no means partial.

Alonzo was produced in 1773, and was received with a degree of favour which, in some respects, it certainly scarce deserved. Home had, in this instance, forgotten a story belonging to his former profession, which we have heard himself narrate. It respected a country clergyman in Scotland, who, having received much applause for a sermon preached before the Synod, could never afterwards get through the service of the day without introducing some part of the discourse on which be reposed his fame, with the quotation, "as I said in my Synod sermon." In plain words, *Alonzo* was almost a transcript of the situation, incidents, and plot of *Douglas,* and every author should especially beware of repeating the theme which has formerly been successful, or presenting a *da capo rotta* of the banquet which he has previously been fortunate enough to render acceptable.

In 1778, Mr. Home's last dramatic attempt, the tragedy of *Alfred,* was represented and completely failed.

Home now turned his thoughts to another walk of literature. His connexion with the civil war of 1745 had long been revolved in his mind, as a subject fit for history: he had even intended to write something on the subject soon after the broil was ended. After 1778, he seems to have resumed the purpose, and endeavoured to collect materials by correspondence and personal communication with such personages as could afford them

"In one or two of these journeys," says Mr. Mackenzie, "I happened to travel for two or three days along with him and had occasion to hear his ideas on the subject. These were such as a man of his character and tone of mind would entertain, full of the mistaken seal and illfated gallantry of the

Highlanders, the self-devoted heroism of some of their chiefs, and the ill-judged severity, carried (by some subordinate officers) the length of great inhumanity, of the conquering party. A specimen of this original style of his composition still remains in his account of the gallant Lochiel. But the complexion of his history was materially changed before its publication, which, at one time, he had very frequently and positively determined should not be made till after his death, but which he was tempted by that fondness for our literary offspring which the weakness of age produces, while it leaves less power of appreciating their merits, to hasten; and accordingly, published the work at London, in 1802. It was dedicated to the King, as a mark of his gratitude for his Majesty's former gracious attention to him, a circumstance which perhaps contributed to weaken and soften down the original composition, in compliment to the monarch whose uncle's memory was somewhat implicated in the impolitic, as well as ungenerous use, which Mr. Home conceived had been made of the victory of Culloden." — Vol. i., pp.68, 69.

It is well for us, perhaps, that we have the advantage of telling the above tale in Mr. Mackenzie's language. We have great veneration for the memory of his author, and much greater for that of his late Majesty, whose uniform generosity and kindness to the unfortunate race of Jacobites was one of the most amiable traits of his honest, benevolent, and truly English character. But since Mr. Home did assume the pen on the subject of the Fortyfive, no consideration whatever ought to have made him depart from the truth, or shrink from exposing the cruelties practised, as Mr. Mackenzie delicately expresses it, by some subordinate officers, or from execrating the impolitic and ungenerous use of the victory of Culloden, in which the Duke of Cumberland was *somewhat* implicated. Mr. Home ought either never to have written his history, or to have written it without clogging himself with the dedication to the sovereign. There was no obligation on John Home to inscribe that particular book to his Majesty, and, had that ceremony been omitted, his Majesty was too just and candid a man to have resented the truth; though there might have been some affront in addressing a work, in which his uncle's memory suffered rough usage, directly to his own royal person. On the whole, we greatly prefer the conduct of Smollett, a Whig as well as Home, when he poured out his affecting lyric: —

"Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn
Thy banish'd peace, thy laurels torn."

On being warned from making such an effusion public, the only answer he condescended to give was, by adding the concluding stanza.

The disappointed public of Scotland, to which the history should have been most interesting, was clamorous in its disapprobation. They complained of suppressed information and servile corrections; but reflection induced critics to pardon the good old man, who had been influenced in his latter years by doubts and apprehensions, which could not have assailed him in his term of active manhood. The work was, indeed, strangely mutilated, and breaks off abruptly at the battle of Culloden, without giving us any account of the manner in which that victory was used. Other faults might be pointed out, chiefly such as are indicative of advanced years. The part which the author himself played in the drama is perhaps a little too much detailed and too long dwelt upon.

The history is, nevertheless, so far as it goes, a fair and candid one; for the writer, though by the manner in which he had fettered himself he was debarred from speaking the whole truth, yet was incapable of speaking any thing but the truth. The narrative is fair and honourable to both sides, nor does the author join with the sordid spirits, who cannot fight their enemies without abusing them at the same time, like the bailiff in Goldsmith's *Goodnatured Man.* The idea which he gives us of the unfortunate Charles Edward is such as we have ourselves formed: the young Chevalier was one of those whom Fortune only distinguishes for a brief period of their life, the rest of which is passed in obscurity, so that they seem totally different characters when judged of by the few months which they spend in all the glare of publicity and sunshine, or when valued according to the many years which have passed away in the gloom of destroyed hopes and broken health. Other circumstances combine to render it difficult to obtain the real character of the unfortunate prince. By far the greater portion of his followers his memory was cherished as that of an idol, but the more dear to them on account of the sacrifices they had made to it. His illustrious birth, his daring enterprise, and the grace and beauty of his person, went no small length in confirming his partisans in those feelings towards their leader. There were exceptions amongst them however. Some of those who followed Charles to France, thought that he looked cold on them, and the

Memoirs of Dr. King, lately published, tend to confirm the suspicion that (like others of his unhappy race) he was not warmly grateful. His courage, at least, ought to be beyond suspicion, considering the manner in which he landed on an expedition so desperate, and the opposition to his undertaking which he met with from the only friends upon whose assistance he could have counted for the chance of bringing together 1500 or 2000 men. A few sentences on this subject from Homes Narrative will probably vindicate what we have said, and at the same time give a specimen of the historian's peculiar style, which, if neither flowery nor eloquent, as might have been expected from his poetical vein, is clear, simple, expressive, and not unlike the conversation of an aged man of intelligence and feeling, recalling the recollections of his earlier years.

To introduce these extracts, we must previously remark, that the chiefs of the Highland clans had come to a prudent resolution, that notwithstanding their attachment to the cause of the Stuarts, they should decline joining in any invasion which the exiled family might attempt, unless it was supported by a body of regular French troops. It was on the dominions (as they might then be called) of the Captain of Clanronald that Charles first landed. He did not find the chief himself, but he summoned on board the vessel which he brought with him to the Hebrides, MacDonald of Boisdale, the brother of Clanronald, a man of considerable intelligence, and who was supposed to have much interest with the chief. Boisdale declared he would advise his brother against the undertaking, remarking that the two most powerful chieftains in the vicinity, MacDonald of Sleate and MacLeod of MacLeod, were determined not to raise their men, unless the Chevalier should bring with him a sufficient foreign force.

"Charles replied in the best manner he could; and ordering the ship to be unmoored, carried Boisdale, whose boat hung at the stern, several miles onward to the mainland, pressing him to relent, and give a better answer. Boisdale was inexorable; and, getting into his boat, left Charles to pursue his course, which he did directly for the coast of Scotland; and, coming to an anchor in the Bay of Lochnanuagh, between Moidart and Arisaig, set a boat ashore with a letter to young Clanronald. In a very little time Clanronald, with his relation Kinloch Moidart, came aboard the Doutelle. Charles, almost reduced to despair in his interview with Boisdale, addressed the two Highlanders with great emotion, and summing up his arguments for taking arms, conjured them to assist their prince, their countryman, in his

utmost need. Clanronald and his friend, though well inclined to the cause, positively refused; and told him, one after another, that, to take arms without concert or support was to pull down certain destruction on their own heads. Charles persisted, argued, and implored. During this conversation, the parties walked backwards and forwards upon the deck; a Highlander stood near them, armed at all points, as was then the fashion of the country: He was a younger brother of Kinloch Moidart, and had come off to the ship to enquire for news, not knowing who was aboard. When he gathered from their discourse that the stranger was the Prince of Wales, when he heard his chief and his brother refuse to take arms with their prince, his colour went and came, his eyes sparkled, he shifted his place, and grasped his sword. Charles observed his demeanour, and, turning briskly towards him, called out, 'Will not you assist me?' — 'I will, I will,' said Ranald; 'though no other man in the Highlands should draw a sword, I am ready to die for you.' Charles, with a profusion of thanks and acknowledgments, extolled his champion to the skies, saying, he only wished that all the Highlanders were like him. Without further deliberation, the two Macdonalds declared that they also would join and use their utmost endeavours to engage their countrymen to take arms. Immediately Charles, with his company, went ashore, and was conducted to Boradale, a farm which belonged to the estate of Clanronald." — Vol. ii., pp. 425—427.

The conversion of the *good Lochiel,* for whom some friendly Presbyterian drew up an epitaph, declaring he

— "is now a Whig in heaven,"

to this rash undertaking, shall he our last quotation from this history, so interesting in spite of its imperfections. This model of a Highland chief and Scottish gentleman met with the Chevalier at MacDonald of Boradale's, a very few days after he landed.

"The conversation began on the part of Charles, with bitter complaints of the treatment he had received from the ministers of France, who had so long amused him with vain hopes, and deceived him with false premises: their coldness in his cause, he said, but ill agreed with the opinion he had of his own pretensions, and with the impatience to assert them, with which the promises of his father's brave and faithful subjects had inflamed his mind. Lochiel acknowledged the engagements of the chiefs, but observed that they were no ways binding, as he had come over without the stipulated aid; and, therefore, as there was not the least prospect of success, he advised his

royal highness to return to France, and to reserve himself and his faithful friends for a more favourable opportunity. Charles refused to follow Lochiel's advice, affirming that a more favourable opportunity than the present would never come; that almost all the British troops were abroad, and kept at bay by Marshal Saxe, with a superior army: that in Scotland there were only a few newraised regiments, that had never seen service, and could not stand before the Highlanders; that the very first advantage gained over the troops would encourage his father's friends at home to declare themselves; that his friends abroad would not fail to give their assistance; that he only wanted the Highlanders to begin the war.

"Lochiel still resisted, entreating Charles to be more temperate, and consent his remain concealed where he was, till he (Lochiel) and his other friends should meet together, and concert what was best to be done. Charles, whose mind was wound up to the utmost pitch of impatience, paid no regard to this proposal, but answered, that he was determined to put all to the hazard. 'In a few days,' said he, 'with the few friends that I have, I will erect the royal standard, and proclaim to the people of Britain, that Charles Stuart is come over to claim the crown of his ancestors, to win it, or to perish in the attempt; Lochiel, who, my father has often told me, was our firmest friend, may stay at home, and learn from the newspapers the fate of his prince.' — 'No', said Lochiel, 'I'll share the fate of my prince; and so shall every man over whom nature or power hath given me any power.' Such was the singular conversation, on the result of which depended peace or war. For it is a point agreed among the Highlanders, that if Lochiel had persisted in his refusal to take arms, the other chiefs would not have joined the standard without him, and the spark of rebellion must instantly have expired." — Vol. iii., pp. 5, 6.

It is singular that we should have to exculpate the unfortunate prince, who thus persisted, at the utmost risk, to instigate his followers, and to rush himself upon an undertaking so utterly desperate, from the imputation of personal cowardice; and yet such is the fact. The strongest evidence on this point is that of the Chevalier Johnstone's *Memoirs of the Rebellion in 1745 and 1746.* These have been published under the care of a sensible and intelligent editor, who has done a great deal to throw light upon the subject, but has been occasionally misled into giving a little too much credit to the representations of his author, who wrote under the influence of disappointment and illhumour. A great part of the work is very interesting,

because Johnstone, having been a military man, and having some turn for observation, has made better professional remarks on the Highland mode of fighting, and mere tactics, than we have observed in any other work. But then we happen to know that some of his stories are altogether fictitious, such as the brutal piece of vengeance said to have been practised by Gordon of Abbachie, upon a Whig minister, [Johnstone's *Memoirs,* 4to, 1820, p. 183.] It will also surprise such of the few readers as might have been disposed to interest themselves in the love affair between the Chevalier and his charming Peggy, which makes such a figure in the conclusion of his work to learn that Chevalier Johnstone was all this while a married man — an absolute Benedick — a circumstance which he no where hints at during his Memoirs, and that the amour, if such existed, was not of a character to be boasted of in the face of the public. There are legitimate grandchildren of the Chevalier Johnstone now alive.

James Johnstone, the father of the Chevalier, by courtesy of Scotland called "*merchant* in Edinburgh," was a grocer in that city. Not that we mean to impeach his gentility, because we believe his father to have been of the ancient and once-powerful family of Wamphray, though, like many sons of Jacobite families, he was excluded from what are called the learned professions, by his reluctance to take the oaths to the Hanoverian dynasty. Accordingly, the heir of the noble family of Rollo, who leave been before allied with the Johnstones of Wamphray, did not derogate in marrying Cecilia, daughter of James Johnstone, grocer, as before said. But when the Chevalier talks big about his fears of being disinherited, we cannot but remember that a petty shop, such as shops in the Cowgate of Edinburgh were in 1745, indifferently stocked with grocery goods,

"Was all his great estate, and like to be."

In short, we suspect our friend the Chevalier to be somewhat of a gasconader, and we are not willing to take away the character of Charles for courage upon such suspicious authority. When we therefore find that this unfortunate prince is accused — *1st,* of having entered into this expedition without foreseeing the personal dangers to which he must be exposed — *2d,* of taking care, in carrying it on, not to expose his person to the fire of the enemy — *3d,* of abandoning it when he had ten times more hope of success than when he left Paris, we are inclined to compare what the Chevalier has averred on these three points with what is elsewhere stated by himself and other authorities.

And, *first* — After reading the foregoing arguments used by Boisdale, Clanronald, and Lochiel, in order to detain the Chevalier, by the strongest representations in their power, from venturing on the expedition, the Chevalier may be censured for foolhardiness, but he cannot surely be considered as a person ignorant of the dangers of the undertaking — in other words, as one too timid to venture had he known the perils he was to encounter.

Secondly — That Charles avoided placing himself in such situations of personal danger as became a prince and a general, is inconsistent with what has been registered by almost all authorities, and with what is narrated by Johnstone himself. Beginning with the battle of Prestonpans, Home states, and we have heard it corroborated by eye and ear witnesses, that "Charles declared he would lead the clans on himself, and charge at their head;" and only relinquished his purpose when the general remonstrance of the chieftains deterred him from leading the van. But notwithstanding this precaution, the prince conducted the second line of the Highland army; and the Chevalier Johnstone tells us, that the battle was gained with such rapidity, "that, in the second line, when I was *still* by the side of the prince, we saw no other enemy on the field of battle than those who were lying on the ground killed and wounded, though we were not more than fifty paces behind our first line, running as fast as we could to overtake them." Now we submit, that a general who brought up a reserve within *fifty paces* of his advance, when, as Sir Lucius O'Trigger says, there was light enough for a long shot, and when the said advance was made upon a line of trained infantry and artillery, cannot be truly charged with keeping himself out of gunshot. At Falkirk, we do not know exactly where the Prince was placed during the conflict, but it appears that he must have been in the advance, since at seven o'clock in the evening, he led in person the troops which pursued the English army, and took possession of Falkirk at halfpast seven at night, while the Chevalier Johnstone did not even know that the victory was won until half an hour later. In the whole course of this strange *levée des boucliers,* the Chevalier Johnstone accuses the prince of what he calls a childish desire of fighting battles, a propensity rather inconsistent with personal cowardice, especially in the circumstances of Prince Charles, as, according to our Chevalier's authority, orders were issued to kill him on the spot if he should fall into the hands of the Government troops.

At the battle of Culloden, the Prince remained upon an eminence, with a squadron of horse. But from what Johnstone states himself, he did give the orders necessary for the occasion; in particular, when he saw the English, and the Campbells, their auxiliaries, about to force an enclosure which protected the right flank of his army, he "immediately repeated orders to place some troops in that enclosure, and prevent the manœuvre of the English, which could not fail to prove fatal to us. Lord George paid no attention to this order," and the English introduced both horse, musketry, and artillery into that enclosure, to attack the Highland right wing on flank and rear, and did so with such deadly effect, that they swept away whole ranks. This manœuvre completely decided the battle, and it was when the right wing was absolutely broken that Chevalier Johnstone proposes that Charles should have rushed down to renew the fight. This would, doubtless, have been the course to ensure a soldier's grave, but that, as is expressed in the last stanzas of poor Byron, is more "often found than sought;" nor are we entitled to praise the chief who rushes upon inevitable death because he has sustained a defeat. No effort of the squadron of horse, which was all that Charles had around his person, could dispossess the English cavalry, infantry, and artillery from the position they had gained; and as for rallying the Highlanders, why they were Highlanders, and for that very reason could not be rallied. In their advances, they fired their guns and threw them away, coming to the shock with the target and broadsword alone; if they succeeded, which they often did, no victory could be more complete; but they exhausted their strength in this effort, and it was not till they received, in the regiments drawn from amongst them, the usual discipline of the field, that Highlanders had any idea of rallying till some hill, pass, or natural fastness, gave them an advantage. *

* See the *History of the Highland Regiments,* by MajorGeneral David Stewart (of Garth;) one of the most interesting military memoirs in the world, and not the less so because the feeling of "*quorum pars magna fui* " is perceptible in every page. — S.

It is very true, that Johnstone is supported on this point by a better evidence than himself — Lord Elcho, namely, who has left manuscript memoirs, in which it is stated that the author requested the Chevalier to charge in person at the head of the left wing, after the right was routed, and that on his not so advancing, Lord Elcho called him an Italian scoundrel, or a worse epithet, and declared he would never see his face more. We cannot

believe, even on Lord Elcho's evidence, that any efforts of Charles could have retrieved the day at Culloden. The left wing, which had become sulky and refused to fight, because (to complete the blunders of the day) they had chosen to deprive the MacDonalds of their post of honour upon the right, were not likely to have their fighting mood improved by the rout and destruction amongst the right; and it is nothing new for a warm and impetuous soldier like Lord Elcho, rendered desperate by circumstances, to give counsel on a field of battle which it would be madness in any general to adopt. Besides, the common ruin which succeeds to such a rash undertaking as that of 1745 breaks all the ties of friendship, and men become severed by their passions and interests, like a fleet driven from its moorings by a tempest. It is then that mutual upbraidings arise amongst them, and such quarrels take place as that betwixt Charles and Lord Elcho, which the latter carried to such a height, that though he lived an exile for the Stuarts' cause, he would never again see Prince Charles, and used to leave Paris so soon as the Chevalier entered it. Such strong passions are apt to sway, even in the most honourable minds, the recollection of past events.

This much is certain, that except the two authorities quoted, all persons who attended Charles that day agree in stating his desire to go down and rally the Highlanders, and affirm that he was only forced from the field by the entreaties of his tutor, Sir Thomas Sheridan, and others, representing the desperation of the attempt, and the impossibility of success. The cornet of the second troop of Horse Guards left a paper, signed with his name, in which he declares that all verbal representations would have been vain, if General Sullivan had not laid hold of the rein of Charles's horse, and turned him about. "To witness this," says the cornet, "I summon my eyes." After all, the words *Qu'i mourût* are pronounced with wondrous ease and effect; but the homely proverb, "While there is life there is hope," is not less likely to influence an individual in the situation of Charles; and if we are to accuse of cowardice every officer who has left the field of battle when all was lost, we shall wondrously curtail the catalogue of the brave.

As for the idea of rallying after the defeat, and making up a new army, it must be remembered that a Highland army differed essentially from one composed of regular troops, and as much in the mode of retreat, as in other particulars. A regular army can have no retreat but upon that point where the general pitches his standard. The camp to them is country and home. If they are defeated, they are aware that their chance of safety lies in union,

and all stragglers have sense enough to regain their battalions as soon as they can. The Highlanders would have been in the same situation had they been routed in the middle of England, where those who might have escaped the sword would have remained together for mutual protection. But on the skirts of their own mountains, the moment the day was lost, the Highlanders, in a great measure, dispersed. The individuals had their own homes to retire to, and their own families to protect; the tribes had each its own country to defend, and, when the Highlanders were defeated at Culloden, their army in a great measure broke up into the separate clans of which it was composed, which went off in different directions to their own several glens. Many, no doubt, were thrown into such confusion, that they made to Ruthven in Badenoch as a common place of rendezvous, and the Lowland troops went thither also, because it had been named as such, and because, being strangers in the country, they knew not where else to go. But Chevalier Johnstone talks widely and wildly when he speaks of five thousand Highlanders being there able and ready to resume the struggle. If the prince had not had the spirit (as Johnstone pretends) to have put himself at the head of such a body, the Highland chiefs themselves would have endeavoured to maintain themselves in arms, in order to enter upon negotiation, which they had been twice able to effect in former cases. But the whole is a vision. There was never above a thousand or fifteen hundred men assembled at Ruthven, and these were many of them Lowlanders. The prince's army was entirely broken up; all the foreign troops surrendered forthwith, with every thing belonging to the *materiel* of their army; the clans had in a great measure dispersed themselves and gone home, as was their uniform custom after defeat. All the efforts of their chieftains could not bring them together again. This *was* attempted, and the principal actors entered into resolutions binding themselves to rendezvous for that purpose. But the spirit of the clans was entirely broken by the immense superiority of the King's forces, while the desire of defending each its own lonely glen from the fire and sword with which that was threatened, overcame the feelings of sounder policy which would have induced them to persevere in a system of cooperation. A full account of the attempt to reassemble their forces, and of the causes of its being abandoned, will be found in Home's Works (vol. iii., p. 369); and we may conclude by observing that Lochiel, by whom the affair was managed, and who saw himself, by irresistible obstacles, constrained to abandon a course which might have at least

extorted some terms from the Duke of Cumberland, was as brave a man, and, to say the least, as good a judge of what the Highlanders could or could not do in the circumstances, as the Chevalier Johnstone could possibly pretend to be.

We do not, on the whole, mean to arrogate for the unhappy Chevalier the character of a great man, to which he displays few pretensions; but to deny energy to the prince who plunged into an enterprise so desperate, and where his own personal safety was so deeply implicated, on the word of one or two private and disappointed men, contradicted by a hundred others, seems to involve a denial of the whole history from beginning to end. He was not John of Gaunt, but yet no coward.

It is time to conclude this old-fashioned Scottish gossip, which, after all, in a literary journal of the present day, sounds as a pibroch might do in the Hanover Square concert-rooms.

LIFE OF KEMBLE — KELLY'S REMINISCENCES

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There are several moralists who have judged the amusements of the stage inimical to virtue — there are many who conceive its exhibitions to be inconsistent with religious principle: to those this article can give no interest unless perhaps a painful one, and we must even say with old Dan Chaucer,

> "Turn o'er the leaf and chuse another tale;
> For you shall find enough both great and small,
> Of storial thing that toucheth gentillesse,
> And eke morality and holiness."

Where the scruples of such dissidents from public opinion are real, we owe them all possible respect; when they are assumed for a disguise in the sight of man, they will not deceive the eye which judgeth both Publican and Pharisee.

For ourselves we will readily allow, that the theatre may be too much frequented, and attention to more serious concerns drowned amidst its fascinations. We also frankly confess that we may be better employed than in witnessing the best and most moral play that ever was acted; but the same may be justly said of every action in our lives, except those of devotion towards God and benevolence towards man. And yet, as six days have been permitted us to think our own thoughts and work our own works, much that is strictly and exclusively secular is rendered indispensable by our wants, and much made venial and sometimes praiseworthy by our tastes and the conformation of our intellect.

If there be one pleasure, exclusive of the objects of actual sensual indulgence, which is more general than another among the human race, it is the relish for personification, which at last is methodized into the dramatic art. The love of the chase may perhaps be as natural to the masculine sex, but when the taste of the females is taken into consideration, the weight of numbers leans to the love of mimic representation in an overwhelming ratio. The very first amusement of children is to get up a scene, to represent

to the best of their skill papa and mamma, the coachman and his horses; and even He, formidable with the birchen sceptre, is mimicked in the exercise-ground by the urchins of whom he is the terror in the schoolroom. We do not know if the witty gentleman, to whom we are indebted for a history of monkeys, ever thought of tracing the connexion betwixt us and our cousin the orang-outang in our mutual love of imitation.

At a more advanced period of life we have mimicry of tone and dialect, and masques, and disguises: then little scenes are preconcerted, which at first prescribe only the business of a plot, leaving the actors to fill up the language extempore from their mother-wit: then some one of more fancy is employed to write the dialogue — a stage with scenery is added, and the drama has reached its complete form.

The same taste which induced us, when children, to become kings and heroes ourselves on an infantine scale, renders us, when somewhat matured in intellect, passionate admirers of the art in its more refined state. There are few things which those gifted with any degree of imagination recollect with a sense of more anxious and mysterious delight than the first dramatic representation which they have witnessed. Iffland has somewhere described it, and it is painted in stronger colours by the immortal Goëthe in *Wilhelm Meister;* yet we cannot refrain from touching on the subject. The unusual form of the house, filled with such groups of crowded spectators, themselves forming an extraordinary spectacle to the eye which has never witnessed it before, yet all intent upon that wide and mystic curtain whose dusky undulations permit us now and then to discern the momentary glitter of some gaudy form, or the spangles of some sandaled foot which trips lightly within; then the light, brilliant as that of day! — then the music, which, in itself a treat sufficient in every other situation, our inexperience mistakes for the very play we came to witness — then the slow rise of the shadowy curtain, disclosing, as if by actual magic, a new land, with woods, and mountains, and lakes, lighted, it seems to us, by another sun, and inhabited by a race of beings different from ourselves, whose language is poetry, whose dress, demeanour, and sentiments seem something supernatural, and whose whole actions and discourse are calculated, not for the ordinary tone of everyday life, but to excite the stronger and more powerful faculties — to melt with sorrow — overpower with terror — astonish with the marvellous — or convulse with irresistible laughter, — all these wonders stamp indelible impressions on the memory. Those mixed

feelings, also, which perplex us between a sense that the scene is but a plaything, and an interest which ever and anon surprises us into a transient belief that that which so strongly affects us cannot be fictitious — those mixed and puzzling feelings, also, are exciting in the highest degree. Then there are the bursts of applause, like distant thunder, and the permission afforded to clap our little hands, and add our own scream of delight to a sound so commanding. All this — and much — much more is fresh in our memory, although, when we felt these sensations, we looked on the stage which Garrick had not yet left. It is now a long while since, yet we have not passed many hours of such unmixed delight — and we still remember the sinking lights, the dispersing crowd, with the vain longings which we felt, that the music would again sound, the magic curtain once more arise, and the enchanting dream recommence; and the astonishment with which we looked upon the apathy of the elder part of our company, who, having the means, did not spend every evening in the theatre.

When habit has blunted these earliest sensations of pleasure, the theatre continues to be the favourite resort of the youth, and though he recognises no longer the enchanted palace of his childhood, he enjoys the more sober pleasure of becoming acquainted with the higher energies of human passion, the recondite intricacies and complications of human temper and disposition, by seeing them illustrated in the most vivid manner by those whose profession it is to give actual life, form, and substance to the creations of genius. Much may be learned in a well-conducted theatre essential to the profession of the bar, and, with reverence be it spoken, even of the pulpit; and it is well known that Napoleon himself did not disdain to study at that school the external gesture and manner becoming the height to which he had ascended.

Yet such partial advantages are mere trifles considered in comparison with the general effect produced by the stage on national literature and national character. Had there been no drama, Shakspeare would, in all likelihood, have been but the author of Venus and Adonis, and of a few sonnets forgotten among the numerous works of the Elizabethan age, and Otway had been only the compiler of fantastic Pindaric odes.

Stepping beyond her own department, the dramatic muse has lent her aid to her sister of history. What points of our national annals are ever most fresh and glowing in our recollection? Those which unite history with the stage. The story of Macbeth, an ancient king, whose annals of half a dozen

lines must otherwise have lurked in the seldom opened black letter of Wintoun or Boece, is as much fixed upon our memory as if it detailed events which we had ourselves witnessed. Who crosses the blighted heath of Forres without beholding in imagination the stately step of Kemble as he descended on the stage at the head of his victorious army? On Bosworth field, the dramatist had engrossed the recollections due to the historian, even so early as Bishop Corbet's time; for when his host, "full of ale and history," pointed out the local position of the two armies, Shakspeare was more in the village chronicler's thoughts than Stowe or Hollinshed.

> "Besides what of his knowledge he could say,
> He had authentic notice from the play,
> Shown chiefly by that one perspicuous thing,
> That he mistook a player for a king;
> For when he should have said, here Richard died
> And call'd 'a horse, a horse' — he Burbadge cried."

A greater man acknowledged his debt to the dramatist on a similar occasion: "In what history did your grace find that incident?" said Burnet to the Duke of Marlborough, on hearing him quote some anecdote concerning the wars of York and Lancaster which was new to the Bishop. "In Shakspeare's plays," answered the Victor of Blenheim, — "the only history of those times I ever read."

It may be said by the rigid worshipper of unadorned truth, that history is rather defaced than embellished by becoming the subject of fictitious composition. These scruples are founded on prejudice — that mischievous prejudice which will not admit that knowledge can be valuable unless transmitted through the dullest and most disagreeable medium. Many are led to study history from having first read it as mingled with poetic fiction; and the indolent, or those much occupied, who have not patience or leisure for studying the chronicle itself, gather from the play a general idea of historical incidents which, but through some such amusing vehicle, they would never have taken the trouble to become acquainted with. And it will scarcely be denied, that a man had better know generally the points of history as told him by Shakspeare, than be ignorant of history entirely. The honey which is put on the edge of the cup induces many to drink up the whole medicinal potion; while those who take only a sip of it have, at least, a better chance of benefit than if they had taken none at all.

In another point of view the theatre is calculated to influence, and, well conducted, to influence favourably, the general state of morals and manners in this country. A full audience, attending a firstrate piece, may be compared to a national convention, to which every order of the community, from the peers to the porters, send their representatives. The entertainment, which is the subject of general enjoyment, is of a nature which tends to soften, if not to level, the distinction of ranks; it unites men of all conditions in those feelings of mirth or melancholy which belong to their common humanity, and are enhanced most by being shared by a multitude. The honest, hearty laugh, which circulates from box to gallery; the lofty sentiment, which is felt alike by the lord and the labourer; the sympathetic sorrow, which affects at once the marchioness and the milliner's apprentice — all these have a conciliating and harmonizing effect, tending to make the various ranks pleased with themselves and with each other. The goodnatured gaiety with which the higher orders see the fashionable follies which they practise treated with light satire for the amusement of the middling and poorer classes, has no little effect in checking the rancorous feelings of envy which superior birth, wealth, and station, are apt enough to engender. The possessors of those obnoxious advantages are pardoned on account of the good-humour and frankness with which they are worn; and a courtier, by laughing at the *Beggar's Opera,* like a bonny Scot applauding Sir Pertinax MacSycophant, disarms what he confronts. When the presence of the sovereign himself graces the audience, takes a part in the general pleasure of the evening, and renders generous or patriotic sentiments more energetically effective, by sharing in the enthusiasm which they call forth from his subjects of all ranks — this gives the royal sanction, as it were, to the approbation of lords and commons. The late King expressed that sentiment strongly when advised to abstain from attending the theatre after the madman Hatfield's attempt upon his life. Mr. Boaden has given us the words: —

"If, with my family, I cannot enjoy my amusements in the midst of my people, let them take my *life,* for existence is not worth holding upon such conditions." — Vol. ii., p. 263.

His present Majesty also occasionally gives his subjects this gratification, and receives an affectionate welcome — such as could neither be dictated by power nor checked by faction. A theatre speaks truth.

In short, the drama is in ours, and in most civilized countries, an engine possessing the most powerful effect on the manners of society. The frequency of reference, quotation, and allusion to plays of all kinds, from the masterpieces of Shakspeare's genius down to the farce which has the run of a season, gives a dramatic colouring to conversation and habits of expression; and those who look into the matter strictly will be surprised to find, how much our ordinary language and ordinary ideas are modified by what we have seen and heard on the stage.

We admit, as broadly as can be demanded, that the stage has been made, and is capable of being rendered again, as powerful an instrument for evil as for good. In this respect it is like the printing press, or rather like literature itself which finds employment both for the actor and the printer, a tremendous power, which, as its energies are directed, may contribute to the welfare or to the ruin of a country. So the most efficacious medicines, ignorantly or maliciously administered, become the strongest poisons. But our purpose in having detained the reader with these preliminary observations is to persuade him of the consequence of the subject, and to serve as introduction to some remarks which we have to offer on the present state of our theatres, and the improvements which might bring these institutions nearer to the state of perfection of which we have theoretically considered the drama as susceptible.

In the meantime, we must not altogether forget the works of which the titles are prefixed to this Article. This, to be sure, is a fashion with our *caste,* from which we do not pretend altogether to exculpate ourselves. If we admit not a fair and impartial division betwixt the reviewers and the reviewed, the neglected authors have a right to share the impatience of the witty Charles Townsend. When he came to Scotland, after having married a lady of that nation of the very highest rank, large fortune, and extensive connexions, the tide of relations, friends, and vassals, who thronged to welcome the bride, were so negligent of her husband as to leave him in the hall while they hurried his lady forwards into the state apartments, until he checked their haste by exclaiming, "for Heaven's sake, gentlemen, consider I am, at least, Prince George of Denmark." Messrs. Kelly and Boaden would have the same reason to complain of us, should we altogether forgot them in an Article which we have decorated with their names. But they must wait at the bottom of the stairs, with gentle patience for five minutes longer: we will show them up presently.

The same circumstances, which gave the drama itself interest, induce us to be curious investigators into the history of the art, and the lives of its chief professors in former times. The grave may think what they will of the levity of such pursuits: but as many folios and small quartos of the antique cast have been bestowed in behalf of Thalia and Melpomene as in that of the most serious of their sisters. But this is not all; we are not to be contented with the scraps which can be collected about Burbadge and Alleyn Kempe and Taylor: — we must also learn what can be told of the distinguished performers of our own time. We want to see these when divested of the pomp and circumstance with which the scene invests them. We desire to know whether we may venture to speak above our breath, or be guilty of a smile, in the presence of Mrs Siddons; whether it be possible to look grave in that of Liston; whether Matthews has as many dramatic portraits in his gallery, as he can present in his own person; if he who plays the fool on the stage can be a man of sense in the parlour; and if the heroine looks still the angel after she has laid aside her chopine, and come down a step nearer to the earth.

And let it not be said that this inquiry into the private history of the scenic artists is capricious, or resembles that of a child who cries to have the toy which has been shown him placed in his own hand, that he may see what it is made of. On the contrary, there is a natural touch of philosophy in our curiosity. It is a rational enough wish to discover what sort of persons those are who can assume, and lay aside at pleasure, the semblance of human passion, and who, by dint of sympathy, compel the smiles and tears of others, when they have doffed their magic mantle and retired into the circle of social life. Besides, to judge from the common case the *duram pauperiem pati* as often prepares the future exertions of the player as of the soldier. In the earlier events of a theatrical life, however successful, there most commonly occur adventures which form a diverting contrast with the ultimate and more splendid parts of the career. And we may add to these honest ingredients of the general interest in dramatic biography, the malicious pleasure which human nature always takes in learning the mishaps, mistakes, and misgovernance of those who have been objects of public attention and general admiration.

These things premised, we beg to announce Messrs. Boaden and Michael Kelly, or rather, to adopt the stage direction in *Chrononhotonthologos,* "Enter *Aldiborontiphoscophornio and Rigdum*

Funnidos." The character and style of the two biographers are, indeed, as strongly contrasted as sock and buskin; Mr. Boaden being grave, critical, full, and laudably accurate, serious in the most lively information which he communicates, and treating comedy itself as if it were a very solemn affair; while, on the other hand, there is nothing so serious as to render Michael Kelly so. He has spent all his life among the levers of laugh and fun, choice spirits, whom Time cannot exhaust, and who make good the boast of Anacreon, and are merry in spite of misfortune and grey hairs. Betwixt merits so various, how shall the critic decide? Were we to spend a morning in looking over Garrick's dramatic collection at the Museum, we should certainly wish to have Mr. Boaden with us to spare us repeated references to the *Biographia Dramatica.* But, in the evening, we fear we should be graceless enough to prefer Kelly's comic gossip, rich in song and jest, qualified by a touch of the traveller, and (what we never object to) a dash of the brogue. We do not, however, undervalue the solid English pudding of Mr. Boaden, though we have a special relish for the souflé of Seignor Kelly. Or, rather, we would address them with the impartiality of Sir John, the jolly deer-stealing priest of Waltham, towards the rival publicans, his comrades. "Neighbours Banks, of Waltham, and Goodman Smug, the honest smith of Edmonton, as I dwell betwixt you both, at Enfield, I knew the taste of both your alehouses — they are good both, smart both." To continue Sir John's metaphor, the beverage supplied by Mr. Kelly is a fine brisk species of vivacious bottled beer, like that unquestionably with which Beau Tibbs regaled the Duke, as we are informed by the sage Lien Chi Altangi, in the Citizen of the World. Boaden, on the other hand, draws us a double flagon of old English liquor, not the sophisticated potion which the vulgar denominate *heavy wet,* but Anno Domini, regularly dated and regularly tapped, like that which honest Boniface ate and drank, and upon which he always slept.

Allowing precedence to be due to the more dignified person, we advert first to the *Memoirs of John Kemble,* combined as they are with a history of the stage from the time of Garrick to the present period. A great deal of curious information is accumulated in these two volumes, by a man who has had the best opportunities of collecting the dramatic history of the last half century.

We cannot, however, altogether approve of his blending the Memoirs of Kemble with an account of the theatre, so general, diffuse, and

disproportioned in length to the pages which the life of his proper hero occupies. The foreground and background are too extensive for the principal figure. We might have been very glad to have possessed the work arranged in two separate departments, one containing the memoirs, the other the history of the stage. The present plan has rendered unavoidable the mingling the account of this distinguished man of talent with that of many ordinary performers, of whom we either never heard before, or never wish to hear again. Mr. Boaden, we have no doubt, has been just in his estimate of these subordinate persons; — but there are many whom he might have dismissed like Virgil with a single " fortemque, " and whom he ought not to have suffered to crowd the scene which they never adorned, and on which they are not now, perhaps, remembered at all. A man should have some title beyond mere respectability before he is handed up to fame. "What shall an honest man do in my closet?" says Caius, and what business has a merely respectable man in our library? say we. We think it is John Dunton in his Life and Errors, who, in a history of the literature of Boston, the capital of New England, which he visited in the course of his wanderings, gives not only an account of authors, publishers, retail booksellers, and printers, but descends to stationers and bookbinders, has a few flying hints on printer's devils, and makes us unnecessarily acquainted with every one of these respectable persons as necessary appendages to literary history. We are far from quarrelling with the minute information conveyed by Mr. Beaden in a miscellaneous manner, somewhat similar to that of Dunton, but we wish it had been a little better arranged, and more connected in its topics than by the mere category of time. The history of Kemble is divided into so many detached pieces, that it seems like the body of an old man cut and ready for Medea's kettle. We will endeavour to collect some of the scattered fragments, so as to form from Mr. Boaden's work, assisted by our own recollections, a full length portrait, though on a reduced scale, of one of the best actors, most accomplished artists, and most kind and worthy men, that ever commanded the admiration of the public, and the esteem of his friends.

John Philip Kemble was born 1st February, 1757, at Prescot, in Lancashire. The family from which he derived his origin was ancient and respectable; but ruined, we have heard him say, in the great Civil War of the seventeenth century, for their adherence to King Charles during that contest. His father was manager of a provincial company of actors; so that the members of this highly gifted race, who have attained such distinguished

eminence, seem to have been dedicated to the stage from their birth upwards. Unquestionably, the natural bent of their minds must have leaned towards the family profession, of which they felt the full fascination, while its disadvantages, as being in ordinary cases considered a step lower than the more grave and established courses of life, could not occur as an objection to those who saw the art daily practised by the parents whom they were accustomed to love and honour.

But Mr. Roger Kemble, the father of John, sensible of the disadvantages attending his own profession, resolved to give his son a classical education, designing him, it is believed, to take orders in the Roman Catholic Church. Accordingly, John Philip Kemble received his first instructions at a Catholic seminary at Sedgely Park in Staffordshire, and was a student for two or three years at the College of Donay, where he attracted attention by the gracefulness of his person, the strength of his memory, and the beauty of his recitation.

During all the time which he spent at these early studies his own secret determination was always to become a performer. He felt the strong vocation for the pleasing art in which he was destined to attain excellence, and never, we have heard him say, was tempted to swerve from his purpose even when his prospects appeared least promising. At the outset they were sufficiently gloomy.

He returned to England, and found his father disappointed and angry on learning that his thoughts were fixed upon the stage. “He might be allowed,” says Mr. Boaden, “to feel some mortification at his son’s choice; for what was then to predict the great and lasting eminence to which he attained?” But the impulse was not to be withstood. John Kemble acted as his first part Theodosius, in the tragedy so called, at Woolverhampton, 8th January, 1776. Dramatic excellence is of slow growth, and requires long and severe study; it is enough if first appearances be received as promising. The characteristic peculiarity of Kemble’s performance was not of a kind to advance him to popularity with a mere rapid pace than usual. With all the requisites for a fine player, and especially with a profound study of his art, and reverence for its difficulties, it must have required habit to familiarize him with the exertion of his own powers. The requisite mellowness and flexibility which make the actor seem at home in his part, were in his case slowly acquired, and until he was possessed of these, his manner, afterwards so graceful, must have seemed stiff; above all, his voice, the

strength of which was never equal to his other powers, must have sounded harsh and unharmonious ere he knew hew to reserve and husband its efforts. We can conceive him, like the giant in *Frankenstein,* working awkwardly enough until he had acquired a complete acquaintance with his own powers and the mode of using them to advantage.

The apprenticeship to the stage is in most instances, as we have already noticed, a severe one. Mr. Boaden is too grave to relate any of the minor misfortunes and hardships which his hero was subjected to in his noviciate, and repels, with some asperity, an account of Kemble and his companion breaking a gentleman's orchard near Gloucester. Certainly in Shakspeare's life by *Aldiborontiphoscophornio* the deer-stealing anecdote would have been sunk from mere love of decorum. Rigdum Funnidos is more communicative, and hints at our friend's having banqueted on turnips and peas in the open fields for want of better commons. There are gripes and indigestion in the very thoughts of the uncooked pulse; and we can conceive that Kemble, who was reasonably, though moderately attached to better cheer, did net relish the circumstances which reduced him to sauce his banquet by a speech from Timon.

> ”Oh! a root — dear thanks!
> Dry up thy marrows, vines, and plough-torn lees;
> Whereof ungrateful man, with liquorish draughts,
> And morsels unctuous, greases his pure mind,
> That from it all consideration slips!”

The honest Kelly has, moreover, told us that in extremity of distress, Kemble once personated a Methodist preacher; the thing may have happened — but from what we know of John Kemble's opinions on religious subjects, we are sure that those who listened to the exhortation must have departed improved in heart and understanding. He was incapable of mocking, under any circumstances, the mysteries of religion.

In 1778, like Robinson Crusoe in his escape from the raging ocean, Kemble began to touch ground. He was that year engaged in a respectable company maintained at York, under the management of Tate Wilkinson, famous as an imitator himself, and as the subject of imitation in others — possessed of considerable judgment and taste — and whose well-selected company was often draughted to recruit the metropolitan theatres.

Here Kemble's importance begats to be felt, yet he still continued to act such parts as Captain Plume, and others ill suited to his powers. We are not sure that this necessity is, at an early period of the profession, to be accounted a disadvantage. It prevents the ideas and exertions of a young performer being too much narrowed by a single cast of characters, and may operate in that respect, like the care taken by professors of gymnastics, to cause their pupils to bring into play successively the different sets of muscles by exertions of a kind appropriate to each. Young actors may be benefited too by attempts which are unsuccessful, as teaching them the bounds and character of their own powers, which they may otherwise suppose as unlimited as their ambition. There is even a wholesome lesson to be learned in experiencing the severity of an audience; for while it represses presumption, it also shows the timid that thunder often admonishes without killing.

At York, John Kemble became for the first time acquainted with his princely friend and patron, the late Duke of Northumberland, whose munificence makes such a distinguished figure in his history. The officer on duty, belonging to a squadron of dragoons lying in York at the time, had somewhat bluntly refused to permit a few of the soldiers to attend the theatre on occasion of some procession in which their appearance was desired. Kemble wrote to Lord Percy, who commanded the squadron, and his request was instantly complied with. The duke afterwards nominally lent Kemble the sum of ten thousand pounds, and converted the loan into a gift by burning the obligation for repayment after the fire in Covent Garden.

He had at York an adventure of another kind, tending to show him how peculiarly the most meritorious of the profession he had chosen were exposed to the taunts of the unworthy. On 8th February, 1778, while he was playing in Murphy's tragedy of *Zenobia,* Kemble became the object of the gross and marked ridicule of a lady who sat in the stage-box. She was of some condition, and apparently enjoyed that sort of provincial consequence, which, when combined with a rude disposition, makes country ladies now and then guilty of ill-breeding, such as would never be permitted to those of the first rank in the capital.

"As to the insults designed for himself during the evening, he had retorted them by looks of infinite disdain. His sensibility was noticed in the box by loud and repeated peals of laughter from the lady and her echoes. At this, Kemble suddenly stopped, and being called upon hy the audience to

proceed, with great gravity and a pointed bow to the stage-box, he said, ‘he was ready to proceed with the play as soon as that lady had finished her conversation, which he perceived the going on with the tragedy only interrupted.’

“The audience received this rudeness of the stage-box as an insolent attempt to control their amusements, and with shouts, which could not he laughed down, ordered the lady and her party out of the theatre.” — Boaden, vol. i., p. 26.

The lady thus most deservedly punished had interest sufficient to excite a party in her behalf, who insisted that Kemble should come forward and ask pardons immediately.

“Mr. Kemble on this, with the greatest firmness, and with some of that mingled astonishment and disdain, which he threw afterwards into Coriolanus, exclaimed, ‘Pardon! ask pardon! no, sirs, — never;’ and immediately quitted the stage.” — Boaden, vol. i., p. 27.

All subsequent efforts of an active faction among the audience vainly attempted to break that lofty spirit, which was as much Kemble’s by nature as it belonged to any of the heroes whom he represented. He could but be brought to say,

“ ‘Let me be heard before I am condemned: if, when I have explained my conduct, any gentleman, or set of gentlemen, will say, in that character, that I have acted unworthily, I shall cheerfully make any reparation that they may judge proper.’ To this there could be no *reasonable* objection, and he was heard. His fine address, his clear statement, his modesty and manliness, carried the cause, and contributed essentially to his progress in the public favour.” — Boaden, vol. i., p. 28.

The same lady, uncorrected by what had happened, made an attack on Mr. Michael Kelly, by the same obstreperous procedure, especially when he consulted his watch as his part required in the course of the drama, by exclaiming loud enough to be heard in the gallery,

“ ‘Why, look there; la! the fellow has got a watch.’ I could not bear this (says Kelly) — I admit I lost my temper: but I walked up to the box, and said, “yes, madam, it is a gold watch, and reckoned one of the best in England,” putting it close to her; — the lady was violently hissed, and ever after, when she came to the theatre, conducted herself with becoming decency.” — Kelly, vol, i., p. 306.

The indulgence of such impertinent humour on the part of the audience, towards those who are tasking their best abilities to please, is akin to the display of ignorance, folly, and wanton cruelty which children exhibit in torturing the inferior animals. Fifty years ago the pelting the performers from the galleries was so legitimate a species of amusement, that we think even Garrick was exposed to it, and when hit by an orange only ventured to say, after pretending to taste it, "it was an orange, but not a Seville (Civil) one." Digges, on another occasion, when subjected to some such insult, made a touching appeal to his former situation as an officer and a man of fashion — "My feelings," he said, "are wounded as a man — I had almost said as a gentleman."

Kemble argued with the perpetrators of such brutality in a different and a bolder mood, and as his unspotted character supported the justice of his complaint, there can be no doubt that the respect due to him both as a public and private character, and the spirit with which he maintained it, was a principal means of raising the estimation of the profession at large. An apple was upon one occasion thrown on the stage, which fell between him and Mrs. Siddons, then acting in the unrivalled scene between Coriolanus and his mother. Kemble instantly advanced to the front of the stage with the apple in his hand, and appealed to the audience for protection against this brutal insult. A person in the gallery called out in reply, "We can't hear."

"Mr. Kemble (with increased spirit,) 'I will *raise* my voice, and the galleries shall *hear* me.' (Great tumult)

" 'This protection is what the audience owe it to themselves to *grant* — what the performers, for the credit of their profession, have a right to *demand* — and what I will venture so far to *assert* , that, on the part of the proprietors, I here offer a hundred guineas to any man, who will disclose the *ruffian* who has been guilty of this act.' (A murmur only in the gallery.)

" 'I throw myself, ladies and gentlemen, upon the high sense of breeding, that distinguishes a London audience; and I hope I shall never be wanting in my duty to the public; but nothing shall induce me to suffer insult.' " — Boaden, vol i., p. 429.

The galleries, awed into silence, endeavoured to shift the charge from themselves. But though Kemble thus asserted the dignity of his profession, and the claim which a performer has to be treated like a gentleman, there cannot be a question that he made enemies among the low and malicious party in the common audience of a theatre, who had hitherto considered the

right of insulting the players as a valuable part of the privilege purchased by the half-price which they had paid at the door. These petty tyrants felt controlled under the superiority of a man like Kemble, but theirs were the right minds for bearing malice, and we believe that the dislike entertained against one who was willing to contribute to their pleasure, but not to endure their insolence, was a great ingredient in the celebrated O. P. riot.

We return to Mr. Kemble's professional progress. He visited Dublin in 1783, where he was received with approbation. His sister, Mrs. Siddons, had now displayed for several months before the public that blaze of varied excellence which was never before equalled, and certainly will never be surpassed. Beautiful as an angel, she seemed gifted also with superhuman powers. The horrors and the sorrows of the scene, were alike her own; the boldest trembled, the wisest wondered, the most hardhearted and the most selfish wept ere they were aware.

Her unrivalled excellence naturally led the managers to inquire respecting that brother who began already to be called the Great Kemble. There is a ludicrous story, however, of the meaning of the epithet being mistaken by the person intrusted with the negotiation, whe instead of our friend is said to have sent to the metropolis his jolly brother Stephen as the *greatest* of the name who was going.

The mistake, if it ever took place, was soon rectified, and on the 30th of September, 1783, John Philip Kemble made his first appearance at Drury Lane in the character of Hamlet.

It cannot be denied that this extraordinary conception of Shakspeare is one of the boldest, most striking, and most effective parts in the drama, and yet it is invested with so much obscurity, that it may be played in twenty different ways without the critic being able to say with certainty which best expresses the sense of the author. Hamlet unites in his single person a variety of attributes, by bringing any of which more forward, or throwing others farther into the background, the shading of the character is effectually changed. Hamlet is the predestined avenger called on to this task by a supernatural voice — he is a prince resenting the intrusion of his uncle into his mother's bed and his father's throne. He is a son devoted to the memory of one parent and to the person of the other, and yet, to do justice to his murdered father's memory, he is compelled to outrage, with the most cutting reproaches, the ears of his guilty mother. Wittenberg has given him philosophy and the habits of criticism — nature has formed him social and

affectionate — disappointment and ill-concealed resentment of family injuries have tinged him with misanthropy — the active world has given him all its accomplishments.

> "The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword,
> The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
> The glass of fashion, and the mould of form."

To all these peculiar attributes must be added his love for Ophelia, and something which resembles an incipient touch of insanity; for this, after all, is necessary to apologize and account for some parts of his conduct. All these exist in Prince Hamlet, but the art of the performer is to distinguish the proper or most striking mode of exhibiting them. The author has done little to help him in the management of the piece, which as a story indicates nothing decisive respecting the real character of Hamlet. He does not resemble Richard or Macbeth, or most of Shakspeare's other distinguished characters, who show themselves and purposes not by their words and sentiments only, but by their actions, and whose actions therefore are the best commentaries on their characters and motives. On the contrary, Hamlet being passive almost through the whole piece, and only hurried into action in its conclusion, does nothing by which we can infer the precise meaning of much that he says. There exists, therefore, a latitude about the representation of Hamlet, which scarcely belongs to that of any other character in the drama. It consists of many notes, and the dwelling upon or the slurring of any of them totally changes the *effect* of the air.

It is natural to expatiate on these peculiarities in the character, because Kemble, in representing it, was to encounter at once the shade of the murdered King of Denmark, and, in the mind's eye of the audience, that of the lost Garrick. The young performer had never seen and could not imitate Garrick. He was relieved from that great stumblingblock in the path of a novice — the temptation to copy some honoured predecessor. Those who are subjected to this temptation and give way to it, seldom rise above respectability in their performances. They are admitted to play the line of characters possessed by the "wellgraced actor" who has left the stage, but it is merely in the character of substitutes: those who aim at great eminence must show originality of conception.

Originality, however, in a novice has its perils; and it was often objected to Kemble, that in playing Shakspeare's best-known characters he

frequently sought to give them effect by a mode of delivery and action daringly opposed to what the audience had been used to. This, in the beginning of his career, was often hardly received by pedantic critics, who had become so much bigoted to one style of acting that they were unable to tolerate any departure from it. Such venturing on new ground is no doubt a hazardous task, and demands both the powers and perseverance of decided genius; and Garrick was, in his time, equally censured as an innovator on the solemn and pompous manner of Booth and Betterton. But were it possible to promulgate and enforce a scale of the tones in which each speech of Hamlet or any other character should be delivered, or to issue a tariff of the emphasis to which each striking passage should be subjected, it is evident we should destroy one great source of the pleasure we receive from the stage — namely, that of comparing and deciding between the different species of efforts which rivals in the scenic art bring to illustrate the same character.

For this Hamlet offers a fair field, and Kemble entered on it with characteristic courage and skill. Beginning already to act upon the principles of dramatic criticism, he discarded the alterations which Garrick had ventured to introduce into the works of Shakspeare; and which Mr. Boaden justly calls feeble and trashy. The following is an accurate and pleasing description of Kemble as he then was stepping forwards to offer himself as a rival to Garrick, and disdaining all that had interposed between them.

"His person seemed to be finely formed, and his manners princely; but on his brow hung the weight of 'some intolerable woe.' Apart from the expression called up by the situation of Hamlet, there struck me to be in him a peculiar and personal fitness for tragedy. What others assumed, seemed to be inherent in Kemble. 'Native, and to the manner born,' he looked an abstraction, if I may so say, of the characteristics of tragedy.

"The first great point of remark was, that his Hamlet was decidedly original. He had seen no great actor whom he could have copied. His style was formed by his own taste or judgment, or rather grew out of the peculiar properties of his person and his intellectual habits. He was of a solemn and deliberate temperament — his walk was always slow, and his expression of countenance contemplative — his utterance rather tardy for the most part, but always finely articulate, and in common parlance seemed to proceed

rather from organization than voice." — Boaden's *Memoirs of Kemble,* vol. i., p. 92.

It must strike the dramatic reader at once that a more complete contrast to the former Roscius could not appear, in almost every point, than in this new candidate for the honours of the buskin. Garrick was short though well formed, airy and light in all his movements, possessed of a countenance capable of the most acute or the most stolid, the most tragic or the most ridiculous expression. Kemble, on the contrary, was tall and stately, his person on a scale suited for the stage, and almost too large for a private apartment, with a countenance like the finest models of the antique, and motions and manners corresponding to the splendid cast of his form and features. Mirth, when he exhibited it, never exceeded a species of gaiety chastened with gravity; his smile seemed always as if it were the rare inhabitant of that noble countenance. There was unquestionably great sweetness of expression in that smile, but it indicated more of benevolence than of gaiety — the momentary stooping of a mind usually strung to a serious mood to the joy which enlivened the meaner natures around him.

Even the habits of life and manners peculiar to these two great performers intimated such a strong difference in their characters as must necessarily have greatly influenced their taste in the art. Garrick was what is called a man of fashion, desirous to maintain his place as such among the great, among whom his talents made him a welcome associate. But in mixing with them he paid them a sort of homage. He was desirous to procure their notice more than a man of his commanding genius ought perhaps to have been. The situation was a difficult one, and he is represented to have been something too eager to show off and entertain the company, as one who had some tax to pay for being where he was when in the society of men of rank and eminence. It is, to be sure, an ungracious behaviour on the part of what is technically called a lion, to refuse gruffly to show his jaws and extend his talons when he chooses to enter into mixed company.

"For if he should *as lion* come in strife
Into such place 'twere pity on his life."

But this is a failing of a very different order from that over-eager love of gaining interest, which will court the attention of the footboy, if it cannot fix that of the master.

Of all men, John Kemble, though not destitute of his share of vanity, was most averse from this peculiar mode of drawing attention: his nature revolted from courting display and obsequiously condescending to be what has been vulgarly called the fiddle of the company. He took a ready and agreeable part in the general conversation. And when it turned naturally upon his own art, he always showed himself willing to entertain and instruct the company from the funds of experience and study, as well as the original conceptions of his own genius. But he never, in the language of the old dramatists, "came aloft or showed tricks from Tripoli." He never stooped to be the amusing and exhibiting man of the company. He never even read or recited for the amusement of the circle; and those who desired the pleasure of his society could only obtain it on the condition of his being an equal contributor, and no more, to the social enjoyment of the day. Perhaps he even carried this point of etiquette a little too far. But on these terms he enjoyed the familiar friendship of many of the first families in England.

He was a frequent and favourite guest at Bentley Priory, which was then the resort of the most distinguished part of the fashionable world. Its noble owner, the late Marquis of Abercorn, has been so long with the dead, that to do justice to his character, much misrepresented in some points during his life, can be ascribed to no motive which interest or adulation could suggest. He was a man highly gifted by nature, and whose talents had been improved by sedulous attention to an excellent education. If he had remained a Commoner, it was the opinion of Mr. Pitt, that he must have been one of the most distinguished speakers in the Lower House. The House of Lords does not admit of the same display either of oratory or of capacity for public business; but when the Marquis of Abercorn did speak there, the talents which he showed warranted the prophecy of so skilled an augur as Pitt. Those who saw him at a distance accused him of pride and haughtiness. That he had a sufficient feeling of the dignity of his situation, and maintained it with perhaps an unusual degree of state and expense, may readily be granted. But that expense, however large, was fully supported by an ample fortune wisely administered, and in the management of which the interests of the tenant were always considered as well as those of the landlord. He racked no rents to maintain the expenses of his establishment, nor did he diminish his charities, which were in many cases princely, for the sake of the outward state, the maintenance of which he thought, not unjustly, a duty incumbent on his situation. Above all, the stateliness of

which the late Marquis of Abercorn was accused, drew no barrier between the Marquis of Abercorn and those who shared his hospitality. Kemble was a very frequent visitor there, and with the noble landlord, the late Payne Knight, and

> "The travell'd Thane,
> Athenian Aberdeen,"

and an eminent person, whom graver and more important duties have now withdrawn from the muses, made evenings of modern fashion resemble a Greek symposium for learning and literature. But this has carried us far from the point, and we have but the poor apology that we could not withstand certain feelings which tempted us to the digression. They are few — scattered and distant — who will be affected by the recollections of Bentley Priory. But such still exist, and why may we not steal a paragraph from our immediate subject to gratify their feelings and our own? Kemble lived in the same close intimacy with the successive Earls of Guildford and the whole of that distinguished family, in which brilliant wit, mingled with the most genuine good-humour and kindness of disposition, and a rational love of literature seem to be hereditary possessions. He was also familiar at Holland House, where the classical translator of Lope de Vega could not fail to appreciate his merit, and he shared the same distinction in many families equally eminent for their rank in society and love of elegant letters.

We return to our comparison between Garrick and Kemble. It follows from what we have before said, that the style of Garrick was impetuous, sudden, striking, and versatile — that with his complete power over the regions of comedy, and tragedy, and farce, he should maintain a sort of ubiquity in the eyes of the public. In the play he could be Hamlet, and perform Fribble in the farce, yet delight the audience equally in both characters. In fact, as we have been assured by a venerable father of literature, most able to judge, and happily, at an advanced period of life, most able both to recollect and discriminate concerning the amusements of his youth, Garrick's versatility, nay, almost universality of talent, was the quality on which his extraordinary popularity chiefly rested. He was like Ariel on board the king's ship.

> "Now on the beak,
> Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin,

He flamed amazement.”

The peculiar talents of Kemble confined him within a much more limited range, although it was soon ascertained that this was capable of being extended far more than the critics had at first been able to anticipate. Kemble’s noble person and graceful demeanour was totally inconsistent with the ludicrous, and almost with the comic. His cast of features was decidedly heroic, and when the best disguise was put on them, he must have looked like Alfred playing the Clown, or the elder Brutus in his assumed state of idiotcy. The very voices of these great actors were totally different; that of Garrick was full, melodious, commanding, and he might exert it with unsparing profusion. Kemble’s, though perfectly distinct and impressive, was early affected by an asthmatic tendency, which rendered it necessary for him to husband his efforts, and reserve them for those bursts of passion to which he gave such sublime effect.

But, besides this limitation, arising from taste, temper, figure, and organic conformation, the schools, if they may he called so, of Garrick and Kemble, were founded upon different principles. We had almost said they were the schools of nature and of art — but, luckily, we suppressed a phrase which, like the whistle of a captain of marksmen, might have raised from thicket and ravine a swarm of controversial sharpshooters like wasps about our ears. Let us then vary the phrase, and say, that Garrick made his impression from his skill in seizing and expressing with force and precision the first and most obvious view of his part; and that Kemble, more learned and more laborious, studied earnestly and long ere he could fix his own ideas of the true meaning of doubtful passages, often illustrated them by what is called a new reading, and was careful to express that he did so by the punctilious accuracy of the corresponding action and enunciation. Indeed, Kemble, a profound scholar in his art, was metaphysically curious in expressing each line of his part with the exactly appropriate accent and manner. Sometimes this high degree of study threw a degree of over-precision into the part, and in the effort to analyze the sentiment, by giving a peculiar emphasis to every word of the sentence, the actor lost the effect which to be vehement should be instant and undivided. Sometimes, also, it happened that, in order to complete the details upon which he had determined, Kemble permitted the action to hang too long suspended, so that one well accustomed to his manner anticipated the effort which be was

about to make, by observing something of preparation, which was like the warning, as it is called, given by some timepieces that they are about to strike the hour. There was also visible in Kemble's manner, at times, a sacrifice of energy of action to grace. We remember this observation being made by Mrs. Siddons herself, who admired her brother in general as much as she loved him. Nor shall we easily forget the mode in which she illustrated her meaning. She arose and placed herself in the attitude of one of the old Egyptian statues; the knees joined together, and the feet turned a little inwards. She placed her elbows close to her sides, folded her hands, and held them upright, with the palms pressed to each other. Having made us observe that she had assumed one of the most constrained, and, therefore, most ungraceful positions possible, she proceeded to recite the curse of King Lear on his undutiful offspring in a manner which made hair rise and flesh creep, and then called on us to remark the additional effect which was gained by the concentrated energy which the unusual and ungraceful posture in itself implied.

Such imperfections as arise from over-study — and these showed themselves but occasionally, and never offensively — were the only faults we could discern in this great actor, and they were amply compensated by the justice of his conception, the precision of his taste, the patience of his investigation, which left no point unconsidered, the firmness of his disposition, which would never be drawn from any point in which he considered himself as perfectly right.

Garrick, never timid but on the stage, would readily concede any point of taste to the audience, and illustrated, in its fullest extent, the maxim of the poet: —

> "The drama's laws, the drama's patrons give,
> For those who live to please, most please to live."

Kemble, on the contrary, felt much more for the honour of his profession and the truth of the dramatic art, than for his own profit or quiet, and would have died on the breach rather than yield to the authority of the public in a point where be justly conceived himself a much better judge than they. Perhaps he carried this to extremity when he insisted on pronouncing *aches* as a two-syllable word in the speech of Prospero.

"For this be sure to night thou shall have achés."

Unquestionably the word was so pronounced in Queen Elizabeth's time. But then it was scarce worth quarrelling about so small a matter with the audience, and it would have been more prudent. perhaps, to have suffered the *aitches* to have quietly undergone the same transmutation into modern sound, as has befallen doubtless a hundred word in the language. We cannot, if we would, bring back the pronunciation of the Elizabethan age, and why should not this modern abridgement of a single syllable pass current with other alterations? But Kemble was too proud of his art to sacrifice even a grain of incense to unjust criticism. He was ready to hazard every thing in defence of the right reading of a word in Shakspeare. Night after night he menaced Caliban with *aitches,* and night after night was for so doing assailed by a party in the pit with a ferocity worthy of Caliban himself. One evening he felt himself, from indisposition, unwilling to sustain the usual conflict, and on that occasion evaded a drawn battle by omitting the line entirely. It was curious enough to see how the critics, as he approached the place where they expected to hear the obnoxious line, resembled

> "greyhounds in the slips,
> Straining upon the start;"

the puzzled countenances which they displayed as speech after speech was made without the expected game being roused; — and the blank look of disappointment when the close of the scene announced to them how Kemble had, for the evening, eluded their resentment without bending to their authority. This perseverance gained the day, but it was resented as obstinacy by not a few, and served to increase the discontent of the low-minded part of the audience against an actor who presumed to follow his own judgment rather than theirs.

We remember observing a similar instance of Kemble's attention to restore true readings astonishing a provincial audience. It occurred in the lines in Macbeth —

"Augurs, and understood relations, have By *magot-pies,* and choughs, and rooks, brought forth The secret'st man of blood."

Performers had been in the habit of pronouncing the word *magpies,* though the blank verse halted for it. But Kemble resumed the proper pronunciation of *magot-pies,* with an emphasis which made the audience of — — look around them in astonishment, scarcely trusting their ears, and

marvelling how any species of augury could be derived from what they apprehended to be a stale pasty. Luckily they were diffident of their own judgment, and only afforded the new reading their amazement, without presuming to dissent from it.

To return to the dramatic career of Mr. Kemble, we can only briefly say, that he speedily attained acknowledged preeminence in the tragic scene. There was none, indeed, worthy of being named as a competitor excepting Henderson, and the excellence of his Falstaff, which we remember as a most wonderful exhibition, made all his other parts relish of sack and sugar. In many pasts of which Kemble obtained possession, and which he played admirably, he has, nevertheless, been equalled or excelled. The ancients preferred the Richard of Garrick to that of the new actor, and many of the moderns give a like preference to Kean, particularly in the last two acts. Some obstacles, however, occurred from his own personal qualifications. We have said he could not appear ludicrous, and we must add that, from the noble effect of his countenance and figure, neither could he seem constitutionally villanous: he could never *look* the part of Richard, and it seemed a jest to hear him, whose countenance and person were so eminently fine, descant on his own deformity. He was, perhaps, sensible of this, for he used to argue that Richard III., being of high descent and breeding, ought not to be vulgar in his appearance or coarse in his cruelty. There certainly should prevail a tinge of aristocracy about the dramatic Richard, but it ought not to be of a generous or chivalrous character, or, whatever the figure of the historical Richard may have been, that of a handsome prince.

For the same reason Kemble was inferior both to Cooke and to Kean in Massinger's Sir Giles Overreach. That singular character is Richard in ordinary life, an extortioner and oppressor, confident in his art and in his audacity; but Kemble, when dressed for this part, reminded us of a dignified country gentleman of the ancient school — "an old courtier of the Queen's," rather than a low-born, upstart, purse-proud tyrant, with impudence enough to glory in his base arts of extortion. He might say what ill he would of himself, the audience could not believe him.

In Lear, Kemble must, we think, have been decidedly inferior to Garrick. In Hamlet he was not more than the equal of Garrick, and a most formidable rival arose in his own time in Charles Young. But in Macbeth, Kemble has been as yet unapproachable; nor can we conceive that the bold

and effective manner of Garrick, touching on the broad points of the character with a hand however vigorous, could at all compare with Kemble's exquisitely and minutely elaborate delineation of guilty ambition, drawn on from crime to crime, while the avenging furies at once scourge him for former guilt, and urge him to further enormities. We can never forget the rueful horror of his look, which by strong exertion he endeavours to conceal, when on the morning succeeding the murder he receives Lennox and Macduff in the antechamber of Duncan. His efforts to appear composed, his endeavours to assume the attitude and appearance of one listening to Lennox's account of the external terrors of the night, while, in fact, he is expecting the alarm to arise within the royal apartment, formed a most astonishing piece of playing. Kemble's countenance seemed altered by the sense of internal horror, and had a cast of that of Count Ugolino in the dungeon, as painted by Reynolds. When Macbeth felt himself obliged to turn towards Lennox and reply to what he had been saying, you saw him, like a man awaking from a fit of absence, endeavour to recollect at least the general tenor of what had been said, and it was some time ere he could bring out the general reply, "'Twas a rough night." Those who have had the good fortune to see Kemble and Mrs. Siddons in Macbeth and his lady, may be satisfied they have witnessed the highest perfection of the dramatic art. There cannot have been, and we fear never will be, any thing to compare to it. Their King John and Lady Constance are equally beyond imitation, and must be forgotten ere others can obtain any high degree of applause in these characters.

But it was not only in such parts as fell precisely within his line, and which he seemed to hold by birthright, that Kemble delighted the public. There were others, appearing to be beyond his proper territory, which he invaded, nevertheless, and conquered; amongst which was the character of the headlong and hasty Percy,

"A harebrain'd Hotspur, guided by a spleen."

One would have thought, *à priori,* that the grave, studious, contemplative actor, who personated Hamlet to the life, could scarcely have assumed the rapidity and energy, and hurry, and reckless indulgence of his humour, which are among the chief ingredients of Henry Percy's character. But Kemble's profound study of the author enabled him to seize on the distinguishing features of that great historical portrait. It cannot now he

known whether Shakspeare gathered from tradition, or himself conferred on Hotspur the quality of

"Speaking thick, which nature made his blemish."

But Kemble contrived to show how well that hurried and impeded articulation suited the irritability of the character. It was in the speech in which Hotspur loses the keynote of what he desires to say, by forgetting the name of a place —

"In Richard's time — what do you call the place? — A plague upon it — 'tis in Gloucestershire — 'Twas where the mad-cap Duke his uncle kept His uncle York."

Through all this confusion of mangled recollections, Kemble chafed and tumbled about his words with the furious impatience of an angry man who has to seek for a pen at the very moment he is about to write a challenge, and is angry at himself and every one else because so petty a want impedes for a moment his thirst of vengeance. Then the delight with which he grasped at the word when suggested —

"Northumberland.At Berkely Castle. — Hotspur. *You say true.* "

The manner in which Kemble spoke those three words, and rushed forward into his abuse of Bolingbroke, like a hunter surmounting the obstacle which had stopped his career, was electrical. It was like a greyhound slipped — like a rocket lighted — like a bolt from a crossbow. The effect on the audience was singular. There was a general disposition to *encore* so fine a piece of art, as if such an effort could have been repeated like a song. The cause of this extraordinary mode of applause seems to have been, that there being no feelings excited by the speech, save admiration of the actor's exquisite skill, it seemed as if that had approached to an exhibition of ventriloquism, or some similar turn of address, which could be repeated on demand: whatever might be the cause, the impulse was general.

Henry V. was a favourite character of Kemble; — Mr. Boaden says,

"As a *coup de thèatre,* his starting up from prayer at the sound of the trumpet, in the passage where he states his attempted atonement to Richard the Second formed one of the most spirited excitements that the stage has ever displayed. His occasional reversions to the 'mad wag,' the 'sweet young prince,' had a singular charm, as the condescension of one who could be so terrible." — Boaden, vol ii., p. 8.

We agree entirely with what Mr. Boaden has here stated. It always struck us that the expression of self-satisfied humour which Kemble threw

into his countenance, in anticipation of the expected scuffle which was to take place between Fluellen and Williams, came as far within the confines of a comic part, as nature had designed John Kemble to advance.

On the whole, however, tragedy, and that of the most stately and majestic character, was the line in which our departed friend was formed to excel. He himself entertained a less limited idea of his powers, and conceived that great study and knowledge of dramatic writing and of the human character could qualify a man as well for the sock as for the buskin. Towards a late period of his life, he displayed this self-confidence in a singular degree. He nourished nothing less ambitious, than an idea of revolutionizing Falstaff by acting the fat knight on a new principle, and he used to enlarge, with all the skilful sophistry his profound acquaintance with the drama could supply, on the points which he would assume differing from those presented by Henderson, to whom, however, he uniformly gave the praise of having presented one of the richest and most glowing portraits which the stage in his time had afforded. At one time, when we were ourselves listening to him on this subject, an incident took place which those who were present can scarcely fail to recollect, and which served to show the strength of Kemble's nerves, and, at the same time, the deep and overwhelming interest which he took in professional discussion.

It was at the entertainment annually given by the Royal Academy, on the day before the opening of the exhibition of paintings in Somerset House, on which occasion we need not tell most of our readers invitations are sent by the academicians to all the persons of rank and quality who are supposed to love and encourage the arts, to those who may be considered as the pillars of literature, and as some readers may think, to the caterpillars also, since we, the critics, were honoured with a summons.

The scene, splendid as usual from the beauty and brilliancy of the works of art which hung around us, was rendered venerable by the presence of old West, in his capacity of president, and he was supported by one of the princes of the blood, and a brilliant array of nobility and quality, intermingled with artists and literary men of eminence. The apartment was illuminated by an immeasurably large and ponderous bronze chandelier, a gift from his present Majesty to the Royal Academy. It exhibited many hundred lamps, and might weigh two or three tons. It had been recently suspended, and this was the first time of its being used. Beneath this huge

and splendid chandelier was placed a sort of gigantic dumb-waiter, on which were arranged the quantity of wineglasses, decanters, water-glasses, and other things of the sort, necessary for the accommodation of so large a company.

We had the good fortune to sit beside our late lamented friend, and were listening to the ingenious distinctions which he was pointing out with great earnestness and precision, between Falstaff as "Sir John to all Europe," — as one who jested familiarly with John of Gaunt on his breaking Justice Shallow's head for crowding among the marshalmen — as the companion of the Prince of Wales — and the same Falstaff as the gallant of Doll Tearsheet, in all the coarse indulgence of the Boar's Head, where he himself was, as it is usually termed, the Cock of the Company — "the old boar, in short, feeding in the old frank."

While we were listening to this with much edification, a roar was heard behind us like distant thunder — the units of the strong chain which suspended the chandelier were giving way, and became slackened so much, that it gradually sunk and came into collision with the dumb-waiter aforesaid — which was crushed to shivers beneath its weight, while all the garnishing of the beaufet, like Alnaschar's stock in trade, was annihilated with a crashing scream, which might equal that of the dying elephant. If the absolute fall of the chandelier had taken place, it would have tried Chambers's architecture with a vengeance, and beyond a doubt must have penetrated through the floor to the very cellars of the building, carrying with it princes, dukes, painters, poets, musicians, amateurs — and critics. Fortunately the links of the bronze chain, though they slacked, did not snap, but the momentary alarm was considerable. We ourselves, though, as may be supposed from our profession, not peculiarly timid, began to think a retreat by the staircase, though less honourable, might have its advantage over the posthumous fame of being recorded among the distinguished victims, as the papers would doubtless have termed them, "on the late awful occurrence." But after one calm glance over his shoulder, our friend, John Kemble, returned back to Falstaff, and had talked for five minutes about the Boar's Head and the Tilt Yard, before we could recover our composure sufficiently to collect what he was saying, and when he chid us for inattention, Charles XII.'s rebuke to his secretary for interrupting a letter at the explosion of a bomb in the next apartment, could not have been more coolly uttered. His acting Falstaff would have given a great treat to those

who desired to see one of the first of critics exemplifying his conception of one of the most singular parts in the drama. But that John Kemble could have been Sir John in the genuine jolly, and jocund sense of the part, is what we can never conceive.

We must cut short our history of Kemble as an actor, by brief mention of those Roman characters, Cato, Brutus, and Coriolanus, by means of which he transported us to the Capitol, so completely had he made the habits, manners, and mode of thinking of the ancients identically his own. They were, indeed, peculiarly suited to his noble and classical form, his dignified and stately gesture, his regulated yet commanding eloquence.

> "Pride in each port, defiance in each eye,
> You saw the Lords of human kind pass by."

To his peculiar art of acting, also, the Roman character in its various shades afforded great facilities. There was almost always connected with it an assumed character, which qualified, if it did not master, that which nature had assigned to the individual. The aristocratic pride of Coriolanus, the patriotic ardour and stoical philosophy of Brutus and Cato, form each a shade of adventitious and adopted character, which seems to control the natural feelings of the heart, and hide, or at least colour, what cannot be altogether suppressed. The temperament of Brutus, for example, is naturally warm, as appears in his quarrel with Cassius; naturally affectionate, as is displayed in his scene with Portia. But his stoic mien, arising out of rules of thought and conduct long since adopted, draws a veil over both feelings; and his affections are subdued, though not hidden, by sufferance enjoined by his philosophy. Other performers might excel Kemble in the full burst of instant and agitating passion to which the person represented is supposed to give the reins upon any direct natural impulse; but we cannot conceive of any one delineating, with any thing approaching to the same felicity, those lofty Romans, feeling and partly exhibiting, yet on the whole conquering the passions of nature by the mental discipline to which they had trained themselves. Those who have seen Kemble as Cato bend over the body of his slain son, and subdue the father to assume the patriot, or have heard him pronounce the few words in Brutus,

"No man bears sorrow better — Portia's dead,"

will at once understand our meaning — to others we almost despair of explaining it. We would further remark, that whatever might in some

characters appear tardy, and even stiff in Kemble's mode of acting, was here natural and proper. The pause showed the time which philosophy claimed to obtain her victory over nature; the delay, else where censured, was in these parts not merely appropriate — the suspense itself agonized the audience.

Neither was that slight degree of tardiness, though ridiculed by Sheridan — when, urging Kemble for some novelty, he advised him to play *Hamlet* with music between the pauses — visible, when, in the opinion of the actor, the scene required instant and precipitate exertion. The mode in which he rushed on the stage in *Coriolanus,* with the half breathless cry, "Am I too late?" is an illustration of what we mean, as well as many similar exertions in Colman's striking piece of the *Mountaineers,* and in the grand pantomime of *Rolla.* He was, indeed, not only a noble figure when moving with the stately grace which he usually maintained, but equally striking when engaged in violent action. When he condescended — we must give it that term — to play the part of Percy in the *Castle Spectre,* he used, in the scene where Percy drops back on the couch, just as when rising to make his spring from the window, to discover all the address and activity of the most able pantomimist. The same command of muscle and limb was far more strikingly exemplified when the Volscian assassins approaching him from behind in the very midst of the triumphant vaunt of his repeated victories over their countrymen, seemed to pass their swords through the body of Coriolanus. There was no precaution, no support; in the midst of the exclamation against Tullus Aufidius, he dropped as dead and as flat on the stage as if the swords had really met within his body. We have repeatedly heard screams from the female part of the audience when he presented this scene, which had the most striking resemblance to actual and instant death we ever witnessed, and saved all that rolling, gasping, and groaning, which generally takes place in our theatres, to the scandal of all foreigners, until at length a stout fellow, exhausted by his apparent efforts and agonies, lies on his back, puffing like a grampus, and is to he received as a heroic corpse.

We must leave John Kemble as a player, to consider him in the light of a manager, — for the improved taste which he introduced into the drama in that capacity will benefit the admirers of the theatrical art in future times as much as his personal exertions delighted his contemporaries. In 1788—89, King resigned what was called the management of Drury Lane Theatre. Honest Tom — who can remember his Benedick and Lord Ogleby without pleasure — though the last has had an excellent substitute? Tom loved

gambling, and fell of course among thieves, who were rather proud of their trade, as witness the following anecdote: —

"After playing all night with a sharper, at a fashionable club, and losing every thing, King discovered that he had been bubbled, and hinted his suspicions to his antagonist; who coolly said to him, 'I *always* play with marked cards, why don't you?' " — Boaden, vol ii., p. 28.

King seems to have been scarcely used better by his employers, the proprietors, than by his friends the Greeks. He had the name and responsibility of stage-manager, but without power to receive or reject a piece, engage or discharge a performer, command a coat to be cleaned, or add a yard of copper-lace to it, though often needed. Kemble refused to undertake the responsible office without the necessary authority for the management of the whole dramatic business. This was promised, and in some degree granted; but it was Sheridan who was the promiser; and though, being then chiefly involved in politics, he was obliged to leave Kemble much greater latitude than he did King, he contrived to give him, from time to time, as much annoyance as a man rigidly true to his engagements could receive from one whose extraordinary talents wore blended with so much negligence and inconsistency. Sheridan's command over Kemble, founded on the respect due to his talents, and the art with which he flattered and conciliated, after offending, disappointing, and breaking faith with him, was exercised in no creditable manner. Perfectly guileless, devoid — not of spirit, far from it — but of every thing like implacability — Kemble long struggled under the difficulties which attended every management in which Sheridan was concerned. But he pleased himself with the sense, that his authority, however interfered with, gave him still the power of doing much for the improvement of dramatic taste.

Before Kemble's time, there was no such thing as regular costume observed in our theatres. The actors represented Macbeth and his wife, Belvidera and Jaffior, and most other parts, whatever the age or country in which the scene was laid, in the cast-off court dresses of the nobility. Kemble used to say, that the modern dresses of the characters in the wellknown print of a certain dramatic dagger-scene, made them resemble the butler and housekeeper struggling for the carving-knife. Some few characters, by a sort of prescriptive theatrical right, always retained the costume of their times — Falstaff, for example, and Richard III. But such

exceptions only rendered the general appearance of the actors more anomalous. We have seen *Jane Shore* acted, with Richard in the old English cloak, Lord Hastings in a full court dress, with his white rod like a lord chamberlain of the last reign, and Jane Shore and Alicia in stays and hoops. We have seen Miss Young act Zara incased in whale-bone, to an Osman dressed properly enough as a Turk, while Nerestan, a Christian knight in the time of the Crusades, strutted in the white uniform of the old French guards. These incongruities were perhaps owing to the court of Charles II. adopting, after the Restoration, the French regulation, that players being considered as in the presence of their sovereign, should wear the dress of the court drawingroom, while in certain parts the old English custom was still retained, which preserved some attempt at dressing in character. Kemble reformed all those anachronisms, and prosecuted with great earnestness a plan of reforming the wardrobe of the stage, collecting with indefatigable diligence from illuminated manuscripts, ancient pictures, and other satisfactory authorities, whatever could be gleaned of ancient costume worthy of being adopted on the theatre. Rigid and pedantic adherence to the dresses of every age was not possible or to be wished for. In the time when Lear is supposed to have lived, the British were probably painted and tattooed, and, to be perfectly accurate, Edgar ought to have stripped his shoulders bare before he assumed the character of poor Tom. Hamlet, too, if the Amlethus of Saxo Grammaticus, should have worn a bear skin instead of his inky suit and whatever Macbeth's garb should have been, of course a philabeg could have formed no part thereof. But as the poet, carrying back his scene into remote days, retains still, to a certain extent, the manners and sentiments of his own period, so it is sufficient for the purpose of costume if every thing he avoided which can recall modern associations, and as much of the antique he assumed as will at once harmonize with the purpose of the exhibition, and in so far awaken recollections of the days of yore as to give an air of truth to the scene. Every theatrical reader must recollect the additional force which Macklin gave to the Jew at his first appearance in that character, when he came on the stage dressed with his red hat, peaked beard and loose black gown, a dress which excited Pope's curiosity, who desired to know in particular why he wore a red hat. Macklin replied modestly, because he had read that the Jews in Venice were obliged to wear hats of that colour. "And pray, Mr. Macklin," said Pope, "do players in general take such pains?" — "I do not know, sir," replied Macklin, "that

they do, but as I had staked my reputation on the character, I was determined to spare no trouble in getting at the best information." Pope expressed himself much pleased.

During his whole life, Kemble was intent on improving, by all means which occurred, the accuracy of the dresses which he wore while in character. Macbeth was one of the first plays in which the better system of costume was adopted, and he wore the Highland dress, as old Macklin had done before him. Many years afterwards, he was delighted when, with our own critical hands, which have plucked many a plume besides, we divested his bonnet of sundry huge bunches of black feathers, which made it look like an undertaker's cushion, and replaced them with the single broad quill feather of an eagle sloping across his noble brow; he told us afterwards that the change was worth to him three distinct rounds of applause as he came forward in this improved and more genuine headgear.

With the subject of dress, modes of disposing and managing the scenes are naturally connected: and here, also, Kemble, jealous of the dignity of his art called in the assistance of able artists, and improved in a most wonderful degree the appearance of the stage and the general effect of the piece in representation. Yet, in our opinion, the Muse of Painting should be on the stage the handmaid not the rival of her sisters of the drama. Each art should retain its due predominance within its own proper region. Let the scenery be as well painted, and made as impressive as a moderate sized stage will afford: but when the roof is raised to give the the scene painter room to pile Pelion upon Ossa; when the stage is widened that his forests may be extended, or deepened that his oceans may flow in space apparently interminable, the manager who commands these decorations is leaving his proper duty, and altering entirely the purpose of the stage. Meantime, as the dresses ought to be suited to the time and country, the landscape and architecture should be equally coherent. Means may, besides, be discovered from time to time tending to render the scenic deception more effective, and the introduction of such must he advantageous, provided always that this part of theatrical business be kept in due subordination to that which is strictly dramatic.

Processions and decorations belong to the same province as scenes and dresses, and should be heedfully attended to, but at the same time kept under, that they may relieve the action of the scene, instead of shouldering aside the dramatic interest. Kemble carried his love of splendour rather to

the extreme, though what he introduced was generally tasteful and splendid. He sacrificed perhaps his own opinion to the humour of the audience, and to the tempting facilities which the size of the modern theatres afford for what is called spectacle.

Macbeth was, as has been hinted, one of the first of the old stock plays which he brought forward in this splendid manner, and in many respects it was admirably suited for such a purpose. The distant approach of Macbeth's army, as well as the apparitions of the cavern, were very well managed. By causing the descendants of the murdered thane to pass behind a screen of black crape, he diminished their corporeal appearance, and emulated the noble lines of Collins: —

> "From thence he sung how, 'mid his bold design,
> Before the Scot, afflicted and aghast,
> The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line
> Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant pass'd."

Things occurred, however, even in this fine spectacle, which show that matters of show and pageantry have their own peculiar risks. At first Kemble had introduced four bands of children, who rushed on the stage at the invocation of the witches, to represent the

> "Black spirits and white,
> Blue spirits and grey."

There was perhaps little taste in rendering these aërial beings visible to the bodily eye, especially when the same manager had made an attempt to banish even the spectre of Banquo. But he was obliged to discard his imps for an especial reason. Mr. Kelly informs us, that, egged on, and encouraged by one of their number, a black-eyed urchin, ycleped Edmund Kean, they made such confusion on the stage that Kemble was fain to dismiss them to the elements. Another failure we ourselves witnessed — a whimsical failure — in this piece, which we may mention as a warning to those managers who put too much faith in such mechanical aids. It occurred when the armed head ought to have arisen, but when, though the trapdoor gaped, no apparition arose. The galleries began to hiss; whereupon the scene-shifters in the cellarage, redoubling their exertions, and overcoming, perforce, the obstinacy of the screw which was to raise the trap, fairly, out of too great

and urgent zeal, overdid their business, and produced before the audience, at full length, the apparition of a stout man, his head and shoulders arrayed in antique helmet and plate, while the rest of his person was humbly attired after the manner of a fifth-rate performer of these degenerate days, — that is to say, in a dimity waistcoat, nankeen breeches, and a very dirty pair of cotton stockings. To complete the absurdity, the poor man had been so hastily promoted that he could not keep his feet, but prostrated himself on his nose before the audience, to whom he was so unexpectedly introduced.

The effect of this accident was not recovered during the whole evening, though the play was performed with transcendant ability.

Kemble, though, from a natural turn for magnificence, he was somewhat too apt to indulge this love of show, often contrived to cater at the same time for those who admired in preference the legitimate scenes of the drama. *Henry VIII.* was produced chiefly on account of the processions: but who would not forgive any motive which could contribute to bring forward such complete personifications as Mrs. Siddons and her brother presented in Cardinal Wolsey and Queen Catherine? The trial scene and dying scene of the immortal actress were among the most splendid displays of her unrivalled excellence, and for Kemble's Wolsey, it was reality itself; you saw the full-blown dignity of the ambitious statesman sink at once before the regal frown, and you felt at the same moment that he had received the death wound. He seemed to totter and grow less before the eyes of the spectator; you saw that the spear he had leaned upon had pierced his side. Unhappily, although they were thus frequently combined, the taste for show prevailed over that for the legitimate drama. A display of splendour in the one theatre provoked rival magnificence in the other, and the example entailed ruinous expense on both. While Drury and Covent Garden merely contended for the superiority in theatrical talent, their expenses were within limit; but when the outlay was extended to splendour of procession and complication of artillery, there could be no end to the conflict but ruin; and all that is gained by such extravagance is to pervert the taste of the public. The burning of towers, and charging with cavalry, and the introduction of elephants, lions, and other inhabitants of the menagerie ought to be confined to pantomime. We have heard that, in Schiller's *Robbers,* as acted on a certain German stage, the hero rushed in at the head of thirty horse; but we would only ask how an actor so situated is to be seen or heard? Let any one observe how difficult it is to distinguish

the captain when at the head of a real troop of dragoons, and he will see at once how completely the presence of numbers destroys the idea of that personal importance which is so necessary to the effect of an actor. What then is to be done when an army or any other large assembly must be addressed? The common resource is to draw up half a dozen men along the flat scene, who stand there with pale countenances, as stiff as upon the parade, till the speech is finished, and then — right about — forward — and off they stalk as if to relieve guard. We have been tempted to think something better than this might be contrived. Suppose two or three armed figures were exhibited as seen partially betwixt the side scenes, with lances and banners projecting over their heads, so as to suggest to the imagination of the audience the leaders of columns stationed in readiness to advance, and give some idea of numbers attendant on their chieftain. But it is our business — a mischievous one, if you will — to criticize existing imperfections rather than submit expedients to the critical powers of others. In the business of the greenroom, Kemble, as manager, was gentlemanlike, accurate, and regular, but somewhat strict; for, as he had in his private capacity as actor taken contentedly whichever parts were assigned him, he conceived himself entitled to expect the same compliance with his own arrangements; and, with these, amidst the little contentions and jealousies which must creep into what may be called a hand of intellectual gladiators, who contend with each other to win the popular suffrage of crowded audiences, human passions not seldom interfered. We once had a long conversation with him on this subject, in which he complained, that there was not the same classification of performers in England that had been formed on the continent. Our theatres were, said John, like eastern regions, where all must be half-deified sultans, viziers, and bashaws, or depressed and sullen slaves. In England, the actor who represents Laertes or Horatio is considering himself all the while as a degraded man, because he is not the Hamlet of the evening. In France, on the other hand, there is a race of actors who either never aspire to more than secondary parts, or, if they have any hope of so aspiring, endeavour to recommend themselves by the superior manner in which they discharge the subordinate characters meanwhile intrusted to them: whereas the English performer too often acts carelessly, and sometimes malignantly neglects to support by due exertion the interest of the scene, with a rival whom he thinks unjustly preferred to himself. Kemble mentioned on this occasion, that, being behind the scenes at the

Comédie Française along with Talma, he observed an individual conning his part with great attention, rehearsing it with different tones and actions, and, in short, so sedulous in his rehearsal, that it seemed he had some most important part to perform. Being greatly struck with the actor's assiduity, he inquired what weighty character this hard student was to represent? Talma informed him that he had only to say five words, "Madam, the coach is ready;" and that, notwithstanding the brevity and seeming unimportance of his part, whatever it might be, this man uniformly spent much time in studying and adjusting the action, tone, and manner of delivering himself. In short, the English actor thinks himself positively sunk and injured when obliged to perform a part of little consequence; the Frenchman, with happier vanity, considers that he may exalt any part by his mode of playing it, and obtain at least such share of applause as may show that he too is a painter, though exercising his powers for the nonce on a limited scale. It is needless to say which system gives most effect to the scene: for, if it may be questioned whether the French or English stage has afforded the greatest actors taken individually, there can be no doubt that your Parisian theatre presents a company so completely drilled to work together, each doing his best to support the rest, that the whole entertainment is more illusive, and more captivating, than if one or two stars, as they are called, had shown themselves amidst a general darkness of ignorance, carelessness, and illhumour. There is also this convenience in the French mode — *concordiâ res parvæ crescunt* — by uniform and habitual cooperation, a company of even ordinary powers may at any time make a better amusement out of a well-cast comedy suited to their different talents, than when a single part is performed with excellence, and the rest *walked trough* or hurried over.

But Kemble's anxiety as a manager made him sometimes too busy; he was apt to be drilling the performers even during the time of the performance; a mode of mixing the duties of actor and manager which ought never to be suffered, as it checks the spirit of the superior performer's own part, while it sadly deranges the inexperienced actor, terrifies the modest, and doubly confuses the dull or negligent. Who can forget how Mrs. Siddons in her noviciate was appalled, almost annihilated, by the *aside* frown of Garrick? We ourselves remember to have seen a very pleasing looking young person much disturbed by Kemble's directions about lifting and lowering the sword in the scene betwixt the princess Anne and Richard.

Mr. Kemble, in the winter season of 1784—5, was superseded in his temporary character of manager by King's return to that situation. But in 1788—9, the veteran finally retreated from the office, and from that time Kemble remained manager of Drury Lane until 1796, when the irregularity with which the proprietors managed their pecuniary matters, and their frequent interference with his authority, induced him to resign the situation. He again returned to the thankless office in 1800—1, with some intention of obtaining a secure hold by purchasing one fourth part of the whole concern. This plan failed; and, in 1802, Kemble finally retired from Drury Lane, and made a purchase of a fourth share of the Covent Garden patent. He was now not only a manager, but a large proprietor, a speculation which, producing some difficulties, afterwards interfered with the quiet of his declining years. As stated by Mr. Boaden, it may be wondered why, with no expensive habits, with professional emoluments to the amount of about £3000 a-year, and with a considerable sum of money saved, without which he could not have made the purchase, this amiable and goodtempered man should have involved his whole fortune in a property which he knew to be so very precarious that he himself always talked of it as a lottery, and confined himself for life to the duty of management which he had often felt to be accompanied by intolerable grievances. But John Kemble was a sworn votary to the drama; and though he certainly did bow the knee to Baal in becoming an encourager of the inordinate rage for spectacle, which at once impoverished the concern and debauched the public taste, he laboured hard, on the other hand, to bring forward ancient pieces which he thought might be revived with renewed interest. He had undoubtedly the laudable wish to raise as high as possible the art to which, as much from the excellence of his personal, as of his professional character, he was an honour. Kemble may be, therefore, considered as having, with his eyes open, made a sacrifice of fortune, of peace of mind and of the bodily ease which frequent fits of the gout rendered desirable, in order to sustain the honour of his art.

The discomfort to which he was exposed never fretted his temper and not even the gout itself, mistress of men's purposes and their actions too in most cases, could conquer his strong resolution to do his duty towards the public. He used to take the somewhat hazardous medicine *l'eau médicinale d'Husson* without hesitation so as to enable him to perform the very day after his malady had made its most severe attacks. It could not but happen that he was sometimes less equal to his part than at others, and such an

occasional failure led to a painful dispute, which for some time created a breach between him and his friend George Colman the Younger. We mention the subject, not with the purpose of raking up the recollections which both parties had buried, but because Mr. Boaden is a little mistaken in some of the particulars. When Mr. Colman brought forward his play of the *Iron Chest,* founded on the masterpiece of Godwin's genius, *Caleb Williams,* he put into the mouth of one of the characters a description of the antiquarian humours of Mortimer, the Falkland of the play, which part was to be performed by Kemble:

> "Philip is all deep reading, and black letter;
> He shows it in his very chin. He speaks
> Mere dictionary; and he pores on pages
> That give plain men the headache. 'Scarce and curious'
> Are baits his learning nibbles at. His brain
> Is crammed with mouldy volumes, cramp and useless,
> Like a librarian's lumber-room."

Kemble conceived that these lines were unnecessarily introduced, as throwing ridicule on his antiquarian lore; and Colman, upon his remonstrance, changed the name of Sir Philip to *Sir Edward* Mortimer, as it now stands. But the smartest wag that ever broke a pun should beware of exercising his wit upon his physician, his lawyer, or the actor who is to perform in his play. Kemble, unwell and out of humour, acted negligently a part which requires violent exertion. The irritated dramatist published the play with an angry preface, and the actor responded. But a quarrel betwixt the author of *Octavian* and John Kemble was too unnatural; they became sensible they had both been wrong, and were reconciled, and the preface was so effectually cancelled, that the price of a copy in which it remains, astounds the novice when it occurs in the sale room.

Of Mr. Kemble as a manager, we have only further to say, that equally unsparing of his labour, and regardless of the illwill which he excited among those who suffered by his economy, he carried retrenchment and good order into every department of the theatre.

The good public in the meantime, though returning ever and anon to Shakspeare and common sense, were guilty of two or three grand absurdities, such as became the worthy descendants of those whose fathers crowded the Haymarket Theatre, to see a man get into a quart-bottle, * and

* It may be new spoken out, that the contriver of this notable *hoax* was the Duke of Montagu, eccentric in his humour as well as in his benevolence. The person who appeared was a poor Scotchman, who had some office about the India House. — *S.*

these were among the most powerful causes that tended to obstruct the effect of Mr. Kemble's exertions to restore the reign of good taste in dramatic matters.

Vortigern, a play ascribed to Shakspeare, gave rise to one of these hallucinations of popular absurdity. An impudent youth of eighteen, desirous of imitating Chatterton, it may be supposed, but without possessing any of his powers, told his father a story of having recovered certain extremely curious documents belonging to Shakspeare, presented to him, as he said, by a benevolent old gentleman, who had them by inheritance, but would not permit himself to he referred to or quoted in the affair. The elder Mr. Ireland, believing, or pretending to believe, this improbable fiction, put the tale into circulation, and, like a commercial note, it received indorsations as it passed from hand to hand, which strengthened its credit. The pleasure of being cheated was never more completely indulged. Without any minute inquiry after the old gentleman who had been the possessor of these documents; without reflecting with distrust upon the extravagance of the liberality which could confer such literary treasures on a mere boy, and enjoin at the same time that the donor's person should be concealed; without examination of the paper of the manuscript, which, torn as it was out of the blank leaves of old account hooks, bore different and recent water-marks — of itself, the very miscellaneous nature of the Shakspeare relics ought to have made thinking men pause.

For this was no affair of a few scraps; — a perfect storehouse of the most curious and interesting articles was announced — letters — locks of hair — rings — portraits — books — billets-doux, and, above all, plays. To render the deception more gross, Ireland introduced a namesake of his own as contemporary and friend of Shakspeare, and, we think, assigned to him the merit of saving the bard from the risk of drowning in the Avon. People visited the manuscript, which was shown with the same guarded precaution that priests use where they exhibit an idol; and, as they came to be deceived, the visitors took care not to return without their errand.

Kemble, warned perhaps by Mr. Malone, escaped the contagious credulity of the time; and though he brought *Vortigern* on the stage, and

acted at the principal character, he was never duped by the figment of the young forger. The dialogue was not calculated to impose upon the ear as the manuscript had bewildered the eye. The piece was most effectually damned, and its fate excited a strong prejudice against Kemble among the numerous body of literati, who had become ridiculous by their faith in the fiction, as if he had not done the part of Vortigern that justice which was his duty. Every one who had the most distant connexion with this ridiculous business seemed destined to come to shame: Malone himself, though he penned a detection of the imposture, was, in the midst of his triumph, exposed, in his turn, by George Chalmers, who, even after Ireland confessed his fraud, wrote an apology for the believers in the manuscript, showing to demonstration, that the reasoning of Malone was false in itself, though brought to establish what was now become undeniable truth. Even John Kemble, passive as he was in the affair, continued long to suffer from that illwill which ascribed to him the ridicule by which the believers in those forgeries had been overwhelmed. Nor must we forget the numerous class of projectors, who had schemed to connect their own private emolument with the furtherance of the deception. These were, years afterwards, to be found among the personal enemies of Kemble.

Another notable instance of popular humour was evinced soon after, *viz.* the violent fever-fit of admiration which the public exhibited for the young Roscius, Master Betty, a child certainly of precocious parts, remarkable for his speech and action, together with his happy mimicry, for it could at his age be nothing else, of the language of passions which he had never felt. It was certainly very fair playing, and in the circumstances wonderful; the graceful demeanour and nonchalance of the almost infantine performer were particularly so. But it was a deception; and Siddons and Kemble were neglected, whilst the youthful prodigy trode the stage in triumph, and afforded the most rapturous gratification to such audiences as had it in their power to enjoy the united efforts of the finest actor and actress in the world. Some illhumour was manifested, if we rightly recollect, by a part of the public, because Mrs. Siddons felt her own dignity, and did not choose to act with this tender juvenile for her lover or husband. This temporary fit of dotage of John Bull was attended with feelings of dislike as well as neglect to his ancient servant Kemble: for, when under the influence of an absurd planet, John is too apt to look with an evil eye upon all who do not bow down to worship the god of his immediate idolatry.

This determined dream of folly included a sort of prospective hope on the part of the admiring audience, that their treasure would increase in value as his powers, already so astonishing in boyhood, should ripen to maturity. But early blossoms seldom do so; and it was seen in the second season, that, as the wonderful circumstance of his youth diminished, Master Betty's attractions became less. He was prudent, or rather his friends were; and as he had amassed, in an incredibly short space, a handsome fortune, they withdrew him from the scene. He appeared again many years afterwards, and showed respectable, but far from striking, powers.

The next great incident in Kemble's history was occasioned by a deplorable event, or rather one out of a course of events of the same nature which succeeded each other rapidly; we mean the sequence of fires, by which the Pantheon, Opera House, Covent Garden, and Drury Lane theatres were burnt down. The wonderful coincidence of time and circumstance in these fatal accidents made persons imagine that some incendiary had, in a fit of zeal of a truly flaming character, undertaken the destruction of what he might consider as the resorts of profanity. But any one who has been behind the scenes of a theatre, and has seen how many lights are burning in the neighbourhood of scenery, and other articles of a character peculiarly combustible, — has been witness, at the same time, to the explosion of guns and fireworks, scattering risk in every direction, — and has observed how the shifting of scenes and alteration of lights are perpetually threatening to bring them into contact, — will wonder that so few rather than that so many accidents of the kind in reality take place. There is, also, to be considered, the total want of party walls, and that ample room and scope afforded to the action of the flames renders fire a more dangerous, as well as a more probable, event in a theatre than any where else — unless it be aboard ship. The same resource against this imminent peril exists in both cases: — namely, the great number of men who are perpetually moving about, both behind the scenes and in a vessel. Numerous accidents occur weekly, nay daily, in both, which, where there were fewer eyes to observe, and fewer ready hands to assist, would produce the most fatal accidents. It is, we think, Captain Brazen, in the *Recruiting Officer,* who hesitates whether he shall lay out the fortune of his wife in the speculation of a theatre or a privateer. In some respects there is the same disadvantage attending either plan — at an insurance office they must both he ranked double dangerous.

But the destruction of Covent Garden theatre was attended with one consequence which we must always regard as detrimental, in the highest degree, to the theatrical art. The house was rebuilt on a plan too ample for its legitimate purpose, and far too magnificent for the profits which might naturally be expected from it.

The proprietors of Drury had led the way in this great and leading error when they reconstructed that theatre and stage on which Garrick and his contemporaries had exhibited their astonishing talents. We remember the old playhouse, and cannot but regret that the plan had not been, in point of extent at least, exactly followed. All the nicer touches of fine acting — the smile, however suppressed — the glance of passion which escaped from the actor's eye and indicated the internal emotion which he appeared desirous to suppress — the whisper which was heard distinctly through the whole circle of the attentive audience — are all lost or wasted in the huge halls which have since arisen. The finest art of the performer — that of modulating features, tones, and action to the natural expression of human passion — is now lost. Extravagant gestures must he used; excess of rant must be committed by the best actors in their finest parts; and even their violence of voice and gesticulation can hardly make them intelligible to the immense circle in front.

Nor do we conceive this enlargement of the theatres to be more favourable to the interest of the proprietors than to the advantage of the art. A crowded house ought to be a frequent occurrence for the purpose of keeping up the appetite of the public, who are stimulated on such occasions by the desire of sharing a delight not to he purchased without some difficulty. But in these immense Domdaniels difficulty of access can but rarely exist: — cold and cheerless vacuity is much more frequently the effect, even when the number which can be calculated upon as regular play-going people are dispersed through their immense spaces. Men are never stimulated to go thither from the fear that a neglected opportunity may not return. What can be done at any time is seldom or never done, and the appearance of huge half-empty amphitheatres must suggest to every one who visits them the chilling idea of an amusement which has little attraction. Besides, the dead and unproductive expense laid out upon ornamental architecture and accommodation which is seldom wanted, loads the property and diminishes the productive capital which ought to be

employed in the salaries of the actors, and other legitimate expenses of the house.

It is also too true that the size of the theatres has greatly tended to increase the charge justly brought against them in some respects as injurious to public morals. Upon the stage the entertainment presented to the public is of a character far more pure and correct in point of morality than was formerly the case. Those by whom it is represented are generally decorous and often exemplary in their private conduct: many mingle with and are well received in the best society; and the personal characters of respectable performers of this day, may be most advantageously opposed to those of the Cibbers and Oldfields of former times, who only made their way into that species of company where profligacy is welcome, when accompanied by wit and the power of giving entertainment.

But what has been gained in point of decorum on the stage, has, we grieve to say, been lost among the audience. In an immense house where the business of the play can only occupy that part of the company who are near the stage, its proprietors are tempted to admit, nay, encourage, the attendance of those who come thither for amusement of a less harmless nature. Saloons have been introduced, which are used for little other purpose than that of assignation: and the most abandoned class of females are so dispersed throughout the theatre, and practise their profession with so little appearance of control, that much arrangement is necessary on the part of those who wish to make the female part of their family partakers of a rational and moral amusement, to place them out of the reach of hearing and seeing what must be unfit for their eyes and ears. It may be answered, and with some truth, that in a corrupted metropolis the presence of such company as we allude to is in some degree unavoidable. But, in small theatres, the decent and well-mannered bear a much larger proportion to the less accurate part of the audience, and the delinquents, outnumbered and abashed, are compelled to behave at least with decency, and assume an appearance of the virtue which they have not. By limiting the profuse expense in useless external magnificence, the proprietors would also lose the temptation to encourage this part of their audience, and would not need to plead the pitiable excuse,

"Our poverty and not our will consents."

Whoever has seen the interior of a Parisian theatre will, and must admit, that they manage these things better in France.

But the Drury Lane proprietors having set the example of increasing the extent of their theatre, those of Covent Garden would not be left behind. and theirs also rose in a still more expanded and expensive scale. They were stimulated by emulation, and like two rival country squires who stand against each other for an election, went on without regard to their own interest, straining every nerve to out-show each other in prodigality of space and magnificence of architecture. Mr. Boaden has some sensible remarks on this subject, and compares them, in the extent of their preparations, to fishermen, who thought they could not fail to ensure the miraculous draught of fishes, if they made but their net large enough to hold them.

It is not impossible that Mr. Kemble's classical taste, and the high sense which he entertained of the dignity of his art, induced him to give his assent too readily to those schemes of magnificence, which were favoured by his colleagues as the surest road to profit. The former was soon convinced of his mistake, beholding that he had only afforded an opportunity for the further predominance of sound and show over the real drama. But the others, who supposed that, in consideration of the additional expenditure, the public would submit to a small increase of entrance-money, were doomed to experience more direct disappointment and mortification. Of these, however, the chief burden fell in the first instance upon Kemble himself though not more accessary than the other proprietors to the original proposal, and not at all guilty of some imprudent steps that had been taken in its support.

A blackguard transaction ought to have its name from the dictionary of the vulgar tongue, and the continued riot raised about the increase of entrance-money, which had remained the same for one hundred years, while all the expenses attending a theatre were increased in a tenfold proportion, became the ground of the *O. P. row,* as was called a continued riot which lasted sixtysix nights. A large proportion of the most idle and unthinking of the audience, lads who escaped from their counters and desks at the hour of half-price, were joined with and instigated by others whose purposes were deliberately hostile to the theatre, and personally malignant to poor Kemble — for so we may term him, when his professional duty called him day after day and night after night, to expose himself to the determined brutality of a set of rioters, equally illiberal and implacable, who made him the object of their marked abuse and violence. This disorderly crew had for their nominal

leader a gentleman rich in pedigree, but poor enough in understanding to suffer himself to be made the tool of such a mob.

At the same time, it must be admitted, the measures used to quell the rioters in the beginning were of a most improper complexion. Water-engines were brought on the stage as if in readiness to play on the audience, and the highly improper measure of introducing common bruisers and prizefighters into the pit, as another mode of bullying the company, gave just offence, and drew many well-meaning auxiliaries to the worser side. Neither of these injudicious devices had Mr. Kemble's sanction; he had too much sense and too much taste. But he reaped almost exclusively the harvest of odium which they excited. Not contented with the most violent expressions of hatred and contempt poured on him from the front of the house, and displayed on placards, lest their import should be lost in a din which overpowered the sound of a full band of musicians (who could only be known to play by the motion of their arms and fingers,) another vent for this lowbred malignity was found in a subscription list for defending the rioters who might be apprehended and prosecuted. Here every blackguard might, for subscribing sixpence or a shilling, indulge himself by announcing it to be a contribution from an enemy of Black Jack or King John, or whatever impertinent nickname he chose to bestow on an accomplished, simple-hearted, and most honourable man, eminent for his own acquirements as well as for the delight which he had afforded the public. At length the rioters carried their animosity so far as to visit *King John's* house every evening after the close of the play, and alarm the female part of his family with their war-whoop. Kemble, hearing himself vociferously called for, resolved, with the mixture of intrepidity and simplicity which distinguished his character, "to go out," as he said, "and speak to them." The prudence and affection of his brother Charles prevented his doing so, or it is likely that the tempting opportunity afforded by darkness and confusion, with the exasperated feelings of the assailants, might have brought about some desperate catastrophe.

The termination of this extraordinary riot is well known, The real right of their case, the laws by which they were protected, the nightly exertions of the police, though strengthened in an unusual manner, — all could not protect the proprietors of the theatre against a mob disciplined with the most extraordinary pains, taking wonderful precaution to stop within certain limits, and so well organized, as to exhibit during the space of almost three

months no appearance of diminishing in their numbers, or relaxing in their determination. They had leaders of their own, were managed by a secret committee, had their regular O. P. dinners, and O. P. music, which was actually published, their placards, their rattles, their whistles, their bells, their cat-calls, and, above all, their bludgeons. The proprietors were at length compelled to submit to foes so inveterate; — to modify the proposed advance to that of a shilling in the boxes, and sixpence in the pit ticket; — and to renounce, in a great measure, that plan of private boxes which gave some chance of making the theatre once again the resort of the world of fashion. To complete the picture, and show the malignant and revengeful temper in which these wild proceedings were conducted, the rioters insisted that the proprietors of Covent Garden should dismiss Mr. Brandon, an old and faithful servant of the house, because, in his capacity of box-keeper, he had made strenuous exertions to protect the property and assist the rights of his employers. Such a conclusion was worthy of the spirit in which the whole *row* was conducted.

We are of opinion that, though Kemble stood this storm like a man, he also felt it very deeply, and that his favourite art lost some of its attractions when he experienced to what unjust humiliation it subjected him, and that without the possibility of defence or retaliation. He remained, indeed, for two years, making every effort to assist the theatre in its state of depression: — and mighty were those efforts, for it was during that space that he brought back *Julius Cæsar* to the stage, and raised from his ashes the living Brutus. But in 1812, deeming he had done his part, desirous of some repose — and not unwilling, perhaps, to make the public sensible what the theatre might suffer by his absence — he withdrew himself from London for nearly two years. In the same year, and just before his departure, the stage lost its brightest ornament by the retirement of Mrs. Siddons.

Mr. Kemble's return to the British capital and stage was triumphant. The pit rose to receive him, and the boxes poured laurels upon the stage. He ascended to the very height of popularity, and was acknowledged as, without dispute, the first actor in Britain, probably in the world, until Kean arose to dispute the crown. The youth, activity, and energy of this new performer, the originality of his manner, which was in reality a revival of the school of Garrick, above all, the effects of novelty, had a great influence on the public mind, although the opinion of the more sound critics remained decidedly partial to that performer who relied for his success on deep and

accurate study of the dramatic art, of the poet's words, and of the human mind, rather than vehement and forcible action; which, though it surprises the first or second time it is witnessed, is apt, when repeated, to have the resemblance of stage-trick. Perhaps Mr. Kemble's resolution to retire, even while his powers seemed to others in their full vigour, was hastened by the toil which he foresaw it must cost him to maintain at his age — and with health that was fast breaking — a contest with a rival in all the vigour of youth. However this was, Mr. Kemble took leave of the audience, 23d June, 1817, after acting, with unabated powers, the character of Coriolanus, which he probably chose, because in that he could neither have rival nor successor.

We add, with regret, that neither his health, nor perhaps his finances, although easy, permitted him with convenience to close his days in his native country. Lamented by numerous friends of the first distinction for character, literature, and rank, John Kemble retreated to Lausanne, and there finally fixed his residence.

He made over his share in the theatre to his brother Charles, and disposed of his dramatic collection (which some public library should have purchased) for £2000 to the Duke of Devonshire. He died, 26th February, 1823, in the arms of the excellent person to whom he had been united for many years, spent in domestic happiness. Few men of milder, calmer, gentler disposition, steeled at the same time with a high sense of honour, and the nice-timed feelings of a gentleman, are probably left behind him. Two instances may be selected from the works before us. A wrong-headed actor, having challenged him on account of some supposed injustice, Kemble walked to the field as if to rehearsal, took his post, and received the fire as unmoved as if he had been acting the same on the stage; but refused to return the shot, saying, the gentleman who wished satisfaction had, he supposed, got it — he himself desired none. On another occasion, when defending Miss Phillips against a body of military gentlemen, whose drunkenness rendered their gallant attentions doubly disagreeable, one of them struck at him with his drawn sabre; a maidservant parried the blow, and Kemble, only saying, "well done, Euphrasia," drew his sword, and taking the young lady under his arm, conducted her home in safety. * As a moral character,

* Kelly's Reminiscences, vol. ii., p. 148.

his integrity was unsullied; and the whole tenor of his life was equally honourable to himself and useful to his art. At proper times and in gentlemen's society, he could show himself one of the old social school, who loved a cup of wine without a drop of allaying Tiber; but this was only, as Ben Jonson says, to give spirit to literary conversation; and, indeed, when we have heard Kemble pour forth the treasures of his critical knowledge over a bottle, we were irresistibly reminded of the author of *Epicene* giving law at the Mermaid or the Apollo.

We have already given our general opinion of Mr. Boaden's performance, but have not perhaps done sufficient justice to the accuracy of his narrative, and the liberality and truth of his critical remarks. The style is a little too ambitious — and sometimes so Gibbonian as rather to indicate, than distinctly to relate what happened. But with these imperfections it is a valuable present to the public, and deserves a place in every dramatic library; not only as a respectable and liberal history of the eminent actor whose name the book bears, but as containing much curious information, a little too miscellaneously heaped together, concerning the drama in general.

On one of his incidental topics we must pause for a moment with delighted recollection. We mean the readings of the celebrated Le Texier, who, seated at a desk, and dressed in plain clothes, read French plays with such modulation of voice, and such exquisite point of dialogue, as to form a pleasure different from that of the theatre, but almost as great as we experience in listening to a firstrate actor. We have only to add to a very good account given by Mr. Boaden of this extraordinary entertainment, that when it commenced, M. Le Texier read over the *dramatis personæ,* with the little analysis of character usually attached to each name, using the voice and manner with which he afterwards read the part. And so accurately was the keynote given, that he had no need to name afterwards the person who spoke; the stupidest of the audience could not miss to recognise him.

We now approach Michael Kelly, but the play has taken up so much time that we must curtail the afterpiece; and we are sorry for it, because it would he sure to send our readers home in good-humour. All the world knows that Michael Kelly, eminently gifted as a musician, who long, with the assistance of the Storaces and Mrs. Crouch, maintained the Italian Opera in London, and contributed his powers to many other musical departments in the drama, had been educated for five years in Italy, and had appeared as a singer at most of the courts on the Continent with good

approbation. So that he can tell the reader many a tale of foreign parts, of princes, and archdukes, and emperors, which are well worth listening to. He has his hairbreadth escapes to tell you, and his perils by flood and field. Being born an Irishman, he has some of the reckless humour of his country, with a large share of its goodnature; gets into scrapes, scrambles out of them again, and laughs heartily both at the danger and the escape. The Memoirs, written undoubtedly by a man of far inferior talent, recalled to us, nevertheless, those of Goldoni; nay, often put us in mind of Gil Blas — not that Mr. Kelly has the least of the *picaro,* which in some degree attached to him of Santillane, but that hanging, as it were, between the higher and sometimes highest orders, in whose behalf he exercised his talents, and a class eminently exposed to variations of society and alternations of fortune, he has seen the world on both sides, and has told the result of his observation with a good deal of light humour. An adventurous little schooner of this kind, skirring the coast in search of its own peculiar objects, cannot be expected to bring back a ponderous or bulky cargo of wares, consisting of solid efficient value in the mart of literature. No matter — the smart little cruiser is the more likely to collect these light notices of persons and manners in society, which, if they are not grave in themselves, are eminently well calculated to relieve works of a graver description. Not but that Mr. Kelly has added things worthy the notice of the historian. There are, in particular, some curious facts concerning the manners of that well-intentioned but misguided speculator in politics, Joseph II., which, had we time, we would willingly pause to introduce.

There is, besides, much concerning music, the science in which Mr. Kelly has distinguished himself, which we conceive must be highly interesting to connoisseurs, and which has afforded ourselves entertainment — for which we give the author our hearty thanks — although, like young Pottinger, we can only wave our hats, and join our applause to that of others, "obviously without comprehending much of what has been going on." One thing we do comprehend, which is the advice of the distinguished Mozart to our hero himself. It seems that Mr. Kelly, whose natural talents and taste had been greatly improved by five years' residence in Italy, having originally determined on the stage as a profession, became ambitious in his prosecution of musical distinction, and thought of devoting himself to the mysteries of counterpoint. Mozart pointed out to him the disadvantage of

engaging in a dry and abstract study, instead of cultivating the powers of melody with which nature had endowed him.

“ ‘Melody is the essence of music,’ continued he; ‘I compare a good melodist to a fine racer, and counterpointists to hack posthorses: therefore be advised, let *well alone,* and remember the old Italian proverb — Chi sa più, meno sa—Who knows most, knows least.’ The opinion of this great man made on me a lasting impression.” — Kelly, vol. i., p. 225.

Now we, being no musicians, have always been of the same opinion.

“Mallem convivis quàm placuisse coquis.”

It is the proper business of the fine arts to delight the world at large by their popular effect, rather than to puzzle and confound them by depth of learning. For our own part, when we are, in spite of our snuffbox, detected with closed eyes during some piece of erudite and complicated harmony, we are determined not to answer, as heretofore, that we shut our eyes to open our ears with less interruption, but boldly to avow, with Jeremy, in *Love for Love,* that though “we have a reasonable ear for a jig, your solos and sonatas give us the spleen.” We will quote Mozart’s authority to silence all reprehension, and

“We thank thee, Mike, for teaching us that word.”

When Michael Kelly came to England, his musical talent speedily gained him distinction and employment; Mr. Boaden gives the following account of his proficiency:

“It often happens in music, that the sweetest organ loads to nothing brilliant, and that truth of tone, and flexibility, and compass, achieve perfection in the art. Something like this was true of Kelly. His voice had amazing power and steadiness; his compass was extraordinary. In vigorous passages he never cheated the ear with the feeble wailings of falsetto, but sprung upon the ascending fifth with a sustaining energy, that often electrified an audience. Some of my readers will remember an instance of this in the air, sung *only* by himself ‘Spirit of my sainted sire,’ where the fifth was upon the syllable *saint.* The Conservatore at Naples, in which he passed five years of his youth, gave him all that science could add to an original love for the art; and Apprili, the best master of any age, completed the studies of the young musician. He was soon versed in all the intricacies of the Italian conversation pieces and finales, and acquired the reputation upon the continent of being an excellent tenor.” — Boaden, vol. i., pp. 350, 351.

Thus accomplished, he easily came to take a distinguished lead in the musical world, and his line connected him in a like degree with the various theatres. True it is that fortune was humorous, and did not always smile upon Michael, though he courted her in every possible shape. He gives a very diverting account of his pursuits, and the emoluments which attended them, in a dialogue betwixt him and the Commissioners of the income-tax, a set of gentlemen eminent some years since for the interest they took in prying into the concerns of other folks.

Mr. Kelly, in the pride of his heart, had reported his income as amounting to £500 yearly; but the unreasonable commissioners were not contented, and urged that his various employments must bring hime twice or thrice that annual sum. The push and parry are as well maintained as between Tilburina and her father in the *Critic*.

" 'Sir,' said I, 'I am free to confess I have erred in my return, but vanity was the cause, and vanity is the badge of all my tribe. I have returned myself as having £500 per annum, when, in fact, I have not five hundred pence of certain income.'

" 'Pray, sir,' said the commissioner, 'are you not stage-manager of the Opera-house?'

" 'Yes, sir,' said I; 'but there is not even a nominal salary attached to that office; I perform its duties to gratify my love of music.'

"Well, but, Mr. Kelly,' continued my examiner, 'you teach?'

" 'I do, sir,' answered I; 'but I have no pupils.'

" 'I think,' observed another gentleman, who had not spoken before, 'that you are an oratorio and concert singer?'

" 'You are quite right,' said I to my new antagonist, 'but I have no engagement.'

" 'Well, but at all events,' observed my first inquisitor, 'you have a very good salary at Drury Lane.'

" 'A very good one, indeed, sir,' answered I; 'but then it is never paid.'

" 'But you have always a fine benefit, sir,' said the othor, who seemed to know something of theatricals.'

" 'Always, sir,' was my reply; 'but the expenses attending it are very great, and whatever profit remains after defraying them, is mortgaged to liquidate debts incurred by building my saloon. The fact is, sir, I am at present very like St. George's Hospital, supported by voluntary

contributions; and have even less certain income, than I telt sufficiently vain to return.' " — Kelly, vol. ii., pp. 189—191.

Well done, Michael — *a brave, brave et demi. We see the dismayed commissioners gazing on each other with dejected and embarrassed aspects, while Mike walks out of the room humming the motivo* of some meditated composition — cantavit vacuus.

To be sure, this was being in the case of the conjurer who could devour any quantity of fire, but was unable to procure bread to eat. But it is explained by the connexion of Kelly as a composer with the celebrated Sheridan.

That comet of eccentric genius was Kelly's patron friend, sometimes partner, and often companion; and how could he thrive, in a worldly sense, with such a principal? The senator and statesman was continually bringing the poor composer into scrapes by his utter neglect of economy, and hitching him out again by ingenuity such as none but he possessed. Some of his tricks on Kelly were, however, sufficiently harmless. On one occasion, to adorn some burletta, Kelly had to sing a song, which Sheridan was to introduce by a speech; and the actor requested, as a particular favour, his part might be as short as possible. This jumped with Sheridan's humour, and the speech was accompanied by a stage direction, enjoining Kelly to gaze for a moment at a cottage in the distance, and to proceed thus: "Here stands my Louisa's cottage — and she must be either in it or out of it." The audience were much amused at this sublime and solitary speech. — (Vol. ii., p. 63.)

Some other good jokes passed betwixt the wit and the melodist. When Kelly had a dangerous fall on the stage, Sheridan alleged that he exclaimed: "And if I had been killed now, who was to maintain me for the rest of my life?" Though he allowed his friend the confusion of ideas commonly imputed to the Green Isle, he would not permit him to possess its dialect; for one night, when Kelly performed an Irish character, Sheridan called to compliment him upon his excellent English. On another occasion, Sheridan was to have an audience of the late King, on theatrical business, for which purpose his present Majesty condescended to propose carrying him down at an appointed hour to Windsor. In order that Sheridan might be near Canton House, and sure of keeping his appointment at twelve next day, Kelly, retiring to sleep in the country, gave up his own bed in Pall Mall to his patron. But, unluckily, Sheridan detected in Michael's pantry a cold neck of

mutton, together with a comfortable reserve of five bottles of port, two of Madeira, and one of brandy, all which he consumed with a brace of jolly companions, and, busied with poor Kelly's good cheer, quite neglected, and indeed incapacitated himself for the purpose for which he had borrowed his lodgings. — Vol ii., p. 223. A still more severe joke was his subjecting Kelly to be arrested for an upholsterer's bill with which he had no personal concern. But Sheridan, on this occasion, did his friend ample justice. He not only persuaded the upholsterer to release Kelly, but, to punish the citizen for his unjust and ungenerous arrest, he borrowed two hundred pounds of him.

One more extraordinary anecdote of this singular compound of genius and carelessness, and we have done.

Pizarro was brought forward as the stay and prop of Drury; all the boxes were bespoke and the scenery prepared; and still Kelly had not been supplied with one word of the songs for which he was to compose music, and the half-distracted composer dunned the bard in vain. Some hope was afforded by a summons at ten o'clock one evening, when Sheridan carried him off from a choice party just at the sweetest hour of the night, but it was only to show him the Temple of the Sun, through the vapours of a large bowl of negus which the bard had planted in the critics' row of the empty pit. At length they got to work, and a curious process it was. "Here," said Sheridan, "I design a procession of the virgins of the sun, with a solemn hymn." Kelly sung a bar or two suitable for the occasion.

"He (Sheridan) then made a sort of rumbling noise with his voice (for he had not the slightest idea of turning a tone,) resembling a deep, gruff bow, wow, wow; but though there was not the slightest resemblance of an air in the noise he made, yet so clear were his ideas of effect, that I perfectly understood his meaning, though conveyed through the medium of a bow, wow, wow." — Kelly, vol ii., pp. 145, 146.

Cora's song Sheridan *did* supply; and Kelly got some song-wright to *do* the rest after the ideas which he had collected from these "bow, wow, wows." By the way, the choral hymn of these same virgins, vol. ii., p. 193, the same which in *Peeping Tom* is set to the words of Pretty Maud, is erroneously termed by Mr. Kelly a Scotch air. It is an English ballad of the reign of George I., on the catastrophe of the celebrated pirate, beginning

"My name is Captain Kidd, When I sail'd, when I sail'd," *etc.*

At last, while *Pizarro* was in the act of being performed,

"all that was written of the play was actually rehearsing, and incredible as it may appear, until the end of the fourth act, neither Mrs. Siddons, nor Charles Kemble, nor Barrymore, had all their speeches for the fifth! Mr. Sheridan was upstairs in the prompter's room, where he was writing the last part of the play, while the earlier parts were acting; and every ten minutes he brought down as much of the dialogue as he had done, piecemeal, into the greenroom, 'abusing himself and his negligence, and making a thousand winning and soothing apologies, for having kept the performers so long in such painful suspense." — Kelly, vol. ii., p.148, 147.

Talk after this of being hunted with printers' devils, with "more copy, sir — the press stands;" pshaw.

There are good anecdotes of many literary characters in this amusing miscellany. Some mistakes there must be: such, for example, is the statement that Mr. Lewis, author of the *Monk,* was poisoned by two favourite negroes, to whom he had bequeathed their liberty, and who became impatient for their legacy. That amiable, though odd man, died of sea-sickness as he returned from visiting his estate in the West Indies, where it is most certain he had exerted himself to improve the condition of his slaves. The disease was aggravated by his persisting in a fatal opinion of his own, that taking emetics would remove the nausea.

There is a very diverting account of a party at Mr. Cumberland's, near Tunbridge, with Jack Bannister; how the veteran read the *Men of Mirth,* a new play, instead of opening a fresh bottle; how Kelly fell asleep during the reading; and what effect his snoring produced on the sensitive nerves of the poet; with much more to the same purpose.

Mr. Kelly's style of story-telling is smart and lively, a little protracted now and then, as will happen to a professed narrator. In point of propriety we have only one stricture to make: the author ought to have spared us his sentimental lamentation over poor Mrs Crouch; it is too much in the line of Kotzebue morality. We never wish to press ourselves into the private intrigues and arrangements of public performers but the joys or sorrows which attend such connexions must not be blazoned as matters of public sympathy. There is bad taste in doing so. Mr. Kelly has told us many good stories, we beg to requite him with one of Northern growth. A young man in the midland counties of Scotland, boorishly educated and homebred, succeeded in due time to his father's estate, and, as the *lairdship* was

considerable began to be looked on as desirable company in the houses of those prudent matrons who have under their charge one, or more than one,

"Penniless lass, wi' a lang pedigree."

One of this class, a lady of considerable rank, was, in the intervals of a formal entertainment, endeavouring to make the wealthy young cub a little more at ease by the ordinary jokes on his celibacy, and exhortations to take a wife with all speed. The interest which her ladyship seemed to take in the matter induced the sapient youth to explain his ideas of domestic convenience in these emphatic words, drawled out in the broad Angus dialect, without the least sense of impropriety, "Na, my leddy; wives is *fashious* bargains — but I keep a missie." We leave the application to the Signor Kelly.

A variety of persons are mentioned in *Kelly's Memoirs,* whose public exhibitions have given an hour of pleasure to conclude the human day of care, and who, in their private capacity, have enlightened the social circle, and afforded gravity itself a good excuse for being out of bed at midnight. Of these some are still labouring in their old walk; Liston, for example, whose face is a comedy, and whose mere utterance makes a jest out of dulness itself; and Charles Matthews, driven from the public stage to make way for puppets and pageants, and compelled to exert his talents, so extraordinary for versatility and inexhaustible resource, in making his own fortune instead of enriching the patentees. * Others enjoy a well-won

* Mr. Matthews died in July, 1835.

independence in the quiet shade of retirement. There is Jack Bannister, honest Jack, who in private character, as upon the stage, formed so excellent a representation of the national character of Old England — Jack Bannister, whom even footpads could not find it in their heart to injure. *

* This distinguished performer and best of good fellows was actually stopped one evening by two foot pads, who recognizing in his person the general favourite of the English audience, begged his pardon and wished him goodnight. Horace's wolf was a joke to this.

There he is, with his noble locks, now as remarkable when covered with snow as when their dark honours curled around his manly face, singing to his grandchildren the ditties which used to call down the rapture of crowded theatres in thunders of applause. There is the other Jack, too, who discriminated every class and character of his countrymen, with all the

shades which distinguish them, from the high-bred Major O'Flaherty, * down

* See *Note, ante,* part iii., p. 281.

to Loony MacTwolter — he, too, enjoys *otium cum dignitate.* The recollection of past mirth has in it something sorrowful; the friends with whom we have shared it are gone; and those who promoted the social glee must feel their powers of enlivening decrease as we feel ours become less susceptible of excitement. Others there are mentioned in these pages whom "our dim eyes seek in vain;" their part has been played; the awful curtain has dropped on them for ever.

SALMONIA

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When great men condescend to trifle, they desire that those who witness their frolics should have some kindred sympathy with the subject which these regard. The speech of Henry IV. to the Spanish ambassador, when he discovered the King riding round the room on a stick, with his son, is well known. “You are a father, Seignor Ambassador, and so we will finish our ride.” No doubt, there was to be remarked something graceful in the manner with which the hero of Navarre bestrode even a cane — something so kind in his expression, while employed in the most childish of pastimes, as failed not to remind the spectator that the indulgent father of his playmate was the no less indulgent father of his people. In taking up this elegant little volume, for which we are indebted to the most illustrious and successful investigator of inductive philosophy which this age has produced, we are led to expect to discover the sage even in his lightest amusements.

We are informed, in the preface, that many months of severe and dangerous illness have been partially occupied and amused by the present treatise, when the author was incapable of attending to more useful studies or more serious pursuits. While we regret that the current of scientific investigation, which has led to such brilliant results, should be, for a moment interrupted, we have here an example, and a pleasing one, that the lightest pursuits of such a man as our angler — nay, the productions of those languid hours, in which lassitude succeeds to pain, are more interesting and instructive than the exertion of the talents of others whose mind and body are in the fullest vigour — illustrating the scriptural expression, that the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim are better than the vintage of Abiezer.

For ourselves, though we have wetted a line in our time, we are far from boasting of more than a very superficial knowledge of the art, and possess no part whatever of the scientific information which is necessary to constitute the philosophical angler. Yet we have read our Walton as well as others; and, like the honest keeper in the New Forest, when we endeavour to form an idea of Paradise, we always suppose a trout-stream going through it. The art itself is peculiarly seductive, requires much ingenuity,

and yet is easily reconciled to a course of quiet reflections, as, step by step, we ascend a devious brook, opening new prospects as we advance, which remind us of a good and unambitious man's journey through this world, wherein changing scenes glide past him with each its own interest, until evening falls, and life is ended. We have, indeed, often thought, that angling alone offers to man the degree of half-business, half-idleness, which the fair sex find in their needlework or knitting, which, employing the hands, leaves the mind at liberty, and occupying the attention so far as is necessary to remove the painful sense of a vacuity, yet yields room for contemplation, whether upon things heavenly or earthly, cheerful or melancholy.

Of the humanity of the pastime we have but little to say. Our author has entered into its defence against Lord Byron, who called it a "solitary vice," and condemned its advocate and apologist, Izaak Walton, as "a quaint old cruel coxcomb," who

> "in his gullet
> Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it."

We will not inquire whether the noble poet has, in the present case, been one of those who

> "Compound for sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to."

And we can easily conceive that scarce any thing could have been less suited to Byron's eager and active temper, and restless and rapid imagination, than a pastime in which proficiency is only to be acquired by long and solitary practice. But in this species of argument, whether used in jest or earnest, there is always something of cant. Man is much like other carnivorous creatures — to catch other animals and to devour them is his natural occupation; and it is only upon reflection, and in the course of a refined age, that the higher classes become desirous to transfer to others the toil and the disgust attending the slaughterhouse and the kitchen. Homer's heroes prostrate the victim and broil its flesh, and were, we must suppose, no more shocked with the moans of the dying bullock than the greyhound with the screams of the hare. The difference produced by a degree of refinement is only that, still arranging our bloody banquet as before, the task of destroying life is, in the case of tame animals, committed to butchers

and poulterers — while, in respect of game, where considerable exertion and dexterity is necessary to accomplish our purpose, and where the sense of excitement, and pride in difficulties surmounted by our own address, overbalance our sympathy with the pain inflicted, we interdict, by strict laws, the vulgar from interference, and reserve the exclusive power of slaughter for our own hands. The sportsman of the present day is, therefore, so far modified by the refinements of society, as to use the intervention of plebeian hands in the case of cattle, sheep, and domestic fowls; but he kills his deer, his hares, his grouse, and his partridges for himself: in respect to them, he is in a state of nature. But if his retaining this touch of the qualities with which

> "Nature first made man
> When wild in woods the noble savage ran,"

shall be considered as a crime, it is surely equally inhuman to cause to be killed, as it is to kill; the guilt, surely, of the criminal who causes a murder to be committed, must be the same as that of the actual bloodspiller. My lady, therefore, who gives the maître d'hôtel orders, which render necessary sundry executions in the piggery, poultry-yard, and elsewhere, is an accomplice before the fact, and as guilty of occasioning a certain quantity of pain to certain unoffending animals, as her good lord, who is knocking down pheasants in the preserve, or catching fish in the brook. In short they that say much about the inhumanity of killing animals for sport, must be prepared to renounce the equally blameable practice of causing them to be killed, lest their delicacy be compared to that of the half-converted Indian squaw, whose humanized feelings could not look upon the tortures of a captive at the death-stake, but, nevertheless, whose appetite was unable to resist a tempting morsel of the broiled flesh, conveyed to her by the kindness of a comrade, as a consolation for her wanting her share of the sport. Our diet, in that case, would become rather lean and Pythagorean, much after the custom of our Brahminical friend, the late Joseph Ritson. Of the hundreds who condemn the cruelty of field sports, how many would relish being wholly deprived, in their own sensitive persons, of animal food?

Our author takes a more special defence than the above — alleging that he is not guilty, like his predecessor, Walton, of using living baits, but always employs the artificial fly or minnow. This is, undoubtedly, more

agreeable, more cleanly, and much more scientific. He also urges that, in all probability, fishes are less sensitive than man. Under the favour of such high authority, this is a point which none can know but the fish himself. The variety of modes in which the trout endeavours to escape from the hook certainly seem to show that his apprehensions are extreme, and the hurry and vivacity of his motions indicate irritation and pain. Being, however, a denizen of another element, our sympathies are not so strongly excited by the sufferings of fish as of the creatures that share the same element with us. We remember an amiable enthusiast, a worshipper of Nature after the manner of Rousseau, who, being melted into feelings of universal philanthropy by the softness and serenity of a spring morning, resolved, that for that day, at least, no injured animal should pollute his board; and, having recorded his vow, walked six miles to gain a hamlet, famous for fish dinners, where, without an idea of breaking his sentimental engagement, he regaled himself on a small matter of crimped cod and oyster sauce. After all, the progress of extermination and reproduction seems to be the plan on which Nature proceeds in maintaining the balance amongst the animal tribes, and carrying on the system of the universe. Man, in his sphere, is one of the most constant exterminators; and if, in satisfying the instinct which impels him to be such, he can acquire the power of realizing the following beautiful picture, there is little to be said concerning the inhumanity of angling.

"The fisher for salmon and trout with the fly employs not only machinery to assist his physical powers, but applies sagacity to conquer difficulties; and the pleasures derived from ingenious resources and devices, as well as from active pursuit, belongs to this amusement. Then, as to its philosophical tendency, it is a pursuit of moral discipline, requiring patience, forbearance, and command of temper. As connected with natural science, it may be vaunted as demanding a knowledge of the habits of a considerable tribe of created beings — fishes, and the animals they prey upon, and an acquaintance with the signs and tokens of the weather and its changes, the nature of waters, and of the atmosphere. As to its poetical relations, it carries us into the most wild and beautiful scenery of nature; amongst the mountain lakes, and the clear and lovely streams that gush from the higher ranges of elevated hills, or that make their way through the cavities of calcareous strata. How delightful in the early spring, after the dull and tedious time of winter, when the frosts disappear, and the sunshine

warms the earth and waters, to wander forth by some clear stream, to see the leaf bursting from the purple bud, to scent the odours of the bank perfumed by the violet, and enamelled, as it were, with the primrose and the daisy; to wander upon the fresh turf below the shade of trees, whose bright blossom, are filled with the music of the bee; and on the surface of the waters to view the gaudy flies sparkling like animated gems in the sunbeams, whilst the bright and beautiful trout is watching them from below; to hear the twittering of the water-birds, who, alarmed at your approach, rapidly hide themselves beneath the flowers and leaves of the water-lily; and, as the season advances, to find all these objects changed for others of the same kind, but better and brighter, till the swallow and the trout contend, as it were, for the gaudy May-fly, and till, in pursuing your amusement in the calm and balmy evening, you are serenaded by the songs of the cheerful thrush and melodious nightingale; performing the offices of paternal love, in thickets ornamented with the rose and woodbine." — Pp. 8—10.

Before leaving this beautiful passage, in which the angler seems to contemplate nature with the eye at once of a poet and a philosopher, we may inform our reader, supposing him more ignorant than ourselves, that not all the love of rural scenery which is inspired by Walton — not all the instructions in practice which may be collected from this work, the composition of that far more illustrious successor, who has condescended to be his imitator, will ever make an angler out of one who is not gifted with certain natural qualifications for that amusement. No degree of zealous study will supply the want of natural parts. To "fish by the book" would be as vain an attempt as Master Stephen's proposal to keep his hawk on that principle.

There must be a certain quickness of eye to judge where the fish lies—a precision and neatness of hand to cast the line lightly, and with such truth and address that the fly shall fall on the very square inch of the stream which you aimed at, and that with as little splash as if it were the descent of the natural insect; there is a certain delicacy of manipulation with which you must use the rod and reel when (happy man!) you actually have hooked a heavy fish; all of which requisites must combine to ensure success. There are the same personal qualities requisite in shooting, billiards, and other exercises of skill, in the use of the turning-lathe, and, as no one knows better than the author of the present work, in the management of

philosophical experiments. If thou hast any of this species of alertness of band and truth of eye in thee, go forth, gentle reader, with “Salmonia” in thy pocket, and return with thy basket more or less heavy in proportion to thy perseverance. But if thou wantest this peculiar knack, we doubt if even the patience that is exercised in a punt above Chelsea bridge would greatly mend thy day’s work: though thy dinner depended upon it, thou mayest go on flogging the water from morning till midnight, entangling the hook now in a hush, now in a stem, now driving it through the nose of some brother of the angle, and now through thine own, hut not a fin wilt thou basket, whether of bull-trout or minnow; and thou must content thee with half the definition of the angler, and be the fool at the one end of the stick and string, without the gudgeon at the other.

Indeed, there always seemed to us something magical in this peculiar dexterity, which no chance or advantages of circumstances ever came to balance. The inequality between individual anglers exists to a degree which simple men will not be able to comprehend from a perusal of Salmonia. Halieus exhorts his less skilful companion —

“Try in that deep pool, below the Tumbling Bay; I see two or three good fish rising there, and there is a lively breeze. The largest fish refuses your fly again and again; try the others. There, you have hooked him; now carry him down stream, and keep his head high, out of the weeds. He plunges and fights with great force; — he is the best-fed fish I have yet seen at the end of the line, and will weigh more in proportion to his length. I will land him for you.” — P. 39.

Instant success follows on the adopting of the precept, but, general reader, do not hastily trust that it will be so in real life. We used sometimes to pursue the amusement with an excellent friend now no more, and we still recollect the mortifying distinction between his success and our want of it. With all the kindness and much of the skill of Halieus, he trained us to high adventure: — “Throw where yonder stone breaks the stream; there is a trout behind it” — we obeyed, and hooked the stone itself: “Let your fly fall light on the ripple” — we threw, and it fell with the emphasis of a quoit. Our Mentor gave us the choice of his flies, and relinquished in our favour even that which we had seen do instant execution. It seemed as if what in his bands had been a real, animated insect, the live child of heat and moisture, was disenchanted in ours, and returned to a clumsy composition of iron, wool, fur, and feathers. The changing from one to the other bank of the

stream in no respect mended the matter, and while trouts came wriggling to the shore as if our companion bad charmed them out of the river, we had nothing to struggle with except eel-weeds and alder-roots. In short, there was a spell in it, and we have our suspicions at this moment, that set a bucket of water before our comrade, he would have drawn out a fish, while we, angling in a duke's preserve, might have failed of catching a bane-stickle.

There are, however, those to whom this fatality attaches in a much greater degree than to us, who, after all, were not without having occasionally our lucky days; whereas all men have heard of the fisherman of the Eastern tale, whose persevering ill-fortune first fished up a pannier full of slime, next the carcase of an ass, and taking no warning by these omens, at last dragged out a genie who had like to have wrung his head off. We ourselves know a respected friend whose only attempts at angling were equally ominous with those of this Oriental. In his first experiment, he fished up the carcase of a drowned man; in the second his hook, indeed, was only entangled in the body of a horse, but, which perhaps equalized the two accidents, that horse proved to be his own. We have not heard of his making a third experiment, but we have no doubt that should he be unwise enough to attempt it, the result must be something portentous. Non cuivis, — therefore it is not every one who can pursue with success this delightful sylvan amusement; there must be, as Tony Lumpkin says, "a concatenation accordingly."

The work before us alarms us on another topic, or rather would have alarmed us, had we acquired the information contained in the following passage, during a more active period of our life. The party of anglers are seated at dinner, a scene which our author understands as well as he does the art of fly-fishing, or the more recondite mysteries of philosophy, and it is after a hearty meal upon fresh salmon, eaten with the salt and water it is boiled in, and some delicate snipes from a Highland morass, that one of the pleasant interlocutors, Ornither, makes a genial proposal for another bottle of claret, observing (most reasonably, as we should have thought, a priori,) that a pint per man (Scottish measure, we hope, for the scene lies on Loch Maree) was not too much after such a day's fatigue. To this motion, which we are afraid we might, in our rashness, have seconded, Halieus makes the following unexpected opposition: —

“Hal. — You have made me president for these four days, and I forbid it. A half-pint of wine for young men in perfect health is enough, and you will able to take your exercise better, and feel better for this abstinence How few people calculate upon the effects of constantly renewed fever in our luxurious system of living in England! The heart is made to act too powerfully, the blood is thrown upon the nobler parts, and with the system of wading adopted by some sportsmen, whether in shooting or fishing is delivered either to the hemorrhoidal veins, or, what is worse to the head. I have known several free livers who have terminated their lives by apoplexy, or have been rendered miserable by palsy, in consequence of the joint effects of cold feet and too stimulating a diet; that is to say, as much animal food as they could eat, with a pint, or perhaps a bottle of wine per day. Be guided by me, my friends, and neither drink nor wade. I know there are old men who have done both and have enjoyed perfect health; but these are devil’s decoys to the unwary, and ten suffer for one that escapes. I could quote to you an instance from this very county, one of the strongest men I have ever known. He was not intemperate, but he lived luxuriously, and waded as a salmon fisher for many years in this very river; bet before he was fifty, palsy deprived him of the use of his limbs, and he is still a living example of the danger of the system which you are ambitious of adopting.

“Oro. — Well. I give up the wine, but I intend to wade in Hancock’s boots tomorrow.

“Hal. — Wear them, but do not wade in them. The feet must become cold in a stream of water constantly passing over the caoutchouc and leather, notwithstanding the thick stockings. They are good for keeping the feet warm, and I think where there is exercise, as in snipe-shooting, may he used without any bad effects. But I advise no one to stand still (which an angler must do sometimes) in the water, even with these ingenious water-proof inventions. All anglers should remember old Boerhaave’s maxims of health, and act upon them; ‘Keep the feet warm, and the head cool, and the body open.’ “ — Pp. 102—104.

We before hinted that we have had our lucky days, and the most propitious time, both as to the size and number of trouts, were the hours before and after sunset upon the very warmest days of July and August. The large trouts which have lain hid during the whole day are then abroad, for the purpose of food, and take the fly eagerly. These moments,

"When the sun, retiring slowly,
Gives to dews the freshen'd air,"

are still alive in our recollection as green spots in the waste of existence. We recollect with what delight we entered knee-deep into the stream after the heat of a sultry day; the green boughs on the margin scarce waving a leaf to the balmy gale of the evening — the stream which glided past us almost alive with the object of our pursuit — the whole a mixture of animal enjoyment, gratified love of sport, with a species of mental repose which enhanced both. This delightful amusement was not to be obtained if, "like the poor cat in the adage," we spared wetting our feet; for the shallowness of the streams, as well as the branches of the trees, impeded our sport, if we could not reach the middle-current with our cast. Neither see we much cause to feel regret or remorse when we add that any little chillness which might arise from pursuing this fascinating sport too late in the evening, was effectually removed by a glass of right Nantz, Schiedam, or Glenlivet; which remedy, if the glass be not too large or filled a second time, we can with a good conscience recommend as a sovereign specific upon occasions of wet feet.

We will not, however, suppress evidence, though somewhat contradictory of our own, as we happen to recollect an anecdote corroborative of the view taken by Halieus concerning the risk of wading, and at the same time indicative of the passionate hold which the sport of angling maintains over the minds of some individuals, with whatever risk it may be accompanied. It is now a great many years (considerably above thirty) since we met in fishing quarters the very pleasing and accomplished gentleman, them engaged in his medical studies, from whom we heard the story.

In a former fishing excursion, such as that in which he was engaged at the time, our friend had observed a follower of the same sport holding his course down the very midst of the small river; and the angler in question was a "noticeable man." He was of uncommon stature — a large and portly figure, brandishing with both hands a rod which commanded the stream on either side — while, being immersed to the waist, his fair round belly seemed to project like a dark rock when in the shallow water, and in the deep current to rest and float on the surface of the waters like the hull of some rich argosy.

Our friend could not help looking back more than once at this singular figure, until he suddenly observed the angler quit the stream, get out upon the bank, and hasten towards him with shouts which seemed a signal of distress. On his closer approach, our medical friend observed that the countenance of the fisherman, naturally bluff and jolly, and not unfitted to correspond with the height of his stature and importance of his paunch, seemed disordered and convulsed with pain. He begged earnestly to know if our acquaintance had in his basket a flask with spirits of any kind, complaining, at the same time, of an attack of cramp in the stomachs which gave him intolerable agony. This was supplied, with all the benevolence which should subsist between brothers of the angle, according to the instructions of their patriarchs, Izaak Walton. When the tall fisherman had experienced the relief which the cordial drop afforded, our informer told him his profession, and inquired whether these attacks were frequent, and whether they seemed constitutional. "Very frequent," answered the lusty edition of Piscator, "and I am afraid rooted in my system." — "In that case, sir," replied our friend, "allow me to tell you that fishing, or at least wading while you fish, is the most dangerous amusement you could select for yourself." — "I know it," said the poor patient, dejectedly. "Assure yourself," pursued the physician, "that your very life depends upon your forbearing to pursue your sport in the manner you do." The intelligence seemed nothing new to our forlorn angler. "I know it, sir," he said, "I have been told so by the best doctors — but," he added, with am air of stoical yet rueful resignation, that might have graced a man who sacrificed life to some weighty duty, "Heaven's will be done! I cannot live without fishing, and without wading I can never catch a fin." So saying, the Giant thanked his adviser, went back to the spot where he had left his rod, and was seen a few minutes afterwards bowel-deep in the stream.

Our friend had the curiosity to inquire after the name and condition of this devoted angler, to whom life was nothing without wading waist-deep after trouts. In the course of the year he saw his death announced by the newspapers. He was found dead on the banks of his favourite stream — nota-bene, no brandy-flask. Halieus and we ourselves have each a portion in this sad story, and may part stakes upon it; for while he fortifies his doctrine concerning wet feet by this doleful example, we are entitled to hang a label, with sic evitabile, round the neck of a certain vade mecum, which John

Bunyan allows even to pilgrims, and without which, in our humble opinion, no wanderer ought to walk the world.

Indeed, after all, we have difficulty in separating our pleasant recollections of the exercise of fishing from the green bank where we rendezvoused at noon — our slice of cold beef and a gentle flirtation which we held with that same flask, after the manner of the cavaliers of Cervantes and the picaros of Gil Blas. So, perhaps, we do not after all possess the genuine admiration of the sport itself, abstractedly considered; and the want of this undivided ardour may he at once the cause and the consequence of the imperfect progress we have made in the art. This at least all the world, and the subjects of our criticism in particular, will be ready to verify, that our indifferent success cannot arise from any want of equanimity and good nature. — We must recollect, however, that we are taking the privilege of a sportsman, to which we are by no means entitled, and prating about our exploits and recollections of field sports, while our readers have no game to eat by way of indemnification. The fact is, that whenever we "babble of green fields" we feel a tendency to lose our way. We will, however, endeavour to proceed more methodically his future, and to give something like a general account of "Salmonia," before proceeding further with our miscellaneous remarks.

The book is confessedly written in the conversational form and discursive style of old Izaak Walton, whose Complete Angler, augmented with a second part, has long been a standard work of our language; and has passed through so many editions, as to ascertain its undiminished attractions, in spite of the fashion of all things that passes away. The form of both works is the same in the outline. In each, a zealous fisher is the Coryphæus of the dialogue, who replies to the objections made to his art by a friend who has prejudices against the pursuits of the angler — confutes him by reasons, introduces him to the practice of the art which he had vindicated in theory — teaches him the secrets upon which success depends, and familiarizes him with those innocent accessory pleasures which render the simplest and most accessible of country sports the most agreeable also to a person of calm and contemplative habits.

In comparing the two treatises, the authors occur to our imagination as pilgrims bound for the same shrine, resembling each other in their general habit — the scalloped hat, the dalmatique, and the knobbed and spiked staff — which equalize all who assume the character: corresponding no less in

the humble mien, and unpretending step, with which they approach the object of their common reverence, and sympathizing also in the feeling of devotion which, for the time, lessens all temporal distinctions, whether resting upon distinction of rank or difference of intellect. Yet though alike in purpose, dress, and demeanour, the observant eye cam doubtless discern an essential difference betwixt those devotees. The burgess does not make his approach to the shrine with the stately pace of a knight or noble; the simple and misinformed rustic has not the contemplative step of the philosopher, or the quick glance of the poet. There is, in short, something of individuality in each personage, which distinguishes advantageously or otherwise, in spite of the circumstances of general resemblance.

The palm of originality, and of an exquisite simplicity, which cannot, perhaps, be imitated with entire success, must remain with our worthy patriarch, Izaak. But, on the other hand, his incalculably more limited range of experience of every kind, has, after his first voyage of discovery, left a huge continent of terra incognita for our modern to make the scene of further discoveries, and, though holding the same course, to introduce us to regions of which his predecessor did not even know the existence. This concordia discors, which gives us the power of comparing the habits of remote times, the ideas and sentiments of persons so strongly contrasted, and treating the same subject in such different style — forms one of the charms of this book, and, at the same time, makes us look back to old Izaak's with additional interest.

Izaak Walton, a London citizen of the middle of the seventeenth century, does not aspire above his sphere in any particular. His walks are to Finsbury, and up Tottenham Hill; his farthest excursions, even in pursuit of his favourite amusement, only reach Ware and Waltham; his diversion, when there, is the drowsy watching of the immersion of a cork and a quill; and almost all his ideas confined to baits of lob-worms and live maggots. This picture is of a most cockney-like character, and we no more expect Piscator to soar beyond it, and to kill, for example, a salmon of twenty pounds weight with a single hair, than we would look to see his brother linendraper, John Gilpin, leading a charge of hussars. What is there, we ask, that relieves the low character, we had almost said the vulgarity, of a picture so little elevated and so homely? It is the exquisite simplicity of the good old man, enjoying tranquillity in his own mind, and breathing benevolence to all around him, and expressing himself with such a graceful ease, that the

London shopkeeper dapping for chubs, acquires the veneration due to a Grecian philosopher, within whose cheerful heart, to use an expression of his own, wisdom, peace, patience, and a quiet mind did cohabit. *

* We cannot resist the temptation to transcribe some sweet verses introduced in the first dialogue of Salmonia, the contribution of a lady, whose elegant genius adorns her high rank: — "A noble lady (says Halieus,) long distinguished at court for preeminent beauty and grace, and whose mind possesses undying charms, has written some lines in my copy of Walton, which, if you will allow me, I will repeat to you.

" 'Albeit, gentle Angler, I
Delight not in thy trade,
Yet in thy pages there doth lie
So much of quaint simplicity,
So much of mind,
Of such good kind,
That none need be afraid,
Caught by thy cunning bait, this book,
To be ensnared on thy hook.

" 'Gladly from thee, I'm lured to hear
With things that seem'd most vile before,
For thou didst on poor subjects rear
Matter the wisest sage might hear.
And with a grace,
That doth efface
More labour'd works, thy simple lore
Can teach us that thy skilful lines,
More than the scaly brood confines.

" 'Our hearts and senses too, we see,
Rise quickly at thy master hand,
And ready to be caught by thee
Are lured to virtue willingly.
Content and peace,
With health and ease,
Walk by thy side. At thy command

We bid adieu to worldly care,
And join in gifts that all may share.

“ ‘Gladly, with thee, I pace along,
And of sweet fancies dream;
Waiting till some inspired song,
Within my memory cherish’d long,
Comes fairer forth,
With more of worth;
Because that time upon its stream
Feathers and chaff will bear away,
But give to gems a brighter ray.’ “ — *S.*

Our modern Piscator is of a different mould, one familiar equally with the world of books and those high circles in society, which, in our ago, aristocratically closed against the pretensions of mere wealth, open so readily to distinguished talents and acquirements. His range, therefore, both of enjoyment and of instruction, is far wider than that of Walton.

The latter carries us no farther than the brooks within a short walk of London, though his rich vein of poetical fancy renders their banks so delightfully rural, by seating himself and his scholar under a honeysuckle hedge during a soft shower, there to sit and sing while gentle rain refreshed the burning earth, and gave a yet sweeter smell to the lovely flowers that embroidered the verdant meadows. Halieus, on the contrary, transports us to the ornate scenes of Denham upon the Colne, where the river is strictly preserved within the park of a wealthy and hospitable proprietor, and gives us the following picturesque description, as a contrast to the unadorned meadows of the Lea.

“Poiet. — This is really a very charming villa scene, I may almost say, a pastoral scene. The meadows have the verdure which even the Londoners enjoy as a peculiar feature of the English landscape. The river is clear, and has all the beauties of a trout stream of the larger size, — there rapid, and here still, and there tumbling in foam and fury over abrupt dams upon clean gravel, as if pursuing a natural course. And that island, with its poplars and willows, and the flies making it their summer paradise, and its little fishing-house, are all in character; and, if not extremely picturesque, it is at least a

very pleasant scene, from its verdure and pure waters, or the lovers of our innocent amusement' — Pp. 21, 22.

This Italian and ornamental species of landscape may he compared advantageously with a voyage down a Highland lake, a scene which never disturbed Walton's quiet thoughts even in a dream.

"Poiet. — That cloud-breasted mountain on the left is of the best character of Scotch mountains: these woods, likewise, are respectable for this northern country. I think I see islands, also, in the distance: and the quantity of cloud always gives effect to this kind of view; and, perhaps, without such assistance to the imagination, there would be nothing even approaching to the sublime in these countries; but cloud and mist, by creating obscurity, and offering a substitute for greatness and distance, give something of an Alpine and majestic character to this region." — P. 82.

In the continuation of this description, our modern, by what painters call an accident, enlivens his still scenery with a touch of science and painting at once, far beyond the limited sphere of father Walton. The latter has done all that his extent of travel and experience could suggest, when he has taught us to listen to a "friendly contention between the singing birds in an adjacent grove, and the echo whose dead voice lived in a hollow tree near to the top of a primrose-hill" or shown us how to beguile time "by viewing the harmless lambs seen leaping securely in the cool shade, while others sported themselves in the cheerful sun, or craved comfort from the swollen udders of their bleating dams." The modern author, in a wild land, calls our attention to a far less usual phenomenon, and describes the flight of an eagle, and the education of its callow brood, with the pencil of a Salvator Rosa, and the accuracy of a Gilbert White.

"Poiet. — The scenery improves as we advance nearer the lower parts of the lake. The mountains come higher, and that small island or peninsula presents a bold craggy outline; and the birch wood below it, and the pines above, make a scene somewhat Alpine in character. But what is that large bird soaring above the pointed rock, towards the end of the lake? Surely it is an eagle?

"Hal. — You are right, it is an eagle, and of a rare and peculiar species — the grey or silver eagle, a noble bird! From the size of the animal it must be the female; and her aery is in that high rock. I dare say the male is not far off.

“Phys. — I think I see another bird, of a smaller size, perched on the rock below, which is similar in form.

“Hal. — You do: it us the consort of that beautiful and powerful bird and I have no doubt their young ones are not far off.

“Poiet. — Look at the bird! She dashes into the water, falling like a rock and raising a column of spray; she has fallen from a great height. And now she rises again into the air. What an extraordinary sight!

“Hal. — She us pursuing her prey, and is one of our fraternity, — a catcher of fish. She has missed her quarry this time, and has moved further down towards the river, and falls again from a great height. There! You see her rise with a fish in her talons.

“Poiet. — She gives an interest which I hardly expected to have found, to this scene. Pray are there many of these animals in this country?

“Hal. — Of this species I have seen but these two; and I believe the young ones migrate as soon as they can provide for themselves; for this solitary bird requires a large space to move and feed in, and does not allow its offspring to partake its reign, or to live near it. Of other species of the eagle, there are some in different parts of the mountains, particularly of the Osprey, and of the great fishing or brown eagle; and I once saw a very fine and interesting sight in one of the crags of Ben Weevis, near Strathgarve, as I was going, on the 20th of August, in pursuit of black game. Two parent eagles were teaching their offspring — two young birds — the manœvres of flight. They began by rising from the top of a mountain in the eye of the sun (it was about mid-day, and bright for this climate.) They at first made small circles, and the young birds imitated them; they paused on their wings, waiting till they had made their first flight, and then took a second and larger gyration, — always rising towards the sun, and enlarging their circle of flight so as to make a gradually extending spiral. The young ones still slowly followed, apparently flying better as they mounted. And they continued this sublime kind of exercise, always rising, till they became mere points in the air, and the young ones were lost, and afterwards their parents, to our aching sight. But we have touched the shore, and the lake has terminated: you are now on the river Ewe.” — Pp. 84—56.

In like manner our ancient Piscator’s habits make us acquainted with the snug honest English alehouse, where they find a cleanly room, sweet briers and honeysuckles peeping into the windows, and Chevy Chace, the Children in the Wood, the Spanish Lady’s Lore, and twenty ballads more,

stuck about the walls; where the landlady is tidy, and handsome, and civil; where they dress a chub so admirably as to equal a trout, and wash him down with a modest cup of the best homebrewed; where they tell tales, sing songs, or join in a catch, or find some other harmless sport to content them without offence to God or man, until it is time to occupy a bed where the linen looks white, and smells of lavender. Halieus and his company repose themselves, on the contrary, in the elegant villas of Denham or Downton, or the lordly castles of Inverara or Dunrobin, partake of chère exquise, and give philosophic rules for the practice of Apicius. Or else the sportsmen are the romantic inhabitants of some Irish cabin or Scotch bothy, where they dress their own salmon with sauce à la Tartare, and dilute it with mountain dew and claret cooled in the next spring.

And here, lest we be accused of passing over the most interesting and edifying passage of the volume, we will communicate to the curious gastronome, a circumstance of which, if his travels have been as limited as those of Izaak Walton, we suspect he is not aware. The salmon exposed to sale in London, in however excellent condition, very, very rarely is, or can be had in what those who inhabit the banks of a salmon-stream account the first perfection. Halieus gives us the following tempting account of the proper preparation of the fish, where extraordinary attention is employed. It succeeds an account of hooking and playing a salmon in Loch Maree.

"Hal. — He seems fairly tired: I shall bring him in to shore. Now gaff him; strike as near the tail as you can. He is safe; we must prepare him for the pot. Give him a stunning blow on the head to deprive him of sensation, and then give him a transverse cut just below the gills, and crimp him by cutting to the bone on each side, so as almost to divide him into slices; and now hold him by the tail that he may bleed. There is a small spring, I see, close under that bank, which I dare say has the mean temperature of the atmosphere in this climate, and is much under 50¶ — place him there, and let him remain for ten minutes, and then carry him to the pot, and let the water and salt boil furiously before you put in a slice, and give time to the water to recover its heat before you throw in another, and so with the whole fish, and leave the head out and throw in the thickest pieces first." — Pp. 94, 95.

This receipt reminds us of the various kettles of fish, technically so termed, and dressed after the recipe of Halieus, which we have partaken of, fronde super riridi, near the ruins of Tilmouth Chapel, finding, when we had

fair companions, some subject for wit from the Wishing Well where Saint Cuthbert is supposed to indulge with a grant of their desires the votaries who drink of his spring with due devotion to his sanctity. There we enjoyed ourselves

> Where none was unwilling, and few were unable,
> To sing a wild song, or to tell a wild tale.

But as our patriarch Walton says, "these companions are gone, and with them many of our pleasant hours, even as a shadow that passes away and returns not." The rationale of this mode of cookery is thus explained by Halieus.

"Poiet. — I am endeavouring to find a reason for the effect of crimping and cold in preserving the curd of fish. Have you ever thought on this subject?

"Hal. — Yes: I conclude that the fat of salmon between the flakes, is mixed with much albumen and gelatine, and is extremely liable to decompose, and by keeping it cool the decomposition is retarded, and by the boiling salt and water, which is of a higher temperature than that of common boiling water, the albumen is coagulated, and the curdiness preserved. The crimping, by preventing the irritability of the fibre from bring gradually exhausted, seems to preserve it so hard and crisp, that it breaks under the teeth; and a fresh fish not crimped is generally tough." — Pp. 97, 98.

Before quitting a subject which many may think one of the most interesting in our article, there may be some comfort for those who cannot put on the pot so soon as the fish is hooked, in reflecting, that the taste for crimped fish, dressed as above, is not universal. We have known strangers who had not been accustomed to eat salmon thus prepared, object to the curdy fish as poor and hard, and greatly approve of the same salmon when he had been kept for a day or two, until the curd dissolved into oil, and gave a richer taste to the flakes betwixt which it lay. The same mess will not please every palate. But the crimped fresh salmon is the natural taste, nor should it be eaten with any other sauce than a spoonful of the salt and water, or brine in which it has been boiled, with the addition of a little lemon-juice or (if that cannot be had) vinegar and pepper.

Of the risks and dangers which attend angling, (to continue the contrast between the two works,) Walton, too peaceful and grave a person to seek

quarrels, and whose travels led him to no haunts where they were to be found without seeking, has but little to show. Some distant hint is thrown out, we believe, on the risk of encountering that Giant Despair of a sportsman's pilgrimage, an ungracious and untractable gamekeeper, and Father Izaak talks rather feelingly, though we trust not from personal experience, of the harmless angler having his shoulders basted, his fish seized, and his rod broken by some such merciless faitour. Halieus and his brethren were protected from every risk of that kind. The name of their leader must have been an open sesamum to the most jealous preserves, and a quietus to the Cerberus who guarded them. Yet that the sport of his characters might not altogether want the dignity of danger, we are treated with an encounter between a Highland dunnie-wassail and the fishing party, which the civility of the Southrons brings to a happy termination. The anecdote is well told, and we have little doubt, from the truth of the keeping, that the scene has been sketched from life.

"Hal. — Now I will wager ten to one that this pool has been fished before to day.

"Orn. — By whom?

"Hal. — I know not; but take my wager, and we will ascertain.

"Orn. — I shall ascertain without the wager if possible. See, a man connected with the fishing advances, let us ask him. There you see; it has been fished once or twice by one who claims without charter the right of angling."

Their rival soon after appears: —

"Hal. — But our intrusive brother angler (as I must call him,) is coming down the river to take his evening cast. A stout Highlander, with a powerful tail, or, as we should call it in England, suite. He is resolved not to be driven off, and I am not sure that the laird himself could divert him from his purpose, except by a stronger tail and force of arms; but I will try my eloquence upon him. 'Sir, we hope you will excuse us for fishing in this pool, where it seems you were going to take your cast; but the Laird has desired us to stand in his shoes for a few days, and has given up angling while we are here; and as we come nearly a thousand miles for this amusement, we are sure you are too much of a gentleman to spoil our sport; and we will take care to supply your fish-kettle while we are here morning and evening and we shall send you, as we hope, a salmon before night.'

“Poiet. — He grumbles good sport to us, and is off with his tail: you have hit him in the right place He is, I am sure, a pot fisher, and somewhat hungry and provided he gets the salmon does not care who catches him!

“Hal. — You are severe on the Highland gentleman, and I think extremely unjust. Nothing could be more ready than his assent, and a keen fisherman must not be expected to be in the best possible humour when he believes he has a right, and which perhaps he generally enjoys without interruption, taken away from him by entire strangers.” — Pp. 90-93.

Our readers will, by this time, probably be of opinion that, upon the general comparison of the works, the elder worthy author has not greatly anticipated or forestalled the work of our contemporary. Far less will this appear to be the case, when we consider the two manuals, whether with reference to the practical art of which they treat, or the philosophical, scientific, and general observations which accompany both. On the first of these we have already given an opinion. It is probable that honest Izaak knew nothing even of fly-fishing of any kind save what he learned, by report, from Cotton or others; and as for salmon, we question if he ever saw one entire, unless it were upon a fishmonger’s stall. Now, salmon-fishing is to all other kinds of angling as buck-shooting to shooting of any meaner description. The salmon is, in this particular, the king of the fish. It requires a dexterous hand and an acute eye to raise and strike him, and when this is achieved the sport is only begun, at the point where, even in trout angling, unless in case of an unusually lively and strong fish, it is at once commenced and ended. Indeed, the most sprightly trout that ever was hooked shows mere child’s play in comparison to a fresh-run salmon. There is all the difference which exists between coursing the hare and hunting the fox. The pleasure and the suspense are of twenty times the duration — the address and strength required infinitely greater — the prize, when attained, not only more honourable, but more valuable. The hazards of failure are also an hundredfold multiplied: the instinct of the salmon lends to the most singular efforts to escape, which must be met and foiled by equal promptitude on the part of the angler. However that faculty is acquired, the salmon seems, when hooked, at once to conceive the nature of its misfortune, and to follow the mode of disentangling itself most likely to be successful. For this it makes the most extraordinary efforts, sometimes shooting off with fury that is apparently irresistible among such boiling currents and sharp rocks as seem most like to cut the line — sometimes

lying at the bottom of the pool with the appearance of sullen indifference, as if nothing could rouse him. In the first case, it is the business of the angler to hold the fish in play, amid his wildest frolics using him as a prudent father does an extravagant son, neither allowing him so much line as may enable the youth to shake himself clear of the paternal restraint which hangs so loose on him, or curbing so tight as to induce him to break through it by a sudden effort of sturdy opposition. In the salmon's wildest vagaries he must be made to feel that there is a secret restraint on his motions, which yet must never amount to such a dead pull upon him as may be encountered and overcome by an attempt to break the line by main force. His sullen fits are no less to be dreaded. When the fish lies at the bottom of a pool, motionless and sulky as if he were a stone, the angler must summon together his utmost vigilance, for he is certainly collecting his strength for some decisive exertion. If the sportsman, growing impatient, tightens the line upon the fish while he is in this condition, his victim will probably spring into the air with his whole force, with the obvious purpose of throwing his body on the line in his descent, and so either breaking it or dislodging the hook. Should he succeed in falling with his whole weight on a tightened line, all is over; the best of hooks and most trusty gut must, one or other, or both, give way. But if the angler be sufficiently on his guard, he will throw downward the point of his rod with the quickness of thought, and drop his line on the water, the instant the fish makes his summerset, so that his weight may descend on the water and on a slackened line, which the promptitude of the angler must instantly, by raising his rod and using his reel, again contract to the necessary tightness, leaving the fish not an instant to profit by the momentary relaxation. This manœuvre we have seen the same fish renew three times running, foiled in every attempt by the acuteness of an excellent fisherman, who gave way to his fury, and instantly recovered the command of his motions when he had eluded the emphasis of his flurry.

But we should overpower the patience of all, save brethren of the angle, were we to prosecute our description of this noble sport. We cannot help adding that although, as ordinarily practised, it is the exercise of a strong and robust man, yet, by help of a boat, it may in many situations be followed even by the aged and infirm, if possessed of the requisite skill; and so much does dexterity supply the want of bodily strength, that we have

known a gentleman, in a very weak state of health at the time, kill a fish of twenty pounds' weight after playing him for an hour.

The delight afforded by success in this animating sport is of most engrossing character, and has had many illustrious devotees. It was Trajan's favourite pastime — it was, in our own time, Paley's and Nelson's; * and we have ourselves seen the first

* The author of Salmonia mentions Nelson's fondness for fly-fishing, and expresses a wish to see it noticed in the next edition of "that most exquisite and touching life of our hero by the Laureate, an immortal monument raised by genius to valour." We believe neither Halieus nor the Laureate will be displeased with the following little anecdote, from a letter of a gentleman now at the head of the medical profession, with which he favoured us shortly after perusing Salmonia. "I was (says our friend) at the Naval Hospital at Yarmouth, on the morning when Nelson, after the battle of Copenhagen (having sent the wounded before him,) arrived at the roads, and landed on the jetty. The populace soon surrounded him, and the military were drawn up in the marketplace ready to receive him; but, making his way through the crowd, and the dust, and the clamour, he went straight to the hospital. I went round the wards with him, and was much interested in observing his demeanour to the sailors: he stopped at every bed, and to every man he had something kind and cheering to say. At length he stopped opposite a bed on which a sailor was lying, who had lost his right arm close to the shoulder-joint, and the following short dialogue passed between them: — Nelson. 'Well, Jack, what's the matter with you?' Sailor. 'Lost my right arm, your honour.' Nelson paused, looked down at his own empty sleeve, then at the sailor, and said playfully, 'Well, Jack, then you and I are spoiled for fishermen — cheer up, my brave fellow.' And he passed briskly on to the next bed; but these few words had a magical effect upon the poor fellow, for I saw his eyes sparkle with delight as Nelson turned away and pursued his course through the wards. As this was the only occasion on which I saw Nelson, I may, possibly, overrate the value of the incident." — *S.*

sculptor in Europe when he had taken two salmon on the same morning, and can well believe that his sense of self-importance exceeded twentyfold that which he felt on the production of any of the masterpieces which have immortalized him. But, perhaps, no one has followed this fascinating amusement so far and in so many climates and countries as the

distinguished author of Salmonia himself. Without saying a word more on the subject of Walton — even Richard Franck falls far behind our modern worthy, although an angler and author who excelled old Izaak in experience and the advantage of distant travel, as far as he fell short of him in all the accomplishments of sense and style. This Franck, the self-entitled philanthropist, * who,

* The title of the curious work alluded to, is "Northern Memoirs, calculated for the Meridian of Scotland, wherein most or all of the Cities, Citadels, Seaports, Castles, Rivers, and Rivulets, *etc.* are compendiously described, *etc.* To which is added: The Contemplative and Practical Angler, by way of Diversion, *etc.* Writ in the year 1658, but not till now made publick, by Richard Franck, Philanthropus. Lond. 8vo, 1614." Reprinted, with Preface and Notes, by Sir Walter Scott, Edinb. 8ve, 1821. A notice of the work will be found in the Retrospective Review, vol. viii., pp. 170—194, and also in the Censura Literaria. — *Ed.*

to use his own phrase, "stepped into Scotland to rummage and rifle her rivers and rivulets — her northern torrents, which shone so splendidly in every fir wood — her diminutive hills, that overtopped he submissive dales, and overlooked rapid torrents and pretty purling, gliding brooks, where they polished rocks and embellished fortifications," did not at least venture out of Britain; whereas Halieus is not only familiar with the most remote streams and lakes of North Britain, but with those of Ireland, where the salmon fisheries flourish to a great extent, — nay, has followed his sport through most countries in Europe, and killed fish, the description of which makes an Englishman's mouth water, in rivers, the names of which set his teeth on edge.

The instructions and information imparted to anglers are, as we may believe, equally clear, authentic, and entertaining. The account of the fabrication of fish-hooks is highly interesting: the best, our author says, are made by O'Shaughnessy of Limerick. He mentions, also, those made at Keswick — to which, if they have not lost credit, we would add the hooks of the Llandales of Carlisle, who in our younger days had good reputation. We do not intend to enter more particularly into these technicalities; for, as one of Franck's eulogists says, —

"We are no fishers,
Only wellwishers

Unto the game."

The general tone of a moral teacher is so happily assumed by Walton that it appears a part of his nature. Halieus introduces such ethic lessons more sparingly, feeling, as we have before hinted, that that which is simplicity in an original author, becomes affectation in one who follows his footsteps. But though Walton had already said all that could be naturally and gracefully said on the subjects of temperance, humility, and unambitious peace of conscience, which are themes too monotonous to be repeated without satiety, as the sweetest melodies weary the ear upon frequent reiteration; yet Halieus and his companions do not shun such themes when they fall in their way. A debate takes place in their party, whether or not they should continue to pursue their amusement upon Sunday. The proposal is relinquished, on the anglers being assured that the people (the scene being in Scotland) would highly resent their doing so. But the dispute continues on the difference, in this particular, betwixt the Church of Scotland and that of Geneva, and other Protestant churches abroad, where the forenoon having been occupied in divine service, the evening is spent in dancing, singing, games, and sports of every description. The contest not being decided, leaves us room to express our own opinion on the subject, which we will do in as few words as possible:

If we believe in the divine origin of the commandment, the Sabbath is instituted for the express purposes of religion. The time set apart is the "Sabbath of the Lord;" a day on which we are not to work our own works, or think our own thoughts. The precept is positive, and the purpose clear. For our eternal benefit, a certain space of every week is appointed, which, sacred from all other avocations, save those imposed by necessity and mercy, is to be employed in religions duties. The Roman Catholic Church, which lays so much force on observances merely ritual, may consistently suppose that the time claimed is more than sufficient for the occasion, and dismiss the peasants, when mass is over, to any game or gambol which fancy may dictate, leaving it with the priests to do, on behalf of the congregation, what further is necessary for the working out of their salvation. But this is not Protestant doctrine, though it may be imitated by Protestant churches. He who has to accomplish his own salvation, must not carry to tennis-courts and skittle-grounds the train of reflections which ought necessarily to be excited by a serious discourse of religion. The

religious part of the Sunday's exercise is not to be considered as a bitter medicine, the taste of which is as soon as possible to he removed by a bit of sugar. On the contrary, our demeanour through the rest of the day ought to be, not sullen certainly, or morose, but serious, and tending to instruction. Give to the world one half of the Sunday, and you will find that religion has no strong hold of the other. Pass the morning at church, and the evening, according to your taste or rank, in the cricket-field or at the Opera, and you will soon find thoughts of the evening hazards and bets intrude themselves on the sermon, and that recollections of the popular melodies interfere with the psalms. Religion is thus treated like Lear, to whom his ungrateful daughters first denied onehalf of his stipulated attendance, and then made it a question whether they should grant him any share of what remained. We should do our readers and author the greatest injustice in concluding our reflections on this passage in any other than the words of the publication itself.

"Phys. — I envy no quality of the mind or intellect in others; not genius, power, wit, or fancy; but, if I could choose what would be most delightful, and, I believe, most useful to me, I should prefer a firm religious belief to every other blessing; for it makes life a discipline of goodness — creates new hopes, when all earthly hopes vanish; and throws over the decay, the destruction of existence, the most gorgeous of all lights; awakens life even in death, and from corruption and decay calls up beauty and divinity: makes an instrument of torture and of shame the ladder of ascent to paradise; and, far above all combinations of earthly hopes, calls up the most delightful visions of palms and amaranths, the gardens of the blest, the security of everlasting joys, where the sensualist and the sceptic view only gloom, decay, annihilation, and despair!" — P. 136.

We might quote other passages, not unworthy of this strain. The work, as we had occasion to observe already, was written during a slow recovery from a severe illness; and the tone of the dialogue reflects throughout what a good and great man's mind might be expected to exhibit under such circumstances. Serious thoughts may be expressed otherwise than in maxims. But we pass from this. If the modern author does not so frequently as Walton assume professedly the character of the moralist, it would, on the other hand, be absurd to compare poor Izaak with such assistants as Dubravius, Aldrovandus, Gesner, and other naturalists of the seventeenth century, with the remarks of a distinguished philosopher, who has, by his

own efforts, so widely enlarged the horizon of science, during the nineteenth century. A very great number of curious facts, concerning the natural history of fishes, are here recorded, and the high scientific character of the author of Salmonia is an ample pledge for their accuracy. Yet it is not to be expected that even this accomplished observer of nature should be able to clear up, in so brief a publication, the dark doubts which hang over many parts of the history of the salmo genus, through its various species. We observe that he displays the true spirit of philosophy in two most important particulars. He is never hasty in drawing general conclusions from individual facts, showing, by his modesty, that his object is the attainment of truth, not the desire to augment his own reputation by the display of ingenious theories. Indeed, standing so high in public estimation, as he deservedly does, no man can more easily afford to despise every species of favour which does not rest upon a genuine basis.

In like manner, we may observe that it is not sufficient to induce this acute investigator of science to discredit the report of a fact, that it has been rested by vulgar credulity upon erroneous grounds, since what is in itself true is often ascribed to false or absurd causes. The following passage, which concludes a train of remarks upon the superstitious belief in omens, coming, as it does, from the author of Salmonia, ought to impose a check on that vulgar incredulity which is disposed to disbelieve all which it cannot understand. The passage is highly philosophical.

"Phys. — In my opinion, profound minds are the most likely to think lightly of the resources of human reason; and it is the pert, superficial thinker who is generally strongest in every kind of unbelief. The deep philosopher sees chains of causes and effects so wonderfully and strangely linked together, that he is usually the last person to decide upon the impossibility of any two series of events being independent of each other; and, in science, so many natural miracles, as it were, have been brought to light — such as the fall of stones from meteors in the atmosphere, the disarming a thunder cloud by a metallic point, the production of fire from ice by a metal white as silver, and referring certain laws of motion of the sea to the moon, — that the physical inquirer is seldom disposed to assert, confidently, on any abstruse subjects belonging to the order of natural things, and still less so on those relating to the more mysterious relations of moral events and intellectual natures." — Pp.159, 160.

Among other curious phenomena, our author touches upon the strongly disputed character of the par, a small fish, whose appearance is as well known as his parentage and ultimate fate are unknown. From the boldness with which these Liliputian fish rise to a large salmon-fly, many have been disposed to see in the par the young salmon, when they have just quitted the form of spawn. One of the most experienced and scientific anglers of our acquaintance entertains this opinion of the identity between the par and the smoult of the salmon, from having observed that when the silvery scales are rubbed off the sides of the smoult they exhibit the blue, or olive-blush marks (see Salmonia, page 68,) which are considered as distinguishing the par. The same curious observer of Nature, has also remarked that the lens of the par's eye is arranged in the same manner with that of the salmon, and totally different from the lens of the Lochleven trout, herring, sperling, and so forth. Others are disposed to think the par a distinct species of trout; and the author of Salmonia, again, is inclined to agree with a third set of naturalists, who consider this little fish as a mule, the offspring of a trout and a salmon according to some, or rather of the sea trout and common trout. It is difficult for us to reconcile the fact of their being found in such great numbers with the theory of their being of a neutral race.

There are other curious points of investigation. Experiments on the trouts of every species, show, as the author observes (in p. 69,) that they change their character with their place of residence. We had ourselves occasion to put a number of small trout, of a very inferior description, into a pool which bad once been a marle-bog, but was flooded for the purpose of forming a piece of artificial water. They are now of large size, as red as those caught in Loch Leven, and of a rich taste, as we would be happy to show, from experiment, to Halieus, or any of his party, providing they will take the trouble to catch the fish, which, from being well-fed we suppose, defy all common skill.

The remarks on the various kinds of flies (p. 203,) on the migration of eels (p. 191,) on the grayling (p.165,) are all curious subjects, which must not, however, delay us.

We looked with some anxiety for a solution of the great doubt, what is the proper food of the salmon itself. No fisherman or cook that ever we saw or heard of, pretends to have found any thing in their stomach excepting a yellowish liquid. Yet they rise to artificial flies, and are also caught with bait. Our author conjectures that this phenomenon occurs because salmon

are usually caught travelling up the rivers from the sea, in which progress they do not load themselves with food. Their digestion, he observes, is very quick, and they seldom seek more food until what they have previously taken is decomposed. Salmon, when taken in the salt water, hare been found, says Halieus, with undigested food in their stomachs. This does not quite satisfy us. By far the greater part of salmon are taken by the net, which must, one would think, occasionally sweep out fish having their stomachs full, since their being taken in that manner has no reference to the state of their appetite. One would think, therefore, that let them be as abstemious as anchorites, they must eat sometimes, and be taken with food in their stomach; yet, we are assured, it never happens. It has also been remarked that the large gaudy fly to which the salmon usually rises, has no resemblance to any known insect in earth, air, or water (unless a wasp, perhaps,) and it has been suggested that the fish seems to take it rather from sport than from appetite; and, in that case, the very curious problem concerning the actual nature of their food, is not yet decidedly cleared up. At least, there is something very interesting and curious concerning the mode of their feeding, which seems so sparing, even when they are in the highest condition, and their process of digestion, which appears so unusually rapid.

Walton, as might be expected, is full of childish and absurd fables concerning those prodigies and miracles, in which superstitious eld was wont to believe. Our modern author places a microscope before us, instead of a magic lanthorn, and teaches us to look upon truth instead of amusing us with fiction. He has reviewed and disbanded the whole regiment of monsters which guarded the pages of Pontopiddan. Touched as with the spear of Ithuriel, the remains of a sea-snake appear those of a squalus maximus; the kraken, or island fish, is reduced into a compost of urticæ marinæ, or sea-blubbers; and, what we should least of all have suspected, the celebrated Caithness mermaid arises before us in the form of a stout young traveller, who has proved himself, by his journal, to have been bathing at the spot and time when the sea-nymph was seen, and who, while confessing some of the characters ascribed to the figure, denied the green hair and fishy tail as obstinately as Lady Teazle does the butler and the coach-horse. — Pp. 243—245.

But we are called from this, and other curious subjects of inquiry suggested in Salmonia, to consider a point of much more interest — the

question now being not what the salmon puts into its stomach, but whether we are likely, at no distant period, to have salmon for the benefit of ours. The very giants in Guildhall are moved at the surmise; Gog boweth down, Magog stoopeth, and the spirits of the fathers of the city wax faint at the suggestion. Yet the evil is not the less certain; and its approach is distinctly announced by Halieus, who, after recording former feats on the Tweed, Tyne, and other Scottish rivers, pronounces on each of them the melancholy conclusion fuit, and with good reason, as the reader will presently learn, declares they now afford much less sport to the angler, and even what remains is daily decreasing; so that there is very serious ground to fear that the salmon will erelong altogether desert the more southern, at least, of the Scottish rivers.

We need not tell our readers that the possession of immense quantities of this rich and valuable fish in her firths and estuaries was an advantage which nature allotted to Scotland, as some compensation, seemingly, for the great inferiority in soil and climate to the sister kingdom, since where the earth is most sterile the sea is often remarked to be most fruitful. Our northern neighbours seem to have been early aware of this national gain, and soon began to legislate for the preservation of the breed of this noble fish, as well as for the best mode of disposing of them for the general advantage of the country. Some of these statutes are so curious, that they are worthy of notice. The legislators of Scotland had observed the tendency of the fish, in the spawning season, to run up to the tops of the smallest brooks, and there deposit the spawn, destined for the continuation of the race, upon shallow beds of gravel. To assure them of a free passage and protection, the salmon species were declared into regalia or royal fish, nor did possession of either or both banks of the stream confer the right of taking them, even though the term fishings stood in the charter, unless the word salmon-fishings was expressly employed.

In order to obtain free passage for the fish at the spawning season, all dikes, dams, and weirs drawn across the river were directed to be constructed, with a breach in the centre for the run of the salmon, which breach was to be so large that a year-old hog might be turned round in it without touching the weir or damhead either with nose or tail. The whimsical nature of the measure adopted ascertains the antiquity of the regulation.

Another statute adopted in Scotland contains the very essence of that system of political economy, by which an anxious care for the prosperity of trade assumes into the hands of the legislators the power of directing commerce, and encumbers her with aid, where, left to her own exertions, she would make much more progress. In the year 1531, the Scottish legislature seemed to have become apprehensive that the persons who dealt in these exquisite fish might export them to their neighbours at too cheap a price; and they announce that in all time coming it shall be unlawful to export salmon, unless by such shippers as shall find security to bring home onehalf of the value in coined money, the other moiety in Bordeaux wine, or other good pennyworth. This last clause seems to relax greatly the dictatorial character of the statute, which, so mitigated, only imports that the Scottish trader should get for his cargo of salmon as good an equivalent as the foreign market would afford.

Notwithstanding the apprehension of the ruling powers, on the subject of the imprudent exportations of this staple commodity of poor Caledonia, the salmon continued to frequent their rivers, and though much was sent abroad to supply the Catholic countries during the period of Lent, plenty still remained at home, for the use of the inhabitants. Franck, the travelled angler already mentioned, tells us, that in his time a large well-fed salmon (suppose about twelve pounds) cost only sixpence; and he mentions what is still remembered by tradition, a rule that domestics were not to be fed on salmon more than three times a-week. It was, indeed, scarcely possible to procure so much excellent food at so cheap a rate; and we may easily understand the error of the Highland gentleman who, visiting London for the first time, indulged himself in the luxury of a beefsteak, but ordered Donald a cut of fresh salmon. The account of the reckoning must have afforded the honest dunnie-wassail no pleasing surprise.

But a capital like London is a Maelstrom — an immense whirlpool — whose gyrations sweep in whatever is peculiarly desirable from the most distant regions of the empire — so active becomes the love of gain when set in motion by the love of luxury. We recollect once being on shipboard to the north of Duncan's Bay Head, and out of sight of land, the nearest being the Feroe Islands: — we were walking the deck, watching a whale which was gamboling at some distance, throwing up his huge side to the sun, and sending ever and anon a sheet of water and foam from his nostrils. Our thoughts were on Hecla and on the icebergs of the Pole, on the Scalds of

Iceland and the Sea-kings of Norway, when a sail hove in sight: we asked what craft it was — and were answered, "a Gravesend brig dredging for lobsters." Never was enchantment so effectually broken — never stage-trick in pantomime more successfully played off. Scene changes from Feroe and Iceland to the Albion in Aldersgate Street — Exeunt Scald, champion, and whale — Enter common councilman, turbot, and lobster-sauce.

Thanks to that same omnipotent power of attraction possessed by wealth and luxury, the art of packing salmon in ice, for the London market, was perfected, thirty or forty years ago; since which time, as was to be expected, the fisheries have risen incalculably in value, the fish have become dear in proportion, and the natives of the countries through which salmon-rivers flow, become accustomed to see them taken and cased up for the great city, by scores and hundreds, without having it in their power to purchase a pound for their table. It followed as an unavoidable consequence, that more industry was exerted in the fishery, which now afforded so much more profit, and newer and more effective modes of entrapping the salmon were from day to day employed. The law, indeed, placed a certain check upon those proceedings, without which restraint the fish would scarcely ever be suffered to enter a tide river. The veneration due to the Sabbath, and the interest of the inhabitants on the higher part of the river, alike recommend that, from twelve o'clock at night on Saturday to the same hour on Sunday, the water should be free for the run of fish, — not only from the actual drawing of nets or other fishing operations, but from all bar-nets or similar obstacles thrown across the stream. Six-sevenths of the fish are therefore delivered up at the very outset to the proprietors of fisheries at the mouth of the river, whose nets are planted and managed with such dexterity, that they can, if they please, catch every single salmon that attempts to enter. While the fish are thus sought for, and destroyed at the mouths of the rivers, with ever-increasing avidity, inspired by decrease of the commodity, and increase of the demand, other causes are at work in the upper parts of the river where the salmon breed, which diminish the production of the fish, in a degree more than corresponding with the destruction of the full-grown fish beneath. Two of these causes are in full and active operation, threatening, in process of no distant time, the total destruction of the fish in all the southern salmon-rivers in Scotland.

One of these causes of destruction is the general system of drainage practised upon all the high pasture lands of the mountain farms, in a degree

unheard of in any former period, and which has produced, and is daily producing, the most complete change on the brooks and rivers which, twenty years since, were fed from morasses that are now dry pasture. Halieus alludes to this, in accounting for the diminution of the number of insects on which grayling, trouts, and other fish of estimation subsisted. We quote the passage at length: —

"I attribute the change of the quantity of flies in the rivers to the cultivation of the country. Most of the bogs or marshes which fed many considerable streams are drained; and the consequence is that they are more likely to be affected by severe droughts and great floods — the first killing, and the second washing away the larvæ and aurelias. Mayflies, thirty years ago, were abundant in the upper part of the Teme river in Herefordshire, where it receives the Clun: the are new seldom or rarely seen. And most of the rivers e! that part of England, as well as of the west, with the exception of those that rise in the still uncultivated parts of Dartmoor and Exmoor, are, after rain, rapid and unfordable torrent, and in dry summers little more than scanty rills. And Exmoor and Dartmoor, almost the only great remains of those moist, spongy, or peaty soils which once covered the greatest part of the highlands of England, are becoming cultivated, and their sources will gradually gain the same character as those of our midland and highly improved counties. I cannot give you an idea of the effects of peat mosses and grassy marshes on the water thrown down from the atmosphere, better than by comparing their effects to those of roofs of houses of thatched straw, as contrasted with roofs of slate, on a shower of rain. The slate begins to drop immediately, and sends down what it receives in a rapid torrent, and is dry soon after the shower is over. The roof of thatch, on the contrary, sponge like, is long before the water drops from it; but it continues dropping and wet for hours after the shower is over, and the slate is dry." — P. 63.

The author speaks of England, but we are equally sure of his testimony when we add, that in the more southern parts of Scotland the same causes and effects take place on a scale much more extensive, and affect the salmon more than the inferior kinds of fish. Small drains, formed with a peculiar spade, at a rate as low as a-penny a rood, have seamed, as it were, with numerous veins, the sides of the hundred hills, amongst which the Clyde, Tweed, Annan, and Nith have their sources. The morasses by which these hills were formerly covered, used to receive and retain, like sponges,

the quantities of rain which fall in that region of mists, and soaking from thence, by slow degrees, into rivulets and streamlets, they transmitted the moisture gradually to the main body of the river. The consequence was, that the rivers, slower in rising to flood, and slower in subsiding from that state, maintained, in general, a full and equable stream, permitting the salmon, at almost all times, to pursue their instinctive progress towards the upland sources. Halieus, so well acquainted with these localities, must remember well the manner in which fish used to come up to the upper streams in a course of showery, or, as it is there termed, soft weather, which, without producing an overwhelming torrent, rendered the river full enough to carry the salmon through every impediment. In these degenerate times, such showers are not felt on the river; hut when it is at all swollen, the water rushes down in an immense inundation, which forces the fish into pools and dams. The flood subsides as suddenly as it arose, and deserts the fish, who would otherwise have made a long and rapid journey, and supplied in their passage, the upper fisheries; whereas, at present, they remain in the places where they have been arrested by the flood, and never mount higher, being there killed with spears.

This cause of the destruction of the upper fisheries may, perhaps, find a remedy from some check being put to the system of indiscriminate drainage, which, in some respects eminently useful and even necessary, has been carried to an excess hurtful to the pasturage, to benefit which was the object of the practice. The original purpose of draining was most just and proper. The farmers of olden times were in use to lay numerous flocks upon their farms, trusting that the sheep (an animal of extraordinary endurance) would shift through the winter months, in an ordinary season, partly by scraping up the snow, and obtaining such coarse food as lies beneath, — partly by enduring want of food, with the patient and hardy habits which the animal is endowed with. But the consequence was, that spring found the flock in a weak and emaciated condition, and disposed to throw themselves eagerly upon the fresh and lushy grass, which first appears on the spring-heads and marshes which surround them. This rich and tender food, eaten in quantity by an animal in a state of exhaustion, was naturally calculated to produce a disease that swept off whole flocks, which, having survived the winter’s famine, were unfitted to gorge themselves, at once, on the spring-grass. Draining was in such circumstances highly advantageous. It prevents the existence of the grass which the flock could not feed upon with safety.

But in the present improved system of store-farming there is much more economy of animal life. Most tenants lay on the farm a less numerous stock, attend to giving them food during the severe storms of snow, and expect to bring them through winter in a healthy and hardy condition. To such the entire loss of the early spring-grass, afforded by the undrained bogs, is a heavy sacrifice. The species of grass which grows upon the drained lands, and especially near the drains themselves, is peculiarly destitute of sustenance, tough and unfit to be eaten by the sheep; and thus hundreds, nay thousands, of acres have been rendered sterile, whose former fertility only caused disease, because sheep were admitted to them when in a weak and unhealthy state. We have some reason to believe that this truth begins to be felt, and that judicious farmers (always maintaining the system of draining to a certain extent) may be now disposed to qualify its excess, and restore a part of their spring-heads to their natural character, observing, of course, a careful system of herding, which shall exclude from the dangerous food the weaker and more exhausted part of their stock. This would, of course, be attended with benefit to the fisheries by restoring a more equable state of the river.

The other main cause of the scarcity of salmon, and which threatens the total annihilation of the fisheries, rests on moral circumstances, for which it is far more difficult to find a remedy; for while erroneous practices may be corrected when the cure is to be applied to passive nature, it is almost impossible to remedy those evils which spring from the clashing interests, passions, and prejudices of mankind.

We have stated that the activity and success of the means adopted in the lower fisheries, and particularly at their outlets to the sea, by help of modern invention and industry, exerting itself to meet the increasing demand, have had a great effect in altogether intercepting the passage of salmon, during the lawful fishing season, to the upper parts of the river. Taking the Tweed for an example, there are now no fisheries above Kelso which afford any considerable rent to the proprietors. Those of Makerston, Mertoun, etc., are let for inconsiderable sums. The streams about and above Melrose, in which Halieus was so successful under the guidance of the late amiable and lamented Lord Somerville, are now of no value; and those at Yair Bridge, where within the memory of man ninety-nine salmon (we mark the exact number) were taken in one day, are now totally unproductive.

Were it not for the peculiar habits of the salmon, it might be justly argued, that the upper proprietors must submit to this loss as one incidental to their local situation, which gives them only a reversionary right in such fish as escape the nets of those placed lower down the river — which are now so very few, that scarce one occurs without bearing the mark of having encountered a mesh in his passage. But then it is to he considered that the upper streams are those in which the fish deposit their spawn, and that during the whole close-time or breeding season, when the salmon, by law, ought to be undisturbed, their safety, and that of the shoals which are to supply the demand of the next season, must rely upon the protection afforded them at that period. Accordingly, all nets and other obstructions are removed from the river, and the fish ought to be permitted to ascend to the very heads of the streams uninjured, for the purpose of depositing the spawn. The plain handwriting of Nature, as well as the regulation of municipal law, seems to prohibit the killing of the fish at this season, when they are said to be foul, are most uncomely to look upon, and even when smoked (the only mode of using them) are accounted a very unhealthy and deleterious food. The penalties are also very high, sufficiently so to prove totally ruinous to the class of persons by whom the laws of close-time are infringed. Yet neither the fears of punishment nor of poison have any effect in preserving the spawning fish, which are destroyed in the upper parts of the river, and the brooks and streams by which these are fed, with a degree of eagerness which resembles a desire to retaliate upon those who engrossed all the fish during the open season, by destroying all such as the close-time throws within the mercy of the high country. The proprietors or better class of farmers do not indeed partake in these devastations, but they witness them with perfect indifference, perhaps not without a sense of gratified revenge. As they neither have the amusement of angling, nor the convenience of a fish for their tables, when the salmon are in season, it is not of the least personal consequence to them whether the breed is preserved or destroyed, and they are as indifferent to it as a man who has no game of his own, is to the extent of poaching on a sporting squire’s manor.

The proprietors of the lower fisheries, the only persons whose purses are interested, may, indeed, prosecute offenders in the proper courts; but the country in which the spear and torch are so actively employed during the black-fishing, as this species of poaching is called, is wild, mountainous, and thinly inhabited, so that it is difficult to obtain such proof of

delinquency as is requisite for conviction. If water-bailiffs are sent from a lower part of the river, they must encounter, as strangers employed in an obnoxious office, much difficulty, and even danger. If they desire to engage officers within the district for this species of preventive service, the office will not be accepted by any with the purpose of discharging its duties with the necessary activity, in a case where the whole peasants of the country make common cause, and where the gentry are totally indifferent. It is only by enlisting these last in the cause, that a predominant authority, constantly exerted, might probably lessen this great evil. For two or three years after the last Tweed Act was passed, we believe the laws were better kept both at the mouth of the river and in the upper country. But, at present, the destruction of the spawning fish is universal, and, joined to the engrossing activity with which the fish are prevented from ascending in the lawful season, must necessarily compel the salmon to leave the river; for even the strong instinct which induces the salmon to return to the stream in which it was bred, will give way under such unremitting persecution as the river at present undergoes-while, to use a vulgar but expressive phrase, the two classes of persons inhabiting the upper and lower banks are "burning the candle at both ends."

Neither do the upper and lower heritors, as they are called in Scotland, play for equal stakes. It is true the occupation of Halieus and his philosophical companions is nigh lost in the upper districts. But the loss is that of sport merely; whereas that which may be suffered at the mouth of the river shall affect patrimonial interest, to the extent of several thousands a-year.

The most probable mode of redeeming these fisheries from almost sure ruin would, perhaps, be a compromise, by which the upper heritors should be admitted to share such a portion of the fish for their sport and their table as they formerly enjoyed — they, on the other hand, exerting themselves, as they have the means of doing, to prevent or punish those who transgress during close-time. But we have no expectation of such an agreement. If, for example, it were proposed to afford a free use of twentyfour hours per week, in addition to those already conceded between Saturday and Sunday night, it would probably be difficult to induce the inferior proprietors to sacrifice one-sixth part of their immediate weekly gains even for the probability of securing from destruction the fishery out of which these gains a rise. Or, indeed, if the proprietors of the lower fisheries took a more

expanded view of their own interests, and judged it worth while to make a partial sacrifice to preserve the whole, it might still be found difficult or impossible to reconcile their tenants, whose interest is of a temporary character, to submission to a loss which should affect their profit immediately, in order to secure the prosperity of the fisheries at a period when they might be let to other persons.

We are happy, therefore, that a sport which we have admired is recorded in Salmonia — where the descendants of those who have witnessed or shared it will read of it with the same feelings wherewith the present generation peruse accounts of the chase of red or fallow deer, wild boars or wild cattle,

"All once our own."

We must now conclude with the parting address of the Coryphæus of Salmonia to his party, p. 270.

"I have made you idlers at home and abroad, but I hope to some purpose; and I trust you will confess the time bestowed upon angling has not been thrown away. The most important principle perhaps in life is to have a pursuit — a useful one if possible, and at all events an innocent one. And the scenes yon have enjoyed — the contemplations to which they have led, and the exercise in which we have indulged, have, I am sure, been very salutary in the body, and, I hope, to the mind. I have always found a peculiar effect from this kind of life; it has appeared to bring me back to early times and feelings, and to create again the hopes and happiness of youthful days." *

* Sir Humphry Davy died at Geneva, on the 30th May, 1829, in his 51st year. Shortly after his death appeared his Consolations of Travel, or Last Days of a Philosopher—Ed.

ON PLANTING WASTE LANDS

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Education has been often compared to the planting and training up of vegetable productions, and the parallel holds true in this remarkable particular, amongst others, that numerous systems are recommended and practised in both cases which are totally contradictory of each other, and most of which can, nevertheless, be supported by an appeal to the fruits they have brought forth. It would seem to follow that the oak is more easily taught to grow, and the young idea how to shoot, than is generally allowed by the warm assertors of particular systems, and that Nature will, even in cases of neglect or mismanagement, do a great deal to supply the errors or carelessness whether of the preceptor or the forester. It would be wasting words, to set about proving that in both departments there are certain rules which greatly assist Nature in her operations, and bring the tree, or the youth, to an earlier or higher degree of maturity than either would otherwise have obtained. But we think it equally plain, that the rules which are found most effectual are of a very general character, and, when put into practice, must be modified according to the circumstances of each individual case; from which it results, that an exclusive attachment to the *minutiæ* of particular systems will, in many instances, be found worse than unnecessary.

To apply the maxim to the art of planting, we would remark, that there are certain general principles respecting planting, pruning, thinning, and so forth, without which no plantations will be found eminently successful, even in the most advantageous situations; and which, being carefully followed, in less favourable circumstances, will make up for many deficiencies of soil and climate. But on the other hand, there are many peculiar modes of treating plantations which, succeeding extremely well in one situation, will in another impede, rather than advance, the progress of the wood. Yet it frequently happens that these very varieties, or peculiarities of practice, are insisted upon, by those who build systems, as the indispensable requisites for success in every case. This leads to empirical doctrines of all sorts, which, perhaps, prevail more among planters than in any other department of rural practice. Such are, violent and exclusive

prepossessions entertained in favour of any particular kind of tree, how valuable soever; such are also the differences eagerly and obstinately maintained respecting particular modes of preparing the ground, and the precise season of putting in the plants. Such also, are some particular doctrines held concerning pruning. Upon all these points we find practical men entertain and express very opposite opinions, with as much pertinacity as if they had been handed down, in direct tradition, from the first of men and of foresters. The feuds arising from these differences of opinion have, as in the case of religion itself, been unfavourable to the progress of the good cause; and one of the most important of national improvements has been, in a great measure, neglected, because men could not make up their minds concerning the very best possible mode of conducting it.

We are far, very far, from supposing ourselves capable of filling up, by a general sketch, a summary of rules which may be useful to the planter, yet we claim some knowledge of the subject, from sixteen years' undeviating attention to the raising young plantations of considerable extent, upon lands which may be, in general, termed waste or unimproved. Indeed, to lay aside for a moment our impersonality, the author of this article having, in the course of that time, seen reason to change his opinion on many important points, and particularly upon those in which the expense of planting is chiefly concerned, takes the freedom to consider Mr. Monteath's useful and interesting treatise with reference to his own experience, and the facts which that experience has suggested.

Every one will own that the subject is of the most momentous interest to this country. It is long since the wisdom and patriotism of the late Lord Melville sounded the alarm on the subject of the decay and destruction of the national forests, announcing the immense increase of the demand for oak timber, the advance of the price of fir timber. the inadequacy of the present forests long to supply the increasing demand, and the apathy with which government omitted to provide for evils which seemed rapidly advancing, although the possibility of doing so appeared plain from his lordship's statement: —

"It is supposed that, exclusive of the royal forests, there are in Great Britain and Ireland, probably more than eighty millions of acres, of which, perhaps, no part is yet brought to the highest state of cultivation, and that certainly not less than twenty millions are still waste. If, therefore, a comparatively very small part of the land of the kingdom is thought

essential to be appropriated to the purpose of securing the continuance of our naval strength and pride, it would surely be a very shortsighted policy which should suggest to this maritime country the expediency of trusting to a commerce for the supply of our dockyards with timber; when, without any real risk to the subsistence of the country, and by a sacrifice, comparatively small, we can avoid for ever putting to hazard the supply of an article, on which, confessedly, our strength, our glory, our independence, even our existence as a nation, must now, and at all times depend." — Lord Melville's *Letter to* Mr. Percival, *on the subject of Naval Timber, published in July,* 1810.

While these facts are granted, it must at the same time, be admitted, that the time of peace is that in which we can best recruit the resources of the nation, and strengthen her sinews for future wars; and that at present, therefore, the country has few more important subjects of consideration, than those which refer to providing a stock of timber for future emergencies. A patriotic spirit, therefore, might be supposed sufficiently rewarded by preparing for the future conquests of the British navy, and for the ornament of his native land; covering sterile wildernesses with the most magnificent productions of the earth, and exercising, slowly indeed but surely, such a change on the face of nature, as the powers of mall cannot achieve in any other manner. Yet we cannot trust to such motives to overcome the inertness of many landholders: to induce them to part for a time with a portion of their yearly income, and be at the outlay of a very moderate sum per acre, we are aware that we must talk to them of pence as well as of patriotism, and indicate a certain return for their advances; since in preaching to them only on the subject of adding to the beauty of the landscape, or the prosperity of the country, we should expose ourselves to the answer of Harpagon to the eulogium of Frosine upon his mistress's perfections: " Oui; cela n'est pas mal; mais ce compte là n'a rien de réel. Il faut bien que je touche quelque chose. " We will, therefore, endeavour to convince those who lean to this view of the subject, that the increase of the value of their own rentals and estates is equally concerned in the considerations to which we invite them, as the interest of the country at large.

The subject naturally divides itself into plantations raised chiefly for the purpose of ornament, and those which are intended principally for profit. The division is not, however, an absolute one; nor is it possible, perhaps, to

treat of the subject in the one point of view, without frequently touching upon the other. No very large plantation can be formed without beautifying the face of the country (although, indeed, stripes and clumps of Scotch firs or larches may be admitted as deformities); and, on the other hand, the thinnings of merely ornamental plantations afford the proprietor who raises such a fair indemnity for the ground which they occupy. But, though this is the case, the two kinds of planting must be considered as different branches of the same art; and we will, accordingly, take leave to consider them distinctly, confining ourselves, for the present, as far as we can, to that in which utility is the principal object.

The most useful style of planting, that which can he executed at the least expense, and which must ultimately return the greatest profit, is that respecting large tracts of waste land, which, by judicious management, may be converted into highly profitable woodland, without taking from agriculture the value of a sheaf of corn, or even greatly interfering with pastoral occupation — so far as that occupation is essentially advantageous. For we suppose it will be admitted, that in any case where a stately and valuable forest can be raised by the restricting a few hundred score of sheep to better and richer pasture than they formerly enjoyed, great advantage will accrue to the landlord, and no loss will be sustained either by the tenant, or the poor animal, who, now picking up his grass by piles at a time in a howling wilderness, would then be better supported, and more free from accident of every kind.

The scheme of which we are about to show the easy practicability, if it be only undertaken boldly and upon a large scale, by the persons principally concerned, will be found as advantageous to the poor as the rich; providing for the over-population, as it is called, a hardy and healthful occupation, the object of which is the improvement of their native country, while the manner in which it is conducted is equally favourable to their comforts and to their morals. Neither are the landed proprietor and his dependents the only parties benefited. The cheapness and plenty of wood, as it is essential to our shipping, becomes, in that point of view, indispensable to our mercantile and manufacturing interests. But we feel ourselves, unintentionally, again drawn back to the public and political views, which it is almost impossible to separate from this great national subject: we will, therefore, proceed to enter upon it at once, cautioning our readers, that in repeating the truths which we have collected from others, and which have

been corroborated by our own experience, we do not pretend to more merit than that of acting as *flappers,* again to solicit the attention of the public and in particular of landed gentlemen, to this most important topic.

The hills of Wales — those of Derby, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Northumberland, and part of Yorkshire and Lancashire, together with the more extensive wastes and mountainous regions which compose by far the greater part of Scotland, have in general, the same character, presenting naked wildernesses of rock, and heath, and moorland, swelling into hills and mountains of greater or less elevation, and intersected by rivers and large lakes, many of them navigable: in short, pointed out by Nature as the site of lofty woods, with which, indeed, her own unassisted efforts had, at an early period, clothed them: for nothing call be more certain than that the sterile districts we have described were, in ancient times, covered with continual forests. History, tradition, and the remains of huge old trees and straggling thickets, as well as the subterranean wood found in bogs and mosses, attest the same indubitable fact. It is not to be supposed that these woods grew at very high points of elevation, on the brow of lofty and exposed mountains, and in the very face of prevailing winds; yet it is astonishing, when the declivities and dales of such a region are once occupied by wood, how very soon the trees, availing themselves of every shelter afforded by the depths and sinuosities of the glens and ravines which seam the mountain side, appear to have ascended to points of altitude where a planter would rationally have despaired of success.

These natural woods, however, have long, excepting in comparatively few instances, wholly ceased to exist. This has been owing to various causes. Extensive forests, occupying a long tract of tolerably level ground, have been gradually destroyed by natural decay, accelerated by the increase of the bogs. The wood which they might have produced was useless to the proprietors; the state of the roads, as well as of the country in general, not permitting so bulky and weighty an article to be carried from the place where it had grown, however valuable it might have proved had it been transported elsewhere. In this situation the trees of the natural forests pined and withered, and were thrown down by the wind, and it often necessarily happened that they fell into or across some little stream or rivulet, by the side of which they had flourished and decayed. The stream, being stopped, saturated with standing water the soil around it, and instead of being, as hitherto, the drain of the forest, the stagnation of the rivulet converted into a

swamp what its current had formerly rendered dry. The loose bog-earth, and the sour moisture with which it was impregnated, loosened and poisoned the roots of other neighbouring trees, which, at the next storm, went to the ground in their turn, and tended still more to impede the current of the water; while the accumulating moss, as the bog-earth is called in Scotland, went on increasing and heaving up, so as to bury the trunks of the trees which it had destroyed. In the counties of Inverness and Ross, instances may be seen, at the present day, where this melancholy process, of the conversion of a forest into a bog, is still going forward.

This, however, was not by any means the only manner in which the northern forests perished, although it may be in some sense accounted their natural mode of death.

From the time of Agricola and Severus, to that of Cromwell, the axes of the invading enemies were repeatedly employed to lay waste the forests, and thereby remove a most important part of the national defence. In this way, doubtless, woods which, standing on the banks of rapid streams, or upon declivities where the course of the water is not liable to be intercepted, were not subject to the causes of destruction by the increase of the morass, fell by violence, as in the former case they perished by decay.

Nature, however, would, with her usual elasticity, have repaired the losses which were inflicted by the violence of man, and fresh crops of wood would have arisen to supply the place of that which had been felled, had not the carelessness and wantonness of mankind obstructed her efforts. The forest of Ettrick, for example, a tract of country containing two hundred and seventy square miles, was, till Charles I.‘s time, reserved as a royal chase, and entirely wooded, except where the elevation of the mountains rendered the growth of trees impossible. In and about the year 1700, great part of this natural wood remained, yet now, excepting the copse woods of Harehead and Elibank, with some trifling remains on the banks of the Yarrow, it has totally vanished. We have ourselves seen an account of a sale of growing trees upon an estate in this district where the proceeds amounted to no less than six thousand pounds, a very large sum considering that the country was overstocked with wood, the demands for it confined to those of rural economy, and the means of transporting it extremely imperfect. There must have been a fall of large and valuable timber to have produced such a sum under such circumstances. The guardians of the noble proprietor, when they made the sale, seem to have given directions for enclosing the natural

wood, with a view to its preservation. Nevertheless, about seventy or eighty years afterwards, there was scarcely in existence, upon the whole property, a twig sufficient to make a walking-stick, so effectually had the intentions of the guardians been baffled, and their instructions neglected. It may be some explanation of this wilful waste, that a stocking of goats (of all other creatures the most destructive to wood) had been put upon the ground after cutting the trees. But to speak the truth, agriculture, as Mr. Shandy says of the noble science of defence, has its weak points. Those who pursue one branch of the art are apt to become bigoted and prejudiced against every thing which belongs to another, though no less essential, department. The arable cultivator, for example, has a sort of pleasure in rooting up the most valuable grass land, even where the slightest reflection might assure him that it would be more profitable to reserve it for pasture. The store-farmer and shepherd, in the same manner, used formerly to consider every spot occupied by a tree as depriving the flock of a certain quantity of food, and not only nourished malice against the woodland, but practically laboured for its destruction; and to such lamentable prejudices on the part of farmers, and even of proprietors, is the final disappearance of the natural forests of the north chiefly to be attributed. The neglect of enclosure on the side of the landlord; the permitted, if not the authorised, invasions of the farmer; the wilful introduction of sheep and cattle into the ground where old trees formerly stood, have been the slow, but effectual, causes of the denuded state of extensive districts, which, in their time, were tracts of what the popular poetry of the country called by the affectionate epithet of “the good green wood.” Still, however, the facts of such forests having existed, ought now, in more enlightened times, to give courage to the proprietor, and stimulate him in his efforts to restore the silvan scenes which ignorance, prejudice, indolence, and barbarism combined to destroy.

This may be done in many different ways, as taste and local circumstances recommend. We will first take a view of the subject generally, as applicable alike to the great chiefs and thanes possessed of what are, in the north called *countries,* *

* It is customary to say Glengarry’s country, MacLeod’s country, and the like, to indicate the estates of the great Highland proprietors. — S.

and to the private gentleman, who has three or four thousand moorland acres, or even a smaller property. We suppose the proprietor, in either case,

desirous to convert a suitable part of his estate into woodland, at the least possible expense, and with the greatest chance of profit.

The indispensable requisites which his undertaking demands are, 1st, a steady and experienced forester, with the means of procuring, at a moment's notice, a sufficient number of active and intelligent assistants. This will often require settlements on the estate, the advantage of which we may afterwards touch upon. If the plantations are to be on an extensive scale, it will be found of great advantage to have the labour of these men entirely devoted to the woods, since they afford various kinds of employment for every month of the year, especially where a great plan is in the progress of being executed, as reason dictates, by certain proportions every year. In such a case, enclosing, planting, pruning, thinning, and felling are going on successively in different parts of the estate in one and the same year; — and these are operations in all of which a good woodsman ought to be so expert as to be capable of working at them by turns.

2dly. The planter, in the situation supposed, ought to be possessed of one nursery or more, as near to the ground designed to be planted, as can well be managed. We have no intention to interfere with the trade of the nurseryman in the more level and fertile parts of the country. Where a proprietor means only to plant a few acres, it would be ridiculous to be at the trouble or expense of raising the plants. But where he proposes to plant upon a large scale, it is of the highest consequence that the young plants should stand for two or three seasons in a nursery of his own. Mr. Monteath recommends that such *second-hand nursery,* as he terms it, should be replenished with seedlings of a year or two years old, from the seed-beds of a professional nurseyman, justly observing that the expense and trouble attending the raising the plants from seed, — and, he might have added, the risk of miscarriage, — are in this way entirely avoided, while the advantages attained are equal to what they would have been had the plant been raised from the seed by the proprietor himself. On the other hand (though we have known it practised,) we would not advise that seedlings, any more than plants, should be carried from the neighbourhood of Glasgow to the Hebrides, or to distant parts of the Highlands. There is also this advantage, that by raising the trees from seed, the forester makes sure of getting his plants from the best trees — an article of considerable importance, especially in the fir tribes.

But whether the planter supplies his nursery from his own seed-bed or that of the professional man, the necessity of having a nursery of one sort or other continues the same. The advantages are, first, that the plants are not hastily transferred from the nurseryman's warm and sheltered establishment, to the exposed and unfertile district which they are meant to occupy, but undergo a sort of seasoning in the nursery of the proprietor, and become, in a certain degree, naturalized to climate and soil before they are, as it is technically termed, *planted out.* Secondly, the most mortifying and injurious interruptions, incident to the planter's occupation, are thus greatly lessened. It is well known that nothing can be so conducive to the success of a plant, as its being transferred instantly, or with the loss of the least possible interval of time, from the line which it occupies in the nursery, to its final station in the field. If it is to be sent for to a distant nursery, this becomes impossible. Besides, it frequently happens, when plants have been brought from a distance, that the weather has changed to frost before they arrive at the place of their destination, and there is no remedy but to dig them down into some ditch, and cover the roots with earth, and leave them in that situation for days and weeks, until the season shall again become favourable to the planter. If, on the contrary, the plants are supplied from the proprietor's own nursery in the vicinity, they need only be brought forward in small quantities at a time, and the pernicious and perilous practice of *sheughing,* as we have heard it called, is almost entirely avoided. It is, therefore, in all cases, a matter of high advantage, in many of actual necessity, that the proprietor who means to plant on a large scale should have a nursery of his own.

Thus provided with the material of his enterprise, and with the human force necessary to carry it into effect, the planter's next point is to choose the scene of operation. On this subject, reason and common sense at once point out the necessary restrictions. No man of common sense would select, for the purpose of planting, rich holms, fertile meadows, or other ground peculiarly fit for producing corn, or for supporting cattle. Such land, valuable everywhere, is peculiarly so in a country where fertile spots are scarce, and where there is no lack of rough, exposed, and at present unprofitable tracts. The necessary ornament of a mansion-house would alone vindicate such an extraordinary proceeding. Nay, a considerate planter would hesitate to cut up and destroy even a fine sheep-pasture for the purpose of raising wood, while there remained on the estate land which

might be planted at a less sacrifice. The ground ought to be shared betwixt pasture and woodland, with reference to local circumstances, and it is in general by no means difficult to form the plantation so as to be of the highest advantage to the sheepwalk. In making the selection the proprietor will generally receive many a check on this subject from his land-steward or bailiff, to whom any other agricultural operations are generally more desirable than the pursuits of the forester. To confirm the proprietor in resisting this narrowminded monitor, it is necessary to assure him that the distinction to be drawn betwixt the ground to be planted, and that which is to be reserved for sheep, is to be drawn with a bold and not a timid hand. The planter must not, as we have *often* seen vainly attempted, endeavour to exclude from his proposed plantation, all but the very worst of the ground. Whenever such paltry saving has been attempted, the consequences have been very undesirable in all respects. In the first place, the expense of fencing is greatly increased; for, in order to form these pinched and restricted plantations, a great many turnings and involutions, and independent fences, must be made, which become totally unnecessary when the woodland is formed on an ample and liberal scale. In the second place, this parsimonious system leads to circumstances contrary to Christian charity, for the eyes of every human being that looks on plantations so formed, feeling hurt as if a handful of sand were flung into them, the sufferers are too apt to vent their resentment in the worst of wishes against the devisers and perpetrators of such enormities. We have seen a brotherhood of beautiful hills, the summits of which, while they remained unplanted, must have formed a fine undulating line, now presenting themselves with each a round circle of black fir, like a skimming dish on its head, combined together with long narrow lines of the same complexion, like a chain of ancient fortifications, consisting of round towers flanking a straight curtain, or rather like a range of college caps connected by a broad black ribbon. Other plantations in the awkward angles, which they have been made to assume, in order that they might not trespass upon some edible portion of grass land, have come to resemble uncle Toby's bowling-green transported to a northern hill side. Here you shall see a solitary mountain with a great black patch stuck on its side, like a plaster of Burgundy pitch, and there another, where the plantation, instead of gracefully sweeping down to its feet, is broken short off in mid-air, like a country wench's gown tucked through her pocket-holes in the days when

such things as pockets were extant in *rerum naturâ.* In other cases of enormity, the unhappy plantations have been made to assume the form of pincushions, of hatchets, of penny tarts, and of breeches displayed at an old-clothesman's door. These abortions have been the consequence of a resolution to occupy with trees only those parts of the hill where nothing else will grow, and which, therefore, is carved out for their accommodation, with "up and down and snip and slash," whatever unnatural and fantastic forms may be thereby assigned to their boundaries.

In all such cases the insulated trees, deprived of the shelter which they experience when planted in masses, have grown thin, and hungrily, affording the unhappy planter neither pleasure to his eye, credit to his judgment, nor profit to his purse. A more liberal projector would have adopted a very different plan. He would have considered, that although trees, the noblest productions of the vegetable realm, are of a nature extremely hardy, and can grow where not even a turnip could be raised, they are yet sensible of, and grateful for, the kindness which they receive. In selecting the portions of waste land which he is about to plant, he would, therefore, extend his limits to what may be called the natural boundaries, carry them down to the glens on one side, sweep them around the foot of the hills on another, conduct them up the ravines on a third, giving them, as much as possible, the character of a natural wood, which can only be attained by keeping their boundaries out of sight, and suggesting to the imagination that idea of extent which always arises when the limits of a wood are not visible. It is true that in this manner some acres of good ground may be lost to the flocks, but the advantages to the woodland are a complete compensation. It is, of course, in sheltered places that the wood first begins to grow, and the young trees, arising freely in such more fertile spots on the verge of the plantation, extend protection to the general mass which occupies the poorer ground. These less-favoured plants linger long while left to their own unassisted operations, annoyed at the same time by want of nourishment, and the severity of the blast, they remain, indeed, alive, but make little or no progress; but when they experience shelter from the vicinity of those which occupy a better soil, they seem to profit by their example, and speedily arise under their wings.

The improver ought to be governed by the natural features of the ground in choosing the shape of his plantations, as well as in selecting the species of land to be planted. A surface of ground, undulating into eminences and

hollows, forms to a person who delights in such a task, perhaps the most agreeable subject of consideration on which the mind of the improver can be engaged. He must take care, in this case, to avoid the fatal yet frequent error of adopting the boundaries of his plantations from the surveyor's plan of the estate, not from the ground itself. He must recollect that the former is a flat surface, conveying, after the draughtsman has done his best, but a very imperfect idea of the actual face of the country, and can, therefore, guide him but imperfectly in selecting the ground proper for his purpose.

Having, therefore, made himself personally acquainted with the localities of the estate, he will find no difficulty in adopting a general principle for lining out his worst land. To plant the eminences, and thereby enclose the hollows for cultivation, is what all parties will agree upon; the mere farmer, because, in the general case, the rule will assign to cultivation the best ground, and to woodland that which is most sterile; and also, because a wood placed on an eminence affords, of course, a more complete protection to the neighbouring fields than if it stood upon the same level with them. The forester will give his ready consent, because wood no where luxuriates so freely as on the slope of a hill. The man of taste will be equally desirous that the boundaries of his plantation should follow the lines designed by nature, which are always easy and undulating, or bold, prominent, and elevated, but never either stiff or formal. In this manner, the future woods will advance and recede from the eye, according to and along with the sweep of the hills and banks which support them, thus occupying precisely the place in the landscape where nature's own hand would have planted them. The projector will rejoice the more in this allocation, that in many instances it will enable him to conceal the boundaries of his plantations, an object which, in point of taste, is almost always desirable. In short, the only persons who will suffer by the adoption of this system will be the admirers of mathematical regularity, who deem it essential that the mattock and spade be under the peremptory dominion of the scale and compass; who demand that all enclosures shall be of the same shape and of the same extent; who delight in straight lines and in sharp angles, and desire that their woods and fields be laid out with the same exact correspondence to each other as when they were first delineated upon paper. It is to be conjectured, that when the inefficiency of this principle and its effects are pointed out, few would wish to resort to it, unless it were a humorist like Uncle Toby, or a martinet like Lord Stair, who planted trees after the

fashion of battalions formed into line and column, that they might assist them in their descriptions of the battles of Wynendale and Dettingen. It may, however, be a consolation to the admirers of strict uniformity and regularity, if any such there still be, to be assured that their object is, in fact, unattainable; it is as impossible to draw straight lines of wood, that is, lines which shall produce the appearance of mathematical regularity, along the uneven surface of a varied country, as it would be to draw a correct diagram upon a crumpled sheet of paper, or lay a carpet down smoothly on a floor littered with books. The attempt to plant upon such a system will not, therefore, present the regular form and plan expected, but, on the contrary, a number of broken lines, interrupted circles, and salient angles, as much at variance with Euclid as with nature.

We are happy to say, that this artificial mode of planting, the purpose of which seems to be a sort of inscribing on every plantation that it was the work of man, not of nature, is now going fast out of fashion, both with proprietors and farmers. A gentleman of our acquaintance had, some years ago, the purpose of planting a considerable part of a farm of about one hundred and twenty acres, which lay near his residence. It rented at about twenty shillings per acre. The proprietor, rejecting a plan which was offered to him, for laying off the ground into fields resembling parallelograms, divided like a chess-board by thin stripes of plantation, went to work in the way we have mentioned above, scooping out the lowest part of the land for enclosures, and planting the wood round it in masses, which were enlarged or contracted, as the natural lying of the ground seemed to dictate, and producing a series of agreeable effects to the eye, varying in every point of view, and affording new details of the landscape, as the plantations became blended together, or receded from each other. About five or six years after this transformation had been effected, the landlord met his former tenant, a judicious cool-headed countryman, upon the ground, and naturally said to him, “I suppose, Mr. R., you will say I have ruined your farm by laying half of it into woodland?” — “I should have expected it, sir,” answered Mr. R., “if you had told me beforehand what you were about to do; but I am now of a very different opinion; and as I am looking for land at present, if you incline to take, for the remaining sixty acres, the same rent which I formerly gave for a hundred and twenty, I will give you an offer to that amount. I consider the benefit of the enclosing, and the complete shelter afforded to the fields, as an advantage which fairly counterbalances the loss of one half

of the land." The proprietor then showed Mr. R. the plan which had been suggested to him, of subdividing the whole farm by straight rectilinear stripes, occupying altogether about five-and-twenty or thirty acres. The intelligent and unprejudiced agriculturist owned that, *à priori,* he would have preferred a system which left so much more land for the occupation of the plough, but as frankly owned that the trees could neither have made half the progress, or have afforded half the shelter, which had actually been the case under the present plan, and that he was now convinced that the proprietor had chosen the better part.

Another proof of the same important fact occurs, upon a hill which we, at this moment, see from the windows of the apartment in which we are now writing. It is of considerable height, and the proprietor, about forty years ago or more, attempted to raise a plantation on the very crest or summit of the eminence, retaining the rest of the hill for the purposes of pasturage and agriculture. His operations, attempted on this niggardly scale, failed totally, after two separate attempts, every plant dying in the exposed and ungenial situation. On a third essay, the proprietor altered his measures, and brought the limits of his woodland so far down the hill as to include a few acres of tolerable land. The trees on these better spots soon rose, and, sheltering those which were exposed, the whole upper part of the hill became clothed with a wood, out of which the present proprietor has cut annually several hundred pounds worth of timber, to the advantage, not the prejudice, of that which remains standing to a large value.

The same change has taken place in the sentiments of intelligent store-farmers as in those of agriculturists like Mr. R. Almost every sheep-farm contains large tracts covered with stones and shingle, or otherwise steep, dangerous, and precipitous; of ravines, which in winter prove the grave of many of the flock; and of other rocky and barren spots, affording little pasture, and that only to be obtained at the great peril of the sheep. There are also on most sheepwalks, extensive moors, which, sheltered by plantations on the mountains, would produce a far different species of herbage from what flocks or herds are now able to glean off them, and, in general, it is now perfectly understood, that when the trees have made such a progress as to afford shelter in the lambing seasons and during storms, the ground they occupy is far from being grudged them by an intelligent shepherd. It is very likely, indeed, that the tenant who possesses a sheep-farm on a short lease may desire some diminution of rent: for when the

landlord entertains a desire to enter into possession of a part of his land during currency of the lease, the circumstance is always considered as a kind of Godsend, which it would be neglecting the benefits afforded by Providence not to make ample use of. But an intelligent farmer, the length of whose possession must enable him to derive advantage from the shelter and other favourable circumstances which cannot fail to attend the more advanced state of the plantations, will usually be disposed to part, at a very easy rate, with the immediate occupation of such grounds as we have indicated, for the purpose of their being planted. At any rate, we state with confidence that the existence of plantations, even to a very considerable extent, upon a sheep-farm, will, if judiciously disposed, rather increase than diminish the offers for a new lease.

The tract to be occupied by the new plantations being fixed, enclosing is the next indispensable point of preparation. If this is neglected, or not executed in a sufficient manner, the improver may as well renounce his plan; for though we believe, as above stated, that the judicious tenant will approve of and respect the plantations of the landholder, yet we cannot venture to hope that his zeal in their behalf will impel him to take great trouble for their preservation. Even if he were willing to do so, his shepherds cannot be expected to possess such liberal ideas, and will see with great apathy an inroad of the flock where the enclosure presents a practicable breach, which, in the spring especially, may do more damage to the young woodland in a few hours' time than it can recover in several seasons. The plantation, therefore, whatever its extent, must be suitably enclosed. For this purpose, quickset hedges are, undoubtedly, the preferable means; but these cannot be generally resorted to in the execution of extensive plans, such as we point at. In wild, coarse ground, thorns will not succeed without much care; in soils of a worse class, they will not rise at all; and even where the ground is fittest for them, they require more labour and trouble than can be expected in executing a very large plan, unless the funds of the projector be ample in proportion. Hedges of furze and of larch have been recommended, but they are precarious, and will only succeed when much attention is bestowed on them. The most effectual substitute, we regret to say it, is the drystone wall. The materials of this species of fence, generally speaking, abound in the neighbourhood of such plantations as we now treat of. The wall has this great advantage, that it may be said to be major, and competent to discharge all its duties, even on the day of its

birth, and if constructed of flat or square stones of good quality, properly put together, and well erected, will last for many years. It is commonly the readiest and best substitute for a quickset fence; but it must be owned that it is extremely ugly, and, when once it begins to break down, can only be repaired at a considerable expense, which, after a certain time, recurs very frequently, as the best builders of this species of wall cannot so effectually repair the breaches which time makes in it but what they are always making their appearance again at the same places. The unpleasing aspect of these walls may, in some degree, be got rid of by keeping them in hollows: this, indeed, is to be recommended in every case; and upon a large plan, where much ground is at the planter's command, may be very easily managed. Respecting their failure through time, it is to be remembered that it will not take place until the period when breaches may be repaired by wattles made from the plantation itself. We have seen a species of earthen fence used with very considerable success on ground where stones were hard to come at. The earth was dug out of a ditch, which was made to slope outwards, and to present, on the side nearest to the plantation, a straight cut of about a foot and a half; on the verge of that ditch arose the wall itself, composed of sods built up to the height of three feet and a half, so that the whole height was about four feet, and sufficient to be respected by sheep and cattle, except, perhaps, during the time of snow, when no fence can be absolutely trusted to. A single bar of paling placed on the top of this species of *vallum* greatly improves it. It is the cheapest of all fences, as it may be raised at the rate of fifteen-pence a-rood by contract. Its duration cannot be exactly calculated; but, where the sods are of a close and kindly texture, we have known it last for nine or ten years without symptoms of decay, and after that age the thinnings of the plantation ought to be used to repair the fence, or, if more convenient, sold, and the price applied to that purpose. A hedge may be raised in the inside of such an earthfence with considerable ease, as the thorns will grow fast among the loose earth; and if this is resorted to, the hedge will be fit to relieve guard when the rampart or earthen wall becomes ruinous.

A preparation no less necessary than that of enclosing, and now generally attended to, although often far too superficially performed, is the drainage of such parts of the intended plantation as are disposed to be marshy. Water, which, when pure, is the necessary nutriment of all vegetables, becomes, when putrid or stagnant, their most decided enemy.

There exist no trees, however fond of subaqueous soil, which will thrive if planted in an undrained bog. On the other hand, there is scarcely any ground so swampy, that, provided it affords a level for draining, may not be made to bear trees, if the kinds are well chosen. We have seen the spruce, silver fir, and even the balm of Gilead pine, attain great magnitude in a soil so moist that the trees were originally planted in what are called *lazy beds.* It must be, of course, essential that the drains should be kept open, and scoured from time to time, but it will be found that, as the trees advance, their own demand for nourishment will exhaust a great deal of the superfluous moisture; for, as the fall of a natural forest in a wild country usually creates a morass, so the growth of a wood, when the first obstacles are removed, has a tendency to diminish a bog which has been already formed.

Another requisite nearly connected with the above is the formation of paths for walking, riding, or driving through the future plantations. Where the woods are on a large scale, these paths should be at least eight or nine feet broad. This object is easily combined with draining, as the ditch which carries off the superfluous water will, at the same time, drain the road, if it is conducted alongside of it, which, in most cases, will be found the best line for both. Such roads serve at first to facilitate the collection of materials for fencing; they afterwards afford easy means of inspecting the condition of the wood, and, finally, of removing the felled trees from the woodland. When *that* occasion comes, the making such paths will be found indispensable, and as, if deferred till then, the object cannot be accomplished without a great waste of time, and the paths, after all, can never be so well lined as before the wood is planted, this preliminary season is unquestionably by far the most proper. It is needless to say that the formation and direction of such paths and drives is one of the most agreeable occupations of a proprietor who pretends to taste, and if barely formed with the spade, and drained, they will become, in a year or two, dry green sward, and require no metalling until they are employed in transporting heavy weights. But, whether formed or not, the space for such paths ought always to be left, and, among other advantages, they will be found to act upon the forest like the lungs of the human body, circulating the air into its closest recesses, and thereby greatly increasing the growth of the trees.

We may now be expected to say something of the preparation of the soil, by cropping, following, paring, and burning, or otherwise, as is recommended in most books on the subject of planting. There can be no doubt that all or any of these modes, may be, according to circumstances, used with the utmost advantage, especially so far as concerns the early growth of wood. Every plantation, therefore, which the proprietor desires to see *rush up* with unusual rapidity, ought to be prepared by one of these methods, or, which is best of all, by deep trenching with the spade. But the expense attending this most effectual mode limits it to the park and pleasure-ground, and even the other coarser modes of preparation cannot be thought of, when the object is to plant as extensively and at as little expense as possible. It may be some comfort to know that, as far as we have observed, the difference betwixt the growth of plantations, where the ground has been prepared, or otherwise, supposing the soil alike, and plants put in with equal care, seems to disappear within the first ten or twelve years. It is only in its earlier days that the plant enjoys the benefit of having its roots placed amongst earth which has been rendered loose and penetrable: at a certain period the fibres reach the subsoil which the spade or plough has not disturbed, and thus the final growth of the tree which has enjoyed this advantage is often not greater than that of its neighbour, upon which no such indulgences were ever bestowed.

The next important object is the choice of the trees with which the proposed woodland is to be stocked, and, supposing the production of tall timber trees to be the ultimate object, we would recommend, for the formation of a large forest, the oak and larch as the trees best to be depended upon. Our choice of the first will scarce be disputed: it is the natural plant of the island, and grows alike on highland and lowland, luxuriating where the soil is rich, coming to perfection, in many cases, where it is but middling, and affording a very profitable copsewood where it is scanty and indifferent.

Our selection of the larch may seem to some more disputable, but it will only be to such as are disposed to judge from outward show. We cannot, indeed, vindicate this valuable tree in so far as outward beauty is concerned: Wordsworth has condemned its formality at once, and its poverty of aspect. Planted in small patches, the tops of all the trees arising to the same height, and generally sloping in one direction from the prevailing wind, the larch-wood has, we must own, a mean and poor effect: its appearance on the ridge

of a hill is also unfavourable, resembling the once fashionable mode of setting up the manes of ponies, called by jockeys *hogging*. But where the quantity of ground planted amounts to the character of a forest, the inequalities of the far-extended surface give to the larches a variety of outline which they do not possess when arranged in clumps and patches, and furnish that species of the sublime which all men must recognise in the prevalence of one tint of colouring in a great landscape. All who have seen the Swiss mountains, which are clothed with this tree as high as vegetation will permit, must allow that it can, in fitting situations, add effectually to the grandeur of Alpine scenery. In spring, too, the larch boasts, in an unequalled degree, that early and tender shade of green which is so agreeable to the eye, and suggests to the imagination the first and brightest ideas of reviving nature.

If, however, in spite of all that can be pleaded in its favour, the larch should be, in some degree, excluded from ornamental plantations, still the most prejudiced admirer of the picturesque cannot deny the right of this tree to predominate in those which are formed more for profit than beauty. The good sense of the poet we have quoted, which is equal to his brilliancy of fancy, has, indeed, pointed out this distinction; and in the following passage, while he deprecates what we do not contend for, he admits the value of the larch in such rude scenes as we now treat of: —

"To those," says Wordsworth, "who plant for profit, and are thrusting every other tree out of the way to make room for their favourite, the larch, I would utter, first, a regret that they should have selected these lovely vales for their vegetable manufactory, when there is so much barren and irreclaimable land in the neighbouring moors, and in other parts of the island, which might have been had for this purpose at a far cheaper rate. And I will also beg leave to represent to them, that they ought net to be carried away by flattering promises from the speedy growth of this tree; because, in rich soils and sheltered situations, the wood, though it thrives fast, is full of sap, and of little value; and is likewise, very subject to ravage from the attacks of insects, and from blight. Accordingly, in Scotland, where planting is much better understood, and carried on upon an incomparably larger scale than among us, good soil and sheltered situations are appropriated to the oak, the ash, and other deciduous trees; and the larch is now generally confined to barren and exposed ground. There the plant,

which is a hardy one, is of slower growth, much less liable to injury, and the timber of better quality." *

* Wordsworth's Description of the Country of the Lakes.

We willingly shake hands with our Miltonic poet, and enter into the composition which he holds out to the profitable planter.

In this capacity, being that which we now occupy, we have much to say in behalf of this same larch-fir. It unites, in a most singular degree, the two opposite, and, in general, irreconcilable qualities of quickness of growth and firmness of substance. In the first, it excels all trees in the forest, and, in the second, equals the oak itself.

The mode of preparing or seasoning larch timber is not yet, perhaps, perfectly understood, more especially as the tree is usually cut in the barking season, when it is full of sap, which renders the large wood apt to warp and crack. To avoid this, some take off the bark the season before the tree is cut, upon which subject Mr. Monteath gives us this practical information: —

"In the summer of 1815 and 1816, I was employed to thin some plantations for James Johnstone, Esq., of Alva, on his state of Denovan; and also in the same years, for Thomas Spottiswoode, Esq. of Dunnipace. The trees on both estates were of considerable size, and particularly those on the estate of Dunnipace — many of them containing betwixt thirty and forty solid feet of timber. As part of the trees on both estates were to be used by the proprietors for their own purposes, I had, the year before, cut down and barked a considerable number of larch-fir trees; which, being barked after being cut down, and exposed to the summer's sun, rent in such a manner as to render them of little or no use. To prevent this, if possible, in the future, I barked all the larch trees standing, and allowed them to remain in this state till autumn, which effectually prevented them from rending with the sun or drought. A number of the trees on Dunnipace stood in this peeled state for two summers, and were then cut up; and Mr. Spottiswoode caused his carpenter to make from the timber of those trees some bound doors, which made an excellent job, no part of the wood casting or twisting. Since that time I have myself used, and have frequently seen used by others, the timber of larch-fir trees, after having stood twelve months with the bark taken off, the cut down, and immediately cut up into battens for flooring, and also made into bound doors and windows for the better sort of houses, with equal success. This is a clear proof that the plan of taking off the bark

from the larch-fir trees, some time previous to their being cut down, will not only prevent the timber from shrinking and twisting, but has also a tendency to harden, the timber, and make it more durable, as it gradually throws out the resinous substance to the surface, and causes it, in a greater or less degree, to circulate through the whole timber; and this in so particular a manner, that the white wood of the tree is found equally as hard, and becomes as durable as the red wood. The consequence has been, that I am now decidedly of opinion, that the timber of a larch-fir, treated in this way, at thirty years of age, will be found equally durable with that of a tree treated in the ordinary way, cut down at the age of fifty years." — Pp. 239-241.

Mr. Monteath gives a process for flaying the unfortunate larch, which we dare say has proved successful under his direction. We must, nevertheless, always consider it as an objection that the stems of the barked trees must continue standing, like so many Marsyases or Saint Bartholomews, among their more fortunate neighbours; but this is an evil which addresses itself to the eye alone. We believe, however, that there are other effectual modes of seasoning this valuable timber, by steeping it repeatedly, for instance, and thus keeping the outside of the tree moist until the heart gets thoroughly dry. We have seen specimens of such wood employed in panelling by the ingenious and experienced Mr. Atkinson, architect, St. John's Wood, which equalled in smoothness of surface and exactness of jointing, any other wood we have ever seen applied to similar purposes, not excepting mahogany itself. It may also be remarked that as larch increases in size, its bark becomes of less value, and when the tree produces great timber, it would be no mighty sacrifice to give up all idea of barking, and cut the wood in winter, like that of other trees, and thus season it in the same manner. While the tree is only of the size of a pole, it should be thrown, after barking, into a ditch, or else covered with branches, to exclude the sunbeams. It will then dry gradually without warping, and being dried, will be as hard as iron-wood, and eminently fit for any of the numerous purposes to which sticks of that size can be applied. When we add that the larch will thrive almost upon every soil that is moderately dry, except that which lies on freestone, and that it ascends higher up the sides of the bleakest mountain than the hardiest of the fir-tribe, we have, we conceive, assigned sufficient reasons for its preference in selecting trees for an extensive tract of ground.

Our next subject of consideration must be, the manner and time of planting the trees, and the distance at which they ought to be placed from each other; and here we beg to express our complete approbation of the old popular proverb, which says — "plant a tree at Martinmas, and command it to grow; plant after Candlemas, and entreat." If the spring months chance to be moist, the trees then planted will succeed well, but the practice must be regarded as precarious. Here our opinion coincides with general practice, but in respect of the following points, we are not, we believe, so fortunate.

It is common, if not universal, to plant the nurses, — that is to say, the firs, which are designed to be gradually felled for thinning the plantation, — at the same period of time with the principal trees meant finally to occupy the ground. The consequence of this is, that the nurses are too young to perform their expected duty. Larches and firs are seldom planted above nine inches or a foot long, and are both troublesome and precarious when of a larger size. Oaks, elms, and almost all hardwood plants, are about twice as long, or from eighteen inches to two feet high, when they are put finally into the ground. The necessary consequence is, that the principal trees have no shelter at all until the nurses have outgrown them. In the mean time they suffer all the evils of premature exposure. The organs by which they raise the sap become hardened, their barks mossed and rigid: in short, for the first two years, the hardwood has no shelter at all, and in some climates may be expected to *sit,* as it is called, that is, to become a shrivelled starveling, which lives, indeed, but makes no advance in growth, if, indeed, it does not, as is frequently the case, die down entirely. Accordingly, when a plantation so managed is about three years old, it is the custom of all good foresters to have it revised, and, in the course of the operation, to cut over, within an inch of the ground, all the hardwood trees which are not found thriving, the number of which is generally as ten to one. The nutriment collected by the roots is thus thrown into new and healthy shoots which arise from the original stem. These, of course, derive from the larch and fir nurses, now grown to two or three feet in height, that shelter which could not be afforded by them to the congenial hardwood, and the plantation goes on prosperously. This process was and is successful, yet it is obvious that both time and labour would be saved could it be dispensed with — since much trouble must be employed both in cutting down the old plants, and afterwards in reducing to a single shrub the little bushes which run from their stem when cut over. To avoid this necessity, it has been our

practice, in latter cases, to plant the nurses in the first place, leaving vacant spaces for the principal trees, which we do not put into the earth for three years afterwards. The consequence is, that the principal trees, receiving from the nurses, at the very moment of their being planted out, that shelter which it is their purpose to communicate, do not, in more than one case out of ten, go back, dwindle, or require to be cut down; much expense of repeated revisal is saved, and the desired purpose is attained as soon, and more perfectly, than by the older practice. However, therefore, the natural impatience of the improver may repine at postponing the planting of his principal trees, he may depend upon it that, in all situations not peculiarly favoured in soil and exposure, he will arrive sooner at his ultimate object by following the slower process.

In planting an extensive tract of ground, as in preparing it, much of the nicer preparation by pitting may be abridged. We do not deny that to make the pits in spring, as recommended by Nicol and other authors, must be a considerable advantage, as the earth in which the new plant is to be set is thus exposed to the influence of the atmosphere until the planting season. On the other hand, this would require double labour along the same extensive district, and our plan is grounded on the strictest economy. Besides, in the desolate regions, which we would fain see clothed with wood, rain is frequent; and should the pits be left open till November or December, they are often exposed to be filled with water, which, remaining and stagnating there, renders the ground so unfit for the plants, that they certainly lose more by such deterioration than they gain by the exposure of the subsoil to the atmosphere.

Our mode of planting them is as follows. A labourer first takes a turf from the sward or heath, of nine inches or a foot in circumference, and lays it aside, while he digs the pit and works the earth carefully with his spade. His assistant, a woman or a boy, then places the plant in the earth, laying the roots abroad in the natural direction in which they severally diverge from the stem, and taking especial care that none of them are twisted or bruised in the operation, which, if it does not totally destroy it, never fails greatly to retard the growth of the plant. The planter ought to fill in the earth with the same care; and having trod it down in the usual manner, he cuts the turf in two with his spade, and places one half on each side of the plant, so that the straight edges of the two sections meet together at the stem, while the grassy or heathy side lies nearest the earth. This answers two good

purposes; the covering prevents the drought from so readily affecting the young plant, and the reversing the turf prevents it from being affected by the growth of long grass, heath, or weeds in its immediate vicinity. When the time of planting the oaks arrives, we would observe the same method, taking only still greater care of working the earth, of adjusting the roots, and of covering the pit.

And here we may hazard an observation, that, of all accidents detrimental to a plantation, those which arise from the slovenly haste of the workman are most generally prejudicial. Sometimes grounds are planted by contract, which, for obvious reasons, leads to hasty proceedings; but, even where the proprietor's own people are employed, which must be usually the case in undertakings in a distant and wild country, the labourers get impatient, and if not checked and restrained, will be found to perform their task with far more haste than good speed. The experienced woodsman will guard with peculiar care against this great danger; for a tree well planted will be found to grow in the most unfavourable spot, while plants, the roots of which have been compressed, or, perhaps, left partially uncovered, will decay, even in the best soil and the most sheltered situation.

We have said, that the forest ought to be planted chiefly with larch and oak, in order to produce an early return, and at the same time to ensure a lasting value; but this is not to be Judaically interpreted, and we must take this opportunity to mention several exceptions.

There are points peculiarly exposed in every extensive plantation, which, if covered with a screen, are found most useful in defending the young woods from the prevailing wind. On such exposed elevations, we would recommend that the Scots fir be liberally intermixed with the larches. It grows more slowly, doubtless, and is an inferior tree to the larch in every respect; but retaining its leaves during the winter, and possessing at the same time a wonderful power of resisting the storm, it forms, in such places as we have described, a much more effectual shelter than can be afforded by the larch alone. It will be easily conceived, that such a change of colouring in the forest should not be introduced, as forming defined figures, or preserving precise outlines; but that the different kinds of trees should be intermingled, so as to shade off into the general mass. If this is attended to, the plantation will seem to have been formed by Nature's own cunning hand.

Ere we leave the subject, we may remind the young planter, that the species of fir, which in an evil hour was called *Scotch,* as now generally found in nurseries, is very inferior, in every respect, to the real Highland fir, which may be found in the North of Scotland in immense natural forests, equally distinguished for their romantic beauty and national importance. This last is a noble tree, growing with huge contorted arms, not altogether unlike the oak, and forming therein a strong contrast to the formality of the common fir. The wood, which is of a red colour, is equal to that brought from Norway; and, when a plant, it may be known from the spurious or common fir by the tufts of leaves being shorter and thicker, and by the colour being considerably darker. The appearance of the Highland fir, when planted in its appropriate situation amongst rock and crags, is dignified and even magnificent; the dusky red of its massive trunk, and dark hue of its leaves, forming a happy accompaniment to scenes of this description. Such firs, therefore, as are ultimately designed to remain as principal trees, ought to be of this kind, though it may probably cost the planter some trouble to procure the seed from the Highlands. The ordinary fir is an inferior variety, brought from Canada not more than half a century ago. Being very prolific, the nursery-gardeners found it easy to raise it in immense quantities; and thus, though a mean-looking tree, and producing wood of little comparative value, it has superseded the natural plant of the country, and is called, *par excellence,* the Scotch fir. Under that name it has been used generally as a nurse, and so far must be acknowledged useful, that it submits to almost any degree of hard usage, as, indeed, it seldom meets with any which can be termed even tolerable. There is a great difference betwixt the wood, even of this baser species, raised slowly and in exposed situations, and that of the same tree produced upon richer soil — the last being much inferior in every respect, because more rapid in growth.

The planter of a large region will also meet with many portions of ground too wet either for the oak or larch, although the former can endure a very considerable degree of moisture. This he will stock, of course, with the alder, the willow, the poplar, and other trees which prefer a subaqueous soil. But we would particularly recommend the spruce-fir, an inhabitant of such marshes. This tree is almost sure to disappoint the planter upon dry and stony ground. Even planted in good soil, it is apt to decay when about twenty or thirty years old, especially the variety called, from the strong odour of its leaves, the balm of Gilead. But in wet grounds, even where

very moorish, the spruce grows to a gigantic size, and the wood is excellent. The silver fir will also endure a great deal of moisture, is one of the hardiest, as well as most stately, children of the forest, and deserves to be cultivated upon a larger scale than that which is usually practised. The woods of Blair Adam, near Kinross, the seat of the Right Honourable William Adam, afford decided proof, that the spruce and silver fir can be raised to the most magnificent trees, in a moist soil, where the substratum appears to be moss.

Before quitting this part of the subject, we may observe that, without prejudice to the general maxims of economy laid down, a proprietor, of ordinary feeling and taste, will find, in an extensive tract of waste lands, numerous recesses where the climate is mild, and the exposure favourable, an occasional intervention, in short, of

"Sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,"

which may be either left for pasture and cultivation, or filled with other varieties of forest trees than those which we have advised for the woodland in general. In discovering these hidden oases of the desert, the improver will be naturally induced to turn them to account, and vary the character of his silvan dominions, according to the facilities which these *accidents* of vale and glade not only admit of, but invite. This employment cannot fail to be one of the most interesting which a rural life holds out to its admirers. He may deepen the shade of the dim glen by tenanting it with yew, and he may increase the cheerfulness of the sunny glade by sprinkling it with the lighter and gayer children of the forest. But here we must avoid the temptation, which all writers on plantations, our friends Pontey and Mr. Monteath not excepted, are disposed to yield to, where there is such an opportunity for fine description. We remember Lord Byron's reproof to Moore: — "Come, hang it, Tom, don't be poetical." So we sheath our eloquence, and resume the humble unadorned tone of rural admonition.

We may, however, just hint to planters, as unpoetical as ourselves, that in achieving such a task as we have proposed to them, nature will, in spite of them, realize, in many places, the wishes breathed by improvers of a different description. In the sort of ground which we have described, it happens invariably that particular places are found where the natural wood, in spite of all the causes which combine to destroy it, has used effective efforts to preserve its existence in the various forms of scattered and stunted trees, tangled and briery copsewood, and small shoots of underwood,

which, kept down by the continual browsing of the cattle, affords only twigs, the existence of which is scarcely manifest among the grass. In all these cases, the remains of natural wood arising rapidly, when protected by enclosures against the intrusion of cattle, volunteer their services to the planter. These are often so important, that, by properly trimming the old wood, the introduction of new plants may, in many cases, be altogether dispensed with. In others, the small twigs, invisible when the ground was planted, come up afterwards as underwood and serve for the purpose of harbouring game or forming thickets. Nay, in some, this natural growth will be found "something between a hinderance and a help," encumbering, and sometimes altogether overpowering and superseding the artificial planting. The trees which thus voluntarily present themselves, as the natural tenants of the soil, are oak, hazel, mountain-ash, thorns of different kinds, hack-berry (called birdcherry,) holly, etc., in the dry places; and in those which incline to be moist, the alder and willow. The forester may look with almost an absolute certainty for the arrival of these volunteer supplies, if he plants a space of two or three hundred acres. They serve to beautify the operations of art, by adding the wild colouring and drapery of nature. According to the old school of planting, it was the business of the forester to destroy, upon such occasions, the natural productions of the soil, in order to protect the much more worthless plants with which he had himself stocked it. Thus, we know a large plantation, in which a natural oak copse was twice rooted out, in order to protect one of base Canadian firs; yet when the woods afterwards began to be managed with more taste and knowledge, the oaks still remained strong enough, despite these two attempts at extirpation, to supersede the intruders; and they constitute at this time the principal part of the existing wood.

We are now come to the distance to be observed betwixt the plants, on putting them into the ground. This is a subject on which different opinions are maintained; opinions which, however, we think have been unnecessarily placed in opposition to each other: — the mode of planting closely, or putting in the trees at a greater distance, being each preferable or inferior to the other in relation to the situation of the plantation, and the purposes for which it is destined.

And considering this most important point, with relation to the number of the principal trees designed to remain as the ultimate stock on the land, we must confess our opinion, that the number of hardwood trees planted is

generally much greater than is necessary. A common rule allots the space of six or seven feet betwixt each principal plant. This seems far too large an allowance, and adds greatly to the expense of planting, without producing any correspondent return. If planted so near each other, a great number of the hardwood trees must be taken out as weedings, before they attain any marketable value; and, as they shoot up again after they are cut down, they are apt to interfere with the growth of the trees which it is the object of the planter finally to cherish, unless the roots themselves are got rid of by the expensive operation of grubbing. If the hard-timber trees are planted at ten or twelve feet distance from each other, there will be room enough left for them to attain a foot in diameter before it is necessary to remove any of them. When planted at a smaller distance than the above, many must certainly be removed ere they have attained any value, while the operation, at the same time, gives to the proprietor the painful feeling attached to destroying a fine plant in its very bloom of promise. But this, like many other maxims concerning planting, is liable to be controlled by circumstances. In forming a plantation near a residence, it may be of great importance to place the hardwood plants at six or eight feet distance, especially if the soil or exposure be indifferent. This gives the planter, at the distance of ten or twelve years, a choice in selecting the particular trees which will best suit the situation, and the power at the same time of rendering the wood a complete screen, by cutting down the others for underwood, the introduction of which beauty and utility alike recommend. If there are still thriving young trees, which it is necessary to remove, they are, in such a case, useful to the proprietor: he may plant them out as ornamental trees either upon his lawn, or, as we have ourselves practised, these outcasts of the plantation may be scattered about in the neighbouring pastures. If they are planted with a little care among such patches of furze as usually occur in sheep-ground, with some attention to shelter and soil, it is really wonderful how few of them fail, certainly not above one out of ten, even where no great attention is bestowed on the process, except by cleansing such sheltered spots for receiving the trees. Those that dwindle must be cut, even after standing a year; they will generally send up fine shoots upon the season following. Here, however, we are again straying from our immediate task; for profit and pleasure are so intimately united in this delightful pursuit, that it is frequently difficult to distinguish where their paths separate. Upon the whole, however, it may be considered as

unnecessary extravagance in a plantation of great extent, and calculated chiefly for profit, to place the principal or hardwood trees nearer than twelve feet. Should one be found to fail, its place may be easily supplied by leaving a larch as a principal tree in its room, an exchange which ultimately leaves little ground for regret.

The quantity of nurses (which, according to our mode of planting, will be chiefly larches, intermingled with Scotch firs where exposure requires it) should seem also a relative question, to be decided by circumstances. If there is a favourable prospect for the sale of the weedings of the plantation at an early period, there can be no doubt of the truth of the old maxim — "Plant thick, and thin early." In this case the larches may be set within three and a half feet of each other generally over the plantation, leaving them somewhat more distant upon the places peculiarly sheltered, and placing them something closer upon exposed ridges, and in rows formed to interrupt the course of the prevailing winds.

If the planting thrives, the larches will, in the fifth or sixth year, require a thinning, the produce of which, in an inhabited country, will certainly be equal to the expense. The bark, for example, will produce from four to five pounds a-ton, or otherwise, in proportion to the value of oak bark, amounting usually to one half the value of that commodity. The peeled sticks, from an inch and a half to three inches diameter, find a ready demand. The smallest are sawed into stakes for supporting the nets with which sheep are secured when eating turnips off the ground, and immense numbers are wanted for this purpose on the verge of hilly districts. They fetch, generally, about a shilling per dozen. The larger larches make paling of various descriptions, gates for enclosures, *etc. etc.* For all these purposes, the larch is admirably calculated, by its quality of toughness and durability. The profits derived from these first thinnings can receive small addition from the produce of the Scotch fir, which will, at this period, be worth little else than what it will bring for firewood at the nearest village. But we must repeat, that even this first and least productive course of thinning will do more than clear the expense bestowed, in situations where the country can be considered as peopled.

There are, however, extensive Highland wastes, which of all other ground, we would most desire to see planted, where the improver must expect no such return. The distance of markets, the want of demand, deny that profit in the larch wildernesses of the North, which is derived from

those more favourably situated, and where every stick, almost every twig, may be brought advantageously to sale. If, therefore, the plantations be as closely filled up in the former case as in the latter, one of two things must happen — either that the thinnings are made at considerable expense over a waste tract of woodland, without any reimbursement from the proceeds; or else the plantation remains unthinned, to the unspeakable prejudice of the wood, since no trees can thrive unless on the condition of removing a part, to give an additional portion, both of soil and air, to those which remain. This painful dilemma may be avoided by preserving such a distance betwixt the plants, when originally put into the ground, as will make thinning unnecessary, until they shall have attained a more considerable value. It has been found by experience, that larches in particular will grow very well, and even in situations of an unpromising character, if placed at the distance of ten or twelve feet from each other, and may therefore be suffered to remain for ten or twelve years without any thinning. The trees thus taken out will be from six inches to a foot in diameter; and, if no other demand occurs, a great quantity of them may be employed in forming internal enclosures in the wood itself, if, as in a large tract of forest ground and in a high country is often highly advisable, it is judged proper to restore a part of the land to the purpose of pasture. This has been a mode of improvement long practised by the Duke of Athole, in the north of Perthshire, where, to his infinite honour, he has covered whole regions of barren mountains with thriving wood, and occupied, with herds of black cattle, extensive pastures, which formerly lay utterly waste and unproductive.

A singular and invaluable quality of the larch-fir, first remarked, or at least first acted on, by the patriotic nobleman whom we have named, has given the means of altogether appeasing the fears of those well-meaning persons, who apprehended that the great extent of modern plantations might, in time, render timber too abundant in the country to bring any remunerating price, while, at the same time, it would draw a great proportion of land from the occupation of flocks or herds. The larch plantations are experimentally found, by the annual casting of their leaves to lend material aid to the encouragement of the fine and more nutritive grasses; while, at the same time, they cause the destruction of the heath, and other coarser productions of vegetation. The cause of this is obvious. The finer grasses — white clover, in particular — exist in abundance in the bleakest and most dreary moors, although they cannot in such

disadvantageous soil become visible to the eye, until encouraged by some species of manure. If any one doubts this, he may be satisfied of the truth, by cutting up a turf in the most barren heath in his vicinity, and leaving it with the heathy side undermost in the place where it was cut; or he may spread a spadeful of lime upon a square yard of the same soil. In either case, the spot so treated will appear the next season covered with white clover. Or the same fact may be discovered by observing the roads which traverse extensive heaths, the sides of which are always greensward, although of the same soil, and subject to the same atmosphere, with the rest of the moor. The blowing of the triturated dust, impregnated with horse-dung, has in this case produced the same effect which the application of lime or the turning the turf, in the former experiments, is calculated to attain. The clover, whether as a seed or plant our dull organs cannot discover, being thus proved to exist in the worst soils, and to flourish on the slightest encouragement, there is no difficulty in understanding how the larch-trees, constantly shedding their leaves on the spot where they are planted, should gradually encourage the clover to supersede the heath, and, by doing so, convert into tolerable pasture-land that from which no animal, excepting a moor-cook, could derive any species of sustenance. We understand the fact to be, that, by the influence of this annual top-dressing, hundreds, nay, thousands of acres have been rendered worth from five to ten shillings an acre, instead of from sixpence to, at the utmost, two shillings. Whoever knows any thing of the comparative value of heath and greensward pasture, will agree that the advantages of converting the one into the other are very moderately stated at the above ratio, and this wonderful transformation is made without the slightest assistance from human art, save that of putting in the larch plants.

If it is judged advisable to profit to the uttermost by this ameliorating quality of the larch-tree, the expense of the original plantation will be very considerably diminished, as it will be, in that case, unnecessary to plant any oaks in it, and the whole expense of setting it with larches alone, cannot, in such parts of the country as we are acquainted with, approach to twenty shillings an acre. To this must be added ten years' rent of the field which we may suppose, on an average, a shilling per acre, making, on the whole, an outlay of thirty shillings per acre. The cost of enclosing, and the loss of interest, are to be added to this sum. No other expenses have been incurred during these ten years; for the distance at which the trees are originally

planted has rendered thinning unnecessary until that space has expired. In the spring of the eleventh year, then, if the bark is considered as an object, a general revising of the plantation takes place, when, probably, onethird part of the larches may be removed. It must be under very disadvantageous circumstances indeed, that four hundred larches do not, in bark and timber, repay all the expenses of fencing by any cheap method, together with the compound interest on the rent and the expenses of thinning. The acre, therefore, which has cost but thirty shillings for the larch woods, may, at ten years old, be occupied as pasture, without much danger to the trees, which cattle and sheep are not known to crop. For this sum the proprietor receives back his acre of land, with a crop of eight hundred larch-trees, twelve years old, which, valued but at threepence a-piece, are worth ten pounds, but which may be more reasonably estimated at a much greater sum, and which, without costing the owner a farthing, but, on the contrary, increasing his income by thinnings from time to time, will come, in process of time, to be worth hundreds, nay, thousands, of pounds. At the same time, the larches have been, in a manner, paying rent for the ground they occupy, by the amelioration of the grass, which is uniformly so great as to treble and quadruple what the land was worth at the first time of planting. To all this large profit is to be added the comfort which the cattle experience in a well-sheltered pasture, where they have at once shade in summer, warmth in winter, and protection in the storm.

Yet great and important as are the advantages attending the Athol mode of planting, we would not willingly see it supersede the culture of the oak, the staple commodity of this island; nor do we believe it is permitted to do so in the country of the noble duke himself. But it is evident, that the greatest possible advantage is to be derived from combining the two different systems, and intermixing plantations to be kept entirely for wood, and consisting chiefly of oak and larch, with others which, consisting only of larch-trees, are to be occupied as pasture after the tenth or twelfth year. The beauty, as well as the productive quality, of the region to be planted, will be increased by blending the systems together, and uniting them at the same time with that of copse plantations, on which we are next about to make some remarks.

The mode of cultivating the *sylva cædua,* or copsewood destined to the axe, has been greatly improved by a discovery of our author, or, at least, a practice which he has been the first to recommend — the propagating the

oak, namely, by layering from the double shoot of young saplings. We will here permit this practical and sound-headed forester to speak for himself: —

"The method of layering from the sprig of a plant is well known to all nurserymen; but we must carry the matter a little farther when we go to the forest. The method of layering in forests, which is agreed on by all those who have tried it, is of the very first and greatest advantage in filling up blanks in a natural or coppice wood: and with this we may commence. When the young shoots in a natural wood have finished their second year's growth, say in the month of November or December the second year (and here, by the way, it may be proper to observe, that, when layering is reqired, the stools of natural wood should not be thinned out the first year, as is directed in the section on rearing of natural or coppice woods,) every shoot should be allowed to grow till the layering is performed, the second year's growth being finished as aforesaid. If the stools have been healthy, these will have made a push of from six to nine feet high. If there is a blank to fill up on every side of the stool, take four of the best shots and layer them down in different directions in the following manner: — take the stem or shoot from the stool; give it a slash with a knife in the under side, very near the stool or root, to make it bend; often the shoot at this age will bend without using the knife; give it also a slash with your knife about one inch above the eye next the top of the shoot. Should there be but one small shoot near the top, and that chance to be next the ground, not to twist the leader or layer, give the shoot a twist round the body of the layer, and bring it upward. Make a rut in the ground about six inches long, and of sufficient width to receive the body of the layer. Pin the layer firmly down in the slit, below the surface of the earth. This may be easily and readily done with a mall pin of wood, about six inches long, with a hook upon its upper end, to keep down the body of the layer; which pins can easily be got from the branches of the trees in the wood. Having pinned it firmly down below the surface of the ground, cover over the layer with the turf from the rut; or a little fresh earth may be put in, and press it firmly down, holding up the end of the young shoot from the body of the layer, pressing the ground about the root of it the same as putting in a plant by pitting, etc., leaving also the top of the shoot or stem thus layered down out of the ground. Thus the layering is performed; and, in one year, if the root or stool from which the layer is taken, be healthy, the top shoot, and the shoot to form the tree, say the small shoot or eye from the top, will make a push of at least two, and I have even

known them grow four feet in one season. Nor is there the smallest chance of their misgiving. The top shoot having made a push again, in two years, of very possibly from eight to nine feet, it can be layered down, and led out other eight or nine feet; thus in four years completely planting up and covering the ground on all sides from sixteen to eighteen feet, and (supposing you have stools or roots on the ground at a distance of from thirty to forty feet,) in five years you can completely plant up the whole ground without the expense of a single plant. Nor is there the least risk of their misgiving in one single case, if properly done; and here also you have a plantation of plants, or we may now rather call them trees, of from four to fourteen feet high, which, by putting inplants, you could not have for twelve years, beside the expense of much filling up." — Monteath, pp. 47-50.

In another part of the same work he gives directions for forming a new copsewood where no old plants exist, and his manner is well worthy the attention of the experimental planter. He proposes that only twentyseven plants shall be placed in an English acre. Each of these being cut over yearly for five or six years, will, he reckons, produce, in the sixth, plants fit for layering; and having gone twice through that process, they will, in the course of eight years, fill up the ground with shoots at the distance of eight feet from each other, being the distance necessary in a copse-plantation. Screens and nurses of larch we would think highly conducive to the perfection of these operations.

Whether formed by planting or by layering, the cultivation of copsewood is a matter of the highest importance, and seldom fails to be the most certain produce of a Highland gentleman's estate, where the woods are properly treated and regularly cut. The oak coppice will flourish on the very face of the most broken ground, however encumbered with rocks, and where it is impossible to conceive how the roots can obtain any nourishment, except from the rain which oozes among the clefts and crevices of the rock. And as to exposure, Mr. Monteath informs us that the copsewoods in Scotland, and particularly in Argyleshire, on the very tops of hills from five hundred to one thousand feet above the level of the sea, are equally healthy, produce equally good bark and are nearly equally productive with those in the vales, although they are exposed to every wind that blows.

In order to give some idea of the profit attending these copsewoods, the following caculation was made for a nobleman who had lately succeeded to

a very extensive tract of mountainous country. It was supposed that, being willing regularly to dedicate a sum, which the amount of his income made a moderate one, to this species of improvement, there should be selected each year in the most convenient places, and those where shelter was most likely to benefit the pasture, a hundred acres of waste and unprofitable ground, to be planted or layered as copsewood. The amount of rent thus sacrificed, for reasons already given, would be very trifling indeed. The expense of planting and enclosing, presuming it to be carried on with liberality and even profusion, could not, in any reasonable view, exceed four hundred pounds. To meet the labour and expense of revision, the proprietor would have the value of thinnings, which, supposing the nurses to be larch, would be found much more than adequate to the purpose of reimbursing them. A similar space of land was supposed to be regularly planted on every year for twenty years, or two or three more, as the general progress of the plantations might render necessary. The hundred acres first planted would then be ready for a fall, the produce of which would afford at east four tons of bark to an acre, and taking the price at ten pounds a-ton, which is certainly not extravagant, would bring in four thousand pounds in return for four hundred expended twenty years before. The subsequent copses being cut in regular rotation, in the order in which they were planted, the noble proprietor would be found to have added four thousand pounds yearly to his estate, in the space of two or three and twenty years; and it is unnecessary to add that the private gentleman who can but afford to plant the tenth part of the extent, must, if the site of his wood is well chosen, derive proportional advantage. It cannot be denied, however, that the larger the size of the plantations, the more likely they are to be thriving and productive.

The copsewood cannot pretend to the dignity of the forest, yet it possesses many advantages. The standing wood must be one day felled, and then it is centuries ere it can arise again in its pristine majesty; nay, as fellers are seldom planters, it too often happens that, once fallen, the mature forest falls for ever; the proprietor feels a sort of false shame in supplying with pigmy shrubs the giants which be has destroyed, and the term when the damage can be repaired is so far beyond the ken of man, that the attempt is relinquished in despair. The copsewood, on the contrary, enjoys a species of immortality, purchased, indeed, like that of Nourjahad, in the Oriental tale, by intervals of abeyance. Its lease of existence may be said to be

purchased by fine and renewal, a portion of it being cut in succession every twenty years. The eye is no doubt wounded for the time by the fall of the portion annually destined for the market, but the blank may be masked by leaving occasional standards, and nature hastens to repair it. In the course of three years, the copse which has been felled generally again assumes its tufted appearance, and in two or three years more, is as flourishing and beautiful as ever.

But the *sylva cædua* possesses more solid advantages. In the first place, there are doubtless many situations in mountainous districts admirably calculated to grow wood, but where it would be injudicious to raise full-grown timber, on account of the difficulty, nay, impossibility, of bringing it into the market. Bark, on the contrary, a light substance and easily transported, can be brought from the most remote and inaccessible recesses of the forest, without the expense of conveyance greatly diminishing the profit of the planter. The peeled timber is also an object in those districts where fuel is scarce, besides the demand for charcoal in others, and the consumption of the larger pieces in country work. In many places there is a demand for the oak boughs and twigs, to make what is called the pyro-ligneous acid, now so generally used instead of vinegar.

Besides their certain return of annual profit, copsewoods, when formed on entailed estates, have the great advantage of affording to every heir of entail in possession, his fair share of this species of property, while, at the same time, it is almost impossible for him to get more. Large woods of standing trees are planted by prudence and foresight, and maintained and preserved by the respect of successive proprietors, in order, perhaps, ultimately to supply the necessities of some extravagant or dissipated possessor, the shame and ruin of the line. But in the case of copsewood, such an "unthrifty heir of Linne" can only receive the produce of what regularly falls to be cut during his time; nor can the amount be increased, or the time of payment accelerated, either by the rapacity or necessity of the proprietor. This is a subject well worth the consideration of those who are anxious about the preservation of their landed estate in their own family.

Thus it will be observed, that each of these several modes of planting has its own peculiar advantages, and far from being bigoted to any one of them, to the total exclusion of others, the proprietor ought, before commencing his operations, to consider maturely, whether his purpose should be to raise a standing wood, to improve his pasturage by the use of

larches exclusively, or to crop the land by means of copsewood, under regular and systematical management. Where plantations of a moderate extent are concerned, the question must be determined by local circumstances, but a large plan affords means of embracing the whole, and can hardly be accounted perfect without exhibiting specimens of the dark majesty of the forest, the gentler beauties of the copse, and the succession of verdant pastures, intermixed with stately and valuable larch-trees, which the Athol system is so well qualified to introduce. By one or other, or all of these methods, the utmost capabilities of the soil will be brought forth, and the greatest change induced in the face of nature which it is possible for human reason to devise, or human power to execute.

We should not have accomplished the task which we proposed, did we not mention, though superficially, the two grand operations of pruning and thinning, without which every one now allows, there can be no rapidly growing plantations, or clean, valuable wood. They are both subjects much better understood than they were twenty years ago, when it was common, for example, to prune off all the under branches of a plant, without considering that this severe operation was destroying the means with which nature provides the plant for drawing up the sap, and thus depriving it of the means of increasing in size; while, with similar incongruity, the upper branches were left to form a thick round head, subject to the action of every storm that blows. Since the publication of Mr. Pontey's treatise, every one worthy to possess a pruning knife is aware that the top of the young plant must be thinned for the encouragement of the leading shoot, and the side boughs only removed in cases where they are apt to rival the stem, or rob it of too much nourishment; and in other cases made so to balance each other, that the tree, when swayed by the wind, may, like a well-trimmed vessel, as speedily as possible recover its equilibrium. We have not, indeed, found that the system of very severe pruning, and removing very many of the side branches, has, under our observation, added so much to the thickness and weight of the stem as it appears to have done under Mr. Pontey's management in better climates; but the general principle which he lays down is indisputable, and has produced much advantage. Neither is it necessary now to renew the caution, that the pruning work should be entirely performed by the hand-knife, or by the chisel and mallet, and, consequently, during the infancy of the plant. The woodsman can scarce commit a greater blunder than by postponing this most necessary operation

until it becomes indispensable to employ the axe, when ten men will not perform the work of one at the earlier period, and when the wounds which might have been inflicted without injury in the infancy of the plant, are sure permanently to disfigure and deteriorate the young tree.

But it may not be so unnecessary to remind the young planter, that the safe and proper time for pruning hardwood is the summer mouths, when the sap, having ascended, is stationary in the tree, and before it begins again to descend. It is true, all authors agree that to prune a tree while the sap is in motion, either upwards or downwards, is the ready way to cause it to bleed to death. But there are authors and practical foresters, who continue to hold the heretical opinion that winter is as safe, or even a safer period for pruning, than summer. Nicol, for example, in his useful *Planter's Kalendar,* falls into this error, and enjoins pruning during the winter months. Yet his experience might have convinced him of its inexpedience. During summer, there always exudes, upon the face of the wound, a thin, gummy fluid, which in a few days seals it up, and skins it over. We have never observed that the plant has any tendency to renew the branches removed at this season. But where the same cut is inflicted in winter, the plant is apt to suffer from the action of the frost upon the raw wound; and, moreover, when the spring months arrive, the forester will observe numerous new shoots pushed out from the scar of that which has been removed, and is thus apprised that his task is but imperfectly performed. As to the necessity of pruning, in general, it is proved by a single glance at the short stems and overgrown heads of the greater part of the oaks found in natural woods, compared with the close upright trunks of those which have felt, in infancy, a judicious application of the pruning-knife. The part of the tree, in the former case, which can be sawn out as useful timber, is not, perhaps, above three feet in length, while the stem of the latter has been trained upwards to the height of fourteen. It is in vain to contradict these facts by an appeal to nature. Nature is equally favourable to all her productions. It is the same to her whether the oak produces timber or boughs, and whether the field produces grain or tares. Human skill and art avail themselves of the operations of nature, by encouraging and directing them towards such results as are most useful to mankind. When we see nature raise a field of wheat, we may expect her to produce a whole forest of clean, straight, profitable timber — till then we must be content to employ plough and harrow in the one case — hatchet and pruning-knife in the other.

The mode of thinning is greatly altered and improved of late years. The sordid and narrowminded system, which postponed the operation until the thinnings should be of some value, is now, we hope, exploded. To treat a plantation in one way or other, with reference to the value to be derived from the thinning, would be as if a carpenter should cut out his wood, not with relation to the ultimate use which he was to make of it, but to the chips which the operation was to produce. These, indeed, are not to be thrown away, if they can be profitably disposed of; but it would be wild to permit them to be considered as a principal object. In modern times, we rarely see those melancholy wrecks of woods which had once been promising, but where the nurses have been allowed to remain until they choked and swallowed the more valuable crop, which they had been intended to shelter; and where the former existence of oaks, elms, and ashes is only proved by a few starting bushes, which, being near the verge of the plantation, have, by straggling and contorting their boughs, contrived to get as much of the atmosphere as is sufficient to keep them alive, whilst the interior of the wood presents only a dull and hopeless succession of spindle-shanked Scotch firs, which, like a horde of savages, after having invaded and ruined a civilized and wealthy province, are finally employed in destroying each other. Timely thinning, commenced in the fifth season after planting, and repeated from time to time as occasion requires, effectually prevents this loss of hopes, plants, and labour.

We would just beg leave to remark, that it is an indifferent, though too frequent mode of thinning, which prescribes the removal of a certain number of plants, a sixth part, or as the case may be, indifferently over the whole plantation. On the contrary, we would be disposed to thin freely the bottoms, hollows, and sheltered places, so that the nurses should be entirely removed, in the first instance, from those places where their presence is least necessary, while they are permitted to retain their station longer on the verges of the wood, or on those exposed heights where, like division hedges in large gardens, they have been originally planted with a view of shelter to the lower ground. In process of time, however, these verges and heights must be gradually thinned out; for warmth and shelter cannot make amends to trees, any more than to mankind, for the want of vital air. It requires the attentive watchfulness of the forester to discover where, or in what proportion, the air is to be introduced into an exposed plantation upon the windward side. If the screen is too speedily opened, the trees, suddenly

exposed to cold and stormy winds, become disordered in the sap-vessels, hide-bound, and mossed, and, finally, dwindle into unsightly shrubs, or, perhaps, die entirely. If the air be not admitted at all, or in due quantities, they are equally sure to wither and decay for want of breath. This dilemma arises from not observing the address, so to call it, with which trees adapt themselves to an exposed or more sheltered situation. On the outside of the plantation, in hedge rows, or where they stand single or in small groups, trees have great heads, short stems, thick and rugged barks, all of which are accommodated to their peculiar situation; the short stems giving them most resistance against the storm, the great branches best balancing the tree when swayed by the gale, and the thick, rugged bark protecting the sap-vessels against the inclemency of the weather. For the contrary reasons, trees of the same species, placed within the shelter of a grove, rise with clear stems, covered with thin and smooth bark, having lofty, but small heads, and all the attributes of a plant accustomed to a milder climate. But if the shelter be allowed to become too close, the tree, like a valetudinary in an overheated room, becomes injured by the very means adopted for its preservation. On the other hand, if the physician wished to allow such a patient a fresher atmosphere, he would certainly allow him time to put on warmer clothing. To pay the same respect to the trees in the interior of our plantation, the outside trees must be thinned, and they must be thinned gradually. Some managers of woods contrive to combine both errors, by neglecting the necessary thinning for years, and finally setting about it with a hasty and unsparing hand. Time and experience alone can teach the forester to observe a medium course in this important operation; but as to thinning, in general, it may be received as a maxim, that he who spares the axe hates the wood.

The duty, indeed, requires in its own nature some share of stoical resolution, nor is it to be approached without a feeling of reluctance. The lonely, secluded, sheltered appearance of your plantation is violated by the intrusion of your hatchet-men; you look with regret on the hopeful tall plants, whose doom you are about to seal, and feel yourself in the same moment unable and unwilling to select which of the darling family, a family of your own planting and rearing, are to perish for the benefit of the survivors. Neither is it very consolatory to look upon the altered scene after the havoc has taken place. It is but four years since, where no employment was so grateful as that of watching and protecting the growth of the trees

that are now lying prostrate on the ground; your old secret path, encumbered by boughs and branches, seems rudely laid bare to the sun. Many of the trees which remain, in spite of the woodman's utmost care, have suffered by the fall of their companions, and

> "the broken boughs
> Droop with their wither'd leaves, ungracious sign
> Of devastation."

The scene is not improved by the mangled appearance of larches and firs, which, destined to the axe on the next occasion, have, in the mean time, been deprived of side branches, like the more notorious criminals, who are mutilated of their limbs before they are executed. In a word, the whole scene seems one of violation, and in its consequences resembles the ravage of the nut-gatherer, as described by Wordsworth: —

> "Then up I rose,
> And dragg'd to earth both branch and bough with crush
> And merciless ravage; and the shady nook
> Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
> Deform'd and sullied, patiently gave up
> Their quiet being … … . .
> I felt a sense of pain, when I beheld
> The silent trees and the intruding sky."

— But a visit to the plantation in the ensuing June will more than recompense the pain which is natural to the performance of this act of duty. All then is again grown fair and green and shady; the future groves affording appearance of improvement, which rarely fails to surprise the spectator, and your firmness in the preceding season is compensated by the certain indications that large progress has been made in the accomplishment of your patriotic as well as profitable object.

Mr. Monteath's work is, in many important respects, of consequence to the planter. It is written in the simple, homely manner of one whose hand is better accustomed to the knife than to the pen, and, without any particular formal order, touches more or less upon most of the forester's operations. He has devised a useful machine for measuring the quantity of wood in standing trees — he has thrown out hints for the preservation and the cure

of the dry rot in timber, and upon diseases in growing trees; he has treated of the mode of valuing and selling bark, and several other subjects; and as he speaks generally from practical knowledge, we may, using a phrase of Chaucer, in somewhat a different sense, fairly dismiss him with the compliment paid to the Squire's Yeoman, in the *Canterbury Tales: —*

"Of woodcraft can he well all the usage."

We may be blamed in these desultory remarks for not having said something upon the subject of planting woods from the acorn, instead of the nursery. We have heard this recommended by great authority, which, moreover, vindicated the practice of leaving nature to work her own work in her own manner, when, it was asserted, the strongest and best trees would work forwards, fight with the others, and save us the trouble of pruning and thinning, by weeding out the inferior plants. We have planted acorns on this system, and the first show of young oaklings which appeared, rose almost like "a bonny *braird* of wheat." But notwithstanding this fine promise, the plantation came to nothing. If the young plants fought with each other, they must have fought what cockers call a Welsh main, for only tens were left out of hundreds and thousands. The mice had probably their share in bringing about this catastrophe; the hares a still greater one; but the indifferent success of the experiment, in which five or six hogsheads of acorns were lost, induced us to renounce the experiment as being at least precarious in its results. In the plantations of a friend, a vast number of Spanish chestnuts were sown chiefly with a view to under wood, and they made such progress at first a induced us to apply for some seed of the same kind from Portugal. Our correspondent fell into the small mistake of supposing the chestnuts were wanted for the table, and with that view had the all carefully peeled. This was a great disappointment at first, but we comforted ourselves in finding the promise of the chestnuts did not exceed in performance that of our own acorns. We therefore hold, that the sowing seeds in a wild country is a very doubtful measure, and that the only way to ensure a thriving plantation, is to stock it from a well-managed nursery, at no great distance from the spot where your trees are to arise.

Mr. Monteath suggests a principle of planting, which might certainly be rendered very advantageous to tenants, by admitting them into a share of the benefit to be derived from planting upon the land occupied by him. Of the great advantages which arise from this to the farmer, he gives the

following striking example, which may be equally quoted as an example of the profits of planting in general:

"The farm of Crosscaple, parish of Dunblane, and barony of Kinbuck, Perthshire, was taken by Mr. J. Dawson, for two nineteen, say thirty-eight years, and entered to in 1777, or 1778, at the annual rent of £26 sterling. There was a clause in the lease, that Mr. Dawson, the tenant, should, if he had a mind, plant all the wet ground that he did not think proper to plough, with trees of any kind; and the tenant should be at liberty to use what of that wood he required, during the currency of his lease, for all the husbandry purposes on the said farm, as well as for all the houses he required, or saw meet to erect on said farm. At the end, or expiration of said lease, all the standing timber was to be valued by two persons, mutually chosen by landlord and tenant. And it was expressly stipulated, that if the two valuators chosen did not agree, they were to choose a third person, and his opinion betwixt the arbiters was to be binding on both parties; and to their valuation the landlord was to pay the tenant in ready money. In February, 1817, the year after the lease expired, Mr. M'Arthur, forester in Drummond Castle, was chosen by and on the part of James Dawson, then the tenant (and now living in Dunblane,) as his valuator: and I was appointed by the trustees for behoof of the heir of Kippenross, then a minor. We met on the ground, and each for himself valued the wood. After comparing our valuations, there was a difference of about £25 sterling. We then named Mr. William Stirling, architect, Dunblane, who divided the difference; and all parties having agreed, fixed the value of the wood on said farm at £1029 sterling; which sum was promptly paid by the trustees of the estate to the tenants. The whole rent of the farm, paid annually for thirty-eight years, amounted to £988 sterling. The value paid by the proprietor for the wood was £1029, being £41 more than all the rents of the farm during the whole lease; besides, after the first ten years, the tenant had a sufficiency of timber for all house and husbandry purposes during the remainder of his lease. Let it be here observed, that, in valuing the said wood, we proceeded on the data of its being all cut down at the time, and brought to market, which was twenty per cent. lower than the like timber was selling for a few years before that time. The tenant being left to the freedom of his own will, as to the kind of trees to plant, had very injudiciously planted mostly Scotch firs; whereas had he planted oak and ash, the soil and situation being well

adapted for these kind, he would have had nearly three times that sum to receive." — *Introduction,* pp. xlii.-xliv.

Notwithstanding the favourable results upon the farm of Crosscaple, we must confess our opinion, that in most cases the entire property and management of the wood had better be left with the proprietor. To the tenant it will always be a secondary object, and often one which is altogether neglected. We know an instance in a Highland farm, of which a lease of three lives was granted many years ago. The lease contained such a clause as our author recommends, not permitting merely, but binding the tenant to plant a certain number of acres during the currency of the lease, of which he was to have the use during the term, and an indemnification at the expiry of his lease for the value of the trees that should be left. One would have thought that during the successive possession of three tenants, some one of them would have endeavoured to derive advantage from this clause in their favour; but the event was, that at the end of the lease the outgoing tenant was obliged to plant the requisite number of acres in order to fulfil his bargain, and thus left the proprietor a newly-planted and infant wood, for which the tenant had recently paid the expense of enclosing and planting, instead of a thriving and full-grown plantation, for which he would have had to receive several thousand pounds.

In this case the wood was not planted at all but though the farmer is a little more industrious, it is still less likely to thrive under his management, and attended to by his ordinary farm-servants, than in the hands of an expert forester and his assistants. Indeed, it has always seemed to us not the least important branch of this great national subject, that the increase and the proper management of our forests cannot but be attended with the most beneficial effect on the population of the country. Where there lies stretched a wide tract of land, affording scanty food for unsheltered flocks, the country will soon, under a judicious system, show the scene most delightful to the eye — an intermixture of pastoral and sylvan scenery, where Ceres, without usurping the land, finds also spots fit for cultivation. For even the plough has its office in this species of improvement. In numerous places we are surprised to see the marks of the furrows upon plains, upon bleak hill sides, and in wild moor land. We are not to suppose that, in the infancy of agriculture, our ancestors were able to raise crops of corn where we see only heath and fern. But in former times, and while the hills retained their natural clothing of wood, such spots were sheltered by the adjacent trees,

and were thus rendered capable of producing crops. There can be no doubt that, the protection being restored, the power of production would again return, and that in the neighbourhood of the little hamlets required for the occupation of the foresters, the means of his simple subsistence would be again produced. The effects of human industry would, as usual, overbalance every disadvantageous consideration, and man would raise food for himself and his domestic animals in the region where his daily labour gained his daily bread.

There would thus arise in the wild desert a hardy and moral population, living by the axe and mattock, pursuing their useful occupation in a mode equally favourable to health and morality. The woods, requiring in succession planting, pruning, thinning, felling, and barking, would furnish to such labourers a constant course of employment. They would be naturally attached to the soil on which they dwelt, and the proprietor who afforded them the means of life would be very undeserving if he had not his share of that attachment. In a word, the melancholy maxim of the poet would be confuted, and the race of bold peasantry, whom want and devastation had driven from these vast wilds, would be restored to their native country. This circumstance alone deserves the most profound attention from every class of proprietors; whether the philosophical economist, who looks with anxiety for the mode of occupying and supporting an excess of population, or the juvenile sportsman, who seeks the mode of multiplying his game, and increasing the number of his *gardes de chasse.* The woods which he plants will serve the first purpose, and, kindly treated, his band of foresters will assist in protecting them.

We may be thought to have laboured too long to prove propositions which no one can reasonably dispute; yet so incalculably important is the object — so comparatively indifferent is the attention of proprietors, that it becomes a duty to the country to omit no opportunity of recurring to the subject.

The only decent pretext which we hear alleged for resisting a call which is sounded from every quarter, is the selfish excuse, that the profits of plantations make a tardy and distant return. To a person who argues in this manner it is in vain to speak of the future welfare of the country, or of the immediate benefit to the poorer inhabitants, or of the honour justly attached to the memory of an extensive improver, since he must be insensible even to the benefit which his own family must derive from the improvement

recommended; we can, notwithstanding, meet him on his own ground, and affirm that the advantage to the proprietor who has planted a hundred acres, begins at the very commencement of the undertaking, and may be realized whenever it is the pleasure of the proprietor that such realization shall take place. If, for example, he chooses to sell a plantation at five years old, or at an earlier period, there is little doubt that it will be accounted worth the sum which the plantation cost him, in addition to the value of the land, and also the interest upon the expense so laid out. After this period the value increases in a compound *ratio:* and at any period when the planter chooses to sell his property, he must and will derive an advantage from his plantations, corresponding to their state of advancement. It is true that the landed proprietor's own interest will teach him not to be too eager in realizing the profits of his plantations, because every year that he retains them adds rapidly to their value. But still the value exists as much as that of the plate in his strong-box, and can be converted as easily into money, should he be disposed to sell the plantations which he has formed.

All this is demonstrable even to the prejudices of avarice itself, in its blindest mood; but the indifference to this great rural improvement arises, we have reason to believe, not so much out of the actual lucre of gain as the fatal vis inertiæ — that indolence which induces the lords of the soil to be satisfied with what they can obtain from it by immediate rent, rather than encounter the expense and trouble of attempting the modes of amelioration which require immediate expense — and, what is, perhaps, more grudged by the firstborn of Egypt — a little future attention. To such we can only say, that improvement by plantation is at once the easiest, the cheapest, and the least precarious mode of increasing the immediate value, as well as the future income, of their estates; and that, therefore, it is we exhort them to take to heart the exhortation of the dying Scotch laird to his son: — "Be aye sticking in a tree, Jock — it will be growing whilst you are sleeping."

ON LANDSCAPE GARDENING

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The notable paradox, that the residence of a proprietor upon his estate is of as little consequence as the bodily presence of a stockholder upon Exchange, has, we believe, been renounced. At least, as in the case of the Duchess of Suffolk's relationship to her own child, the vulgar continue to be of opinion that there is some difference in favour of the next hamlet and village, and even of the vicinage in general, when the squire spends his rents at the manor-house, instead of cutting a figure in France or Italy. A celebrated politician used to say, he would willingly bring in one bill to make poaching felony, another to encourage the breed of foxes, and a third to revive the decayed amusements of cockfighting and bull-baiting — that he would make, in short, any sacrifice to the humours and prejudices of the country gentlemen, in their most extravagant form, providing only he could prevail upon them to "dwell in their own houses, be the patrons of their own tenantry, and the fathers of their own children." However we might be disposed to stop short of these liberal concessions, we agree so far with the senator by whom they were enounced, as to think every thing of great consequence which furnishes an additional source of profit or of pleasure to the resident proprietor, and induces him to continue to support the useful and honourable character of a country gentleman, an epithet so pleasing in English ears, — so dear to English feelings of independence and patriotism. The manly lines of Akenside cannot fail to rush on the memory of our readers, nor was there such occasion for the reproach when it flowed from the pen of the author, as there is at this present day.

> "O blind of choice, and to yourselves untrue!
> The young grove shoots, their bloom the fields renew,
> The mansion asks its lord, the swains their friend,
> While he doth riot's orgies haply share,
> Or tempt the gamester's dark destroying snare,
> Or at some courtly shine, with slavish incense bend!"

Amidst the various sources of amusement which a country residence offers to its proprietor, the improvement of the appearance of the house and

adjacent demesne will ever hold a very high place. Field-sports, at an early season in life, have more of immediate excitation; nor are we amongst those who condemn the gallant chase, though we cannot, now-a-days, follow it: but a country life has leisure for both, if pursued, as Lady Grace says, moderately; and we can promise our young sportsman, also, that if he studies the pursuits which this article recommends, he will find them peculiarly combined with the establishment of covers, and the protection of game.

Agriculture itself, the most serious occupation of country gentlemen, has points which may be combined with the art we are about to treat of — or, rather, those two pursuits cannot, on many occasions, be kept separate from each other; for we shall have repeated occasion to remark, how much beauty is, in the idea of a spectator, connected with utility, and how much good taste is always offended by obvious and unnecessary expense. These are principles which connect the farm with the pleasure-ground or demesne. — Lastly, we have Pope's celebrated apology for the profuse expense bestowed on the house and grounds of Canons — if Canons, indeed, was meant —

> "Yet hence the poor are clothed, the hungry fed;
> Health to himself, and to his children bread,
> The labourer bears."

The taste of alterations may be good or bad, but the labour employed upon them must necessarily furnish employment to the most valuable, though often the feast considered of the children of the soil, — those, namely, who are engaged in its cultivation.

Horace Walpole, in a short essay, distinguished by his usual accuracy of information, and ornamented by his wit and taste, has traced the history of gardening, in a pictural sense, from the mere art of horticulture to the creation of scenery of a more general character, extending beyond the narrow limits of the proper garden and orchard. We venture, however, to think that this history, though combined by a master-hand, is in some degree imperfect, and confounds two particulars which our ancestors kept separate, and treated on principles entirely different — the garden, namely, with its ornaments, and the park, chase, or riding, which, under various names, was the proudest appurtenance of the feudal castle, and marked the existence of those rights and privileges which the feudal lord most valued.

The garden, at first intended merely for producing esculent vegetables, fruits, and flowers, began to assume another character, so soon as the increase of civilisation tempted the feudal baron to step a little way out of the limits of his fortifications, and permitted his high dame to come down from her seat upon the castle walls, so regularly assigned to her by ancient minstrels, and tread with stately pace the neighbouring precincts which art had garnished for her reception. These gardens were defended with walls, as well for safety as for shelter: they were often surrounded with fosses, had the command of water, and gave the disposer of the ground an opportunity to display his taste, by introducing canals, basins, and fountains, the margins of which admitted of the highest architectural ornament. As art enlarged its range, and the nobles were satisfied with a display of magnificence to atone for an abridgement of their power, new ornaments were successively introduced; banqueting houses were built; terraces were extended, and connected by staircases and balustrades of the richest forms. The result was, indeed, in the highest degree artificial, but it was a sight beautiful in itself — a triumph of human art over the elements, and, connected as these ornamented gardens were with splendid mansions, in the same character, there was a symmetry and harmony betwixt the baronial palace itself, and these its natural appendages, which recommended them to the judgment as well as to the eye. The shrubs themselves were artificial, in so far as they were either exotic, or, if indigenous, were treated in a manner, and presented an appearance, which was altogether the work of cultivation. The examination of such objects furnished amusement to the merely curious, information to the scientific, and pleasure, at least, to those who only looked at them, and passed on. Where there was little extent of ground, especially, what could be fitter for the amusement of "learned leisure," than those "trim gardens," which Milton has represented as the chosen scene of the easy and unoccupied man of letters? He had then around him the most delightful subjects of observation, in the fruits and flowers, the shrubs and trees, many of them interesting from their novelty and peculiar appearance and habits, inviting him to such studies as lead from created things up to the Almighty Creator. This sublime author, indeed, has been quoted, as bearing a testimony against the artificial taste of gardening, in the times when he lived, in those wellknown verses: —

> “Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
> In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
> Pour’d out profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
> Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
> The open field, and where the unpierced shade
> Embrown’d the noontide bowers. Thus was this place
> A happy rural seat of various view.”

This passage expresses exquisitely what park-scenery ought to be, and what it has, in some cases, actually become; but, we think, the quotation has been used to authorise conclusions which the author never intended. Eden was created by the Almighty fiat, which called heaven and earth into existence, and poets of genius much inferior, and falling far short of Milton in the power of expressing their meaning, would have avoided the solecism of representing Paradise as decorated with beds and curious knots of flowers, with which the idea of human labour and human care is inevitably connected — an impropriety, indeed, which could only be equalled by that of the French painter, who gave the skin dress of our first father the cut of a court suit. Milton nobly conceived that Eden, emanating directly from the Creator, must possess that majestic freedom which characterises even the less perfect works of nature, and, in doing so, he has anticipated the schemes of later improvers. But we think it extremely dubious, that he either meant to recommend landscape gardening on an extensive scale, or to censure those “trim gardens,” which he has elsewhere mentioned so affectionately.

A garden of this sort was an extension of the splendour of the residence into a certain limited portion of the domain — was, in fact, often used as a sort of chapel of ease to the apartments within doors; and afforded opportunities for the society, after the early dinner of our ancestors, to enjoy the evening in the cool fragrance of walks and bowers. Hence, the dispersed groups which Watteau and others set forth as perambulating the highly ornamented scenes which these artists took pleasure in painting. Sometimes the hospitality of old England made a different use of these retreats, and tenanted the pleasure-ground with parties of jolly guests, who retired from the dining-parlour to finish the bottle, *al fresco,* on the bowling-green and in its vicinity. We have heard, for example, that, in a former generation, this used to be the rule at Trentham, where a large party of country-gentlemen

used to assemble once a-week, on a public day appointed for the purpose. At a certain hour the company adjourned to the bowling-green, where, according to their different inclinations, they played at bowls, caroused, lounged, or smoked, and thus released their noble landlord from all further efforts to keep up the spirit of the entertainment. The honest Staffordshire squires were not, perhaps, the most picturesque objects in the world, while thus engaged, with countenances highly illuminated,

"With a pipe and a flask, puffing sorrow away;"

but the circumstance serves to show that such *plaisances* as we have described formed convenient, as well as agreeable accompaniments to the mansion of a nobleman, who, having a certain duty to perform towards his neighbourhood, was accommodated by that arrangement of his pleasure-ground which enabled him to do the thing with most satisfaction to his guests, and least personal inconvenience to himself.

Such were the uses of the old fashioned and highly ornamented style of gardening. Its beauty, we have been informed by a sure, nay, we will add, the surest guide on such a subject, consists in its connexion with the house —

"Where architectural ornaments are introduced into the garden about the house, however unnatural raised terraces, fountains, flights of steps, parapets, with statues, vases, balustrades, etc., may be called — however our ancestors may have been laughed at (and I was much diverted, though not at all convinced with the ridicule) for walking up and down stairs in the open air — the effect of all these objects is very striking; and they are not more unnatural, that is, not more artificial, than the hoses they are intended to accompany." *

* Price's Essays on the Picturesque, vol. ii., p. 135.

Nothing is more completely the child of art than a garden. Its *artificial* productions are necessarily surrounded by walls, marking out the space which they occupy as something totally distinct from the rest of the domain, and they are not seldom distinguished by the species of buildings which their culture requires. The greenhouses and conservatories necessary to complete a garden on a large scale are subjects susceptible of much ornament, all of which, like the plants themselves, must be the production of art, and art in its most obvious phasis. It seems right and congruous that these objects, being themselves the offspring of art, should have all the grace of outward form and interior splendour which their parent art can give

them. Their formality is to be varied and disguised, their shapes to be ornamented. A brick wall is, in itself, a disagreeable object; but its colour, when covered with green boughs, and partially seen through them, produces such a rich effect as to gratify the painter in a very high degree. Upon the various shapes and forms of shrubs, creepers, and flowers, it is unnecessary to dilate; they are the most beautiful of nature's works, and to collect them and arrange them with taste is the proper and rational purpose of art. Water, even when disposed into the formal shapes of ponds, canals, and artificial fountains, although this may be considered as the greatest violence which can be perpetrated upon nature, affords effects beautiful in themselves, and congenial with the presence of ornamented architecture and artificial gardening. Our champion, Price himself, we presume to think, rather shrinks from his ground on this particular point, and may not be willing to follow his own banner so far as we are disposed to carry it. He justifies fountains only on the ground that natural *jets-d'eau,* though rare, do exist, and are among the most surprising exhibitions of nature: these, he thinks, must *therefore* be proper objects of imitation; and since art cannot emulate these natural fountains in greatness of style and execution, she is justified in compensating her weakness by symmetry, variety, and richness of effect. Now we are inclined, with all the devotion of reverence for Sir Uvedale Price, to dispute the ground of his doctrine on this subject, and to affirm, that whether the *geyser,* or any other natural *jet-d'eau* existed or no, the sight of a magnificent fountain, either flinging up its waters into the air and returning down in showers of mist, which make the ascending column resemble a giant in a shroud, or broken into other forms of importance and beauty, would still be a captivating spectacle; and the tasteful veteran argues, to our fancy, much more like himself when he manfully contends, that the element of water is as fitly at the disposal of the professor of hydraulics as the solid stone is at that of the architect. It has been a long time fashionable to declaim against architectural water-works, and to ask triumphantly, what are *les eaux* of Versailles to the cataracts of the Nile and of Niagara, to the falls of Schaffhausen, or even to those of the Clyde? The answer is ready to a question which is founded on the meanest of all tastes — that which arises from comparison. The water-works of Versailles are certainly inferior to the magnificent cascades which we have mentioned; but we suspect they have been talked of by many authors who have never witnessed what is not now an everyday sight. Those who *have* seen that

exhibition will certainly say they have witnessed a most magnificent and interesting scene, far beyond what they might have previously supposed it was within the compass of human art to produce — We do not mean to say that the expense was altogether well laid out which was necessary to bring the waters of the Seine by the mediation of a complicated bundle of sticks, to throw *summersets* at Versailles. This is entirely a separate affair. The present question merely is, whether, the money being spent, and the water-works completed, a great example of human power over the elements has not been given, and a corresponding effect produced? We, at least, are prepared to answer in the affirmative.

Wealth, in this, as in other respects, has proved a snare, and played "many fantastic tricks before high heaven." If we approve of Palladian architecture, the vases and balustrades of Vitruvius, the enriched entablatures and superb stairs of the Italian school of gardening, we must not, on this account, be construed as vindicating the paltry imitations of the Dutch, who clipped yews into monsters of every species and description, and relieved them with the painted wooden figures which are seen much in the attitude of their owners, silent and snugly smoking at the end of the paltry walk of every *Lust-huys*. This *topiarian* art, as it was called, came into England with King William, and has left strong and very ungraceful traces behind it. The distinction betwixt the Italian and Dutch is obvious. A stone hewn into a gracefully ornamented vase or urn has a value which it did not before possess; a yew hedge clipped into a fortification is only defaced. The one is a production of art, the other a distortion of nature. Yet, now that these ridiculous anomalies have fallen into general disuse, it must be acknowledged that there exist gardens, the work of Loudon, Wise, and such persons as laid out ground in the Dutch taste, which would be much better subjects for modification than for absolute destruction. Their rarity *now* entitles them to some care as a species of antiques, and unquestionably they give character to some snug, quiet, and sequestered situations, which would otherwise have no marked feature of any kind. We ourselves retain an early and pleasing recollection of the seclusion of such a scene. A small cottage, adjacent to a beautiful village, the habitation of an ancient maiden lady, was for some time our abode. It was situated in a garden of seven or eight acres, planted about the beginning of the eighteenth century by one of the Millars, related to the author of the *Gardener's Dictionary,* or, for aught we know, by himself. It was full of long straight walks betwixt hedges of

yew and horn-beam, which rose tall and close on every side. There were thickets of flowering shrubs, a bower, and an arbour, to which access was obtained through a little maze of contorted walks, calling itself a labyrinth. In the centre of the bower was a splendid platanus, or Oriental plane — a huge hill of leaves — one of the noblest specimens of that regularly beautiful tree which we remember to have seen. In different parts of the garden were fine ornamental trees which had attained great size, and the orchard was filled with fruit-trees of the best description. There were seats and trellis-walks, and a banqueting-house. Even in our time, this little scene, intended to present a formal exhibition of vegetable beauty, was going fast to decay. The parterres of flowers were no longer watched by the quiet and simple *friends* under whose auspices they had been planted, and much of the ornament of the domain had been neglected or destroyed to increase its productive value. We visited it lately, after an absence of many years. Its air of retreat, the seclusion which its alleys afforded, was entirely gone; the huge platanus had died, like most of its kind, in the beginning of this century; the hedges were cut down, the trees stubbed up, and the whole character of the place so much destroyed, that we were glad when we could leave it. This was the progress of innovation, perhaps of improvement: yet, for the sake of that one garden, as a place of impressive and solemn retreat, we are inclined to enter a protest against the hasty and ill-considered destruction of things which, once destroyed, cannot be restored.

We may here also notice a small place, called Barncluth, in Lanarkshire, standing on the verge of the ridgy bank which views the junction of the Evan with the Clyde. Nothing can be more romantic than the scene around: the river sweeps over a dark rugged bed of stone, overhung with trees and bushes; the ruins of the original castle of the noble family of Hamilton frown over the precipice; the oaks which crown the banks beyond those grey towers are relics of the ancient Caledonian forest, and at least a thousand years old. It might be thought that the house and garden of Barncluth, with its walks of velvet turf and its verdant alleys of yew and holly, would seem incongruous among natural scenes as magnificent as those we have described. But the effect generally produced is exactly the contrary. The place is so small, that its decorations, while they form, from their antique appearance, a singular foreground, cannot compete with, far less subdue the solemn grandeur of the view which you look down upon;

and thus give the spectator the idea of a hermitage constructed in the midst of the wilderness.

Those who choose to prosecute this subject farther, will find in Sir U. Price's book his regret for the destruction of a garden on the old system, described in a tone of exquisite feeling, which leads that distinguished author to declare in favour of many parts of the old school of gardening, and to argue for the preservation of the few remains of ancient magnificence that still exist, by awakening the owner to a sense of their beauties.

It were indeed high time that some one should interfere. The garden, artificial in its structure, its shelter, its climate, and its soil, which every consideration of taste, beauty, and convenience recommended to be kept near to the mansion, and maintained, as its appendage, in the highest state of ornamental decoration which could be used with reference to the character of the house itself, has, by a strange and sweeping sentence of exile, been condemned to wear the coarsest and most humbling form. Reduced to a clumsy oblong, enclosed within four rough-built walls, and sequestered in some distant corner where it may be best concealed from the eye to which it has been rendered a nuisance, the modern garden resembles nothing so much as a convict in his gaol apparel, banished, by his very appearance, from all decent society. If the peculiarity of the proprietor's taste inclines him to the worship of Flora or Pomona, he must attend their rites in distance and secrecy, as if he were practising some abhorred mysteries, instead of rendering an homage which is so peculiarly united with that of the household gods. *

* The present Duke of Marlborough has *all but* violated this law, much to the honour of his taste, at White-Knights; and more recently, we hear, at Blenheim. — *S.*

Such being the great change in this department of rural economy, let us next look at that which has taken place in another no less essential part of it. The passionate fondness of our ancestors for the chase is often manifested in their choice of a residence. In an ancient inscription on the house of Wharncliffe, we are informed that the lodge was built in Henry VIII.'s time, by one gentle knight, Sir Thomas Wortley, that he might hear the buck *bell* in the summer season — a simple record, which speaks much to the imagination. The space of ground set apart for a park of deer must, to answer its purpose, possess the picturesque qualities which afford the

greatest scope for the artist: there ought to be a variety of broken ground, of copsewood, and of growing timber — of land, and of water. The soil and herbage must be left in its natural state; the long fern, amongst which the fawns delight to repose, must not be destroyed. In short, the stag, by nature one of the freest denizens of the forest, can only be kept under even comparative restraint, by taking care that all around him intimates a complete state of forest and wilderness. But the character of abode which is required by these noble animals of the chase is precisely the same which, from its beautiful effects of light and shadow, from its lonely and sequestered character, from the variety and intricacy of its glades, from the numerous and delightful details which it affords on every point, makes the strongest and most pleasing impression on all who are alive to natural beauty. The ancient English poets, Chaucer and Spenser in particular, never luxuriate more than when they get into a forest: by the accuracy with which they describe particular trees, and from their noticing the different characters of the different species, and the various effects of light and darkness upon the walks and glades of the forest, it is evident that they regarded woodland scenery not merely as associated with their favourite sports, but as having in itself beauties which they could appreciate, though their age was not possessed of the fascinating of committing them to canvass. Even the common people, as we noticed in a former Article, seldom mention “the good forest,” and “the merry greenwood,” without some expression of fondness, arising, doubtless, from the pleasure they took in the scenes themselves, as well as in the pastimes which they afforded.

We are not, however, to suppose, that the old feudal barons made ornamental scenery any part of their study. When planting their parks, or when cutting paths and glades through them, their attention was probably entirely occupied with the protection of the deer and convenience of the huntsman. Long avenues were particularly necessary for those large parties, resembling our modern *battues,* where the honoured guests being stationed in fit *standings,* had an opportunity of displaying their skill in venery, by selecting the buck which was in season, and their dexterity at bringing him down with the crossbow or longbow; and hence all the great forests were pierced by these long rectilinear alleys which appear in old prints, and are mentioned in old books. The following description of Chantilly, by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, though the scene is in France, and on a scale of unusual grandeur and extent, is no bad picture of the domains by which the

feudal nobility surrounded their castles and manor-houses, and of the dignified character of the mansions themselves.

"A little river, descending from some higher grounds, in a country which was almost all his (the Constable de Montmorency's) own, and falling at last upon a rock in the middle of a valley, which, to keep drawing forwards, it must on one or the other side thereof have declined — some of the ancestors of the Montmorencys, to ease the river of this labour, made clear channels through this rock, to give it a free passage, dividing the rock by this means into little islands, upon which he built a great strong castle, joined together with bridges, and sumptuously furnished with hangings of silk and gold, rare pictures, and statues; all which buildings, erected as I formerly told, were encompassed about with water … . . One might see the huge carps, pikes, and trouts, which were kept in several divisions, gliding along the waters very easily. Yet nothing, in my opinion, added so much to the glory of this castle as a forest adjoining to it, and upon a level with the house; for, being of a very large extent, and set thick both with tall trees and underwood, the whole forest, which was replenished with wild-boar, stag, and roe-deer, was cut into long walks every way, so that although the dogs might follow, their chase through the thickets, the huntsman might ride along the sand walks, and meet or overtake their game in some one of them, they being cut with that art that they led to all the parts in the said forest."

Charles V., when passing through France, was so delighted with Chantilly, as to declare he would have given a province in the Low Countries to have possessed such a residence; and the reader must be exclusively prejudiced indeed to the modern system, who cannot image to himself the impression made by the gorgeous splendour of the chateau, contrasted with the wilderness of the surrounding forest.

If the reader will imagine a house in the irregular form of architecture which was introduced in Elizabeth's time, its varied front, graced with projecting oriels, and its angles ornamented with turrets; its columnar chimneys, so much adorned as to make that a beauty which is generally a deformity; its fair halls, banqueting-rooms, galleries, and lodgings for interior accommodation, — it will afford no uncomfortable notion of the days of good Queen Bess. In immediate and close connexion with the mansion lie its gardens, with their terraces, urns, statues, staircases, screens, alcoves, and summerhouses; its dry paved or turfed walks, leading through a succession of interesting objects, the whole line of architecture

corresponding with that of the house, with its Gothic labels and entablature, but assuming gradually a plainer and more massive character, as the grounds extended and seemed to connect themselves with the open country. The inhabitants possessed the means, we must also suppose, of escaping from this display of ostentatious splendour to the sequestered paths of a lonely chase, dark enough and extensive enough to convey the idea of a natural forest, where, as in strong contrast with the scene we have quitted, the cooing of the wood-pigeon is alone heard, where the streams find their way unconfined, and the trees spread their arms untortured by art; where all is solemn, grand, and untutored, and seems the work of unassisted nature. We would ask the reader, when he has arranged in his ideas such a dwelling, with its accompaniments, of a natural and ornamental character, not whether the style might be corrected by improving the internal arrangement of the apartments; by diminishing the superfluous ornaments of the *plaisance;* by giving better, yet not formal, access to the natural beauties of the park, extending its glades in some places, and deepening its thickets in others — for all this we willingly admit; but whether our ancestors did not possess all that good taste could demand as the materials of most delightful habitations?

The civil wars of Charles I.‘s time, as they laid low many a defensible house of the preceding period, disparked and destroyed in general the chases, ridings, and forest walks which belonged to them; and when the Restoration followed, the Cavaliers who had the good luck to retain their estates, were too poor to reestablish their deer-parks, and, perforce, contented to let Ceres reassume the land. Thus the chase or park, one of the most magnificent features of the ancient mansion, was lost in so many instances, that it could be no longer regarded as the natural and marked appendage of the seat of an English gentleman of fortune. The “trim garden,” which could be added as easily to the suburban villa as to the sequestered country-seat, maintained its place and fashion no longer; while the French taste of Charles II.‘s time, introducing *treillages* and *cabinets de verdure,* and still more, the Dutch fashion, brought in, as we have before hinted, by King William, introduced so many fantastic caprices into the ancient style, that it became necessary, as we have already stated, to resort to the book of nature, and turn over a new leaf.

Kent, too much extolled in his life, and, perhaps, too much dispraised since his death, was the first to devise a system of laying out ground

different from that which had hitherto prevailed in general, though with some variations in detail, for perhaps a century and a half. It occurred to this artist, that, instead of the marked distinction which was made by the old system between the garden and its accompaniments on the one hand, and the surrounding country on the other, it might be possible to give to the former some of the simplicity of the country, and invest that, on the other hand, with somewhat of the refinement of the garden. With this view, all, or nearly all, the ancient and domestic ornaments of the *plaisance* were placed under ban. The garden, as already noticed, was banished to as great a distance as possible; the *plaisance* was changed into a *pleasure-ground!* Down went many a trophy of old magnificence, courtyard, ornamented enclosure, foss, avenue, barbican, and every external muniment of battled wall and flanking tower, out of the midst of which the ancient dome, rising high above all its characteristic accompaniments, and seemingly girt round by its appropriate defences, which again circled each other in their different gradations, looked, as it should, the queen and mistress of the surrounding country. It was thus that the huge old tower of Glamis, "whose birth tradition notes not," once showed its lordly head above seven circles (if we recollect aright) of defensive boundaries, through which the friendly guest was admitted, and at each of which a suspicious person was unquestionably put to his answer. A disciple of Kent had the cruelty to render this splendid old mansion, the more modern part of which was the work of Inigo Jones, more *parkish,* as he was pleased to call it; to raze all those exterior defences, and bring his mean and paltry gravel-walk up to the very door from which, deluded by the name, one might have imagined Lady Macbeth (with the form and features of Siddons) issuing forth to receive King Duncan. It is thirty years and upwards since we have seen Glamis; but we have not yet forgotten or forgiven the atrocity which, under pretence of improvement, deprived that lordly place of all its appropriate accompaniments,

> "Leaving an ancient dome and towers like these
> Beggar'd and outraged."

The ruling principle that dictated Kent's innovations was in itself excellent. The improver was considered as a painter, the landscape as the canvass on which, with such materials as he possessed, he was to display his power. Thus far the conception was laudable; and, indeed, it had already occurred

to Sir John Vanbrugh, when consulted about laying out the grounds at Blenheim, who recommended to the Duke of Marlborough to advise with a landscape-painter upon that subject, as the most competent judge. Had Kent but approached in execution the principle which he adopted in theory, he would have been in reality the great man that his admirers accounted him. But unhappily, though an artist by profession, this father of the English landscape was tame and cold of spirit; his experience had not made him acquainted with the grander scenes of nature, or the poverty of his soul had not enabled him to comprehend and relish them. Even the Nature whom he pretended to choose for his exclusive guide seemed to have most provokingly disappeared from him. By the time that spades, mattocks, and pickaxes had formed and sloped his declivities in the regular and undulating line which he required, — that the water's edge had been trimly bordered with that thin, lank grass, which grows on a new sown lawn, and has so little resemblance to the luxuriant vegetation of nature, — his meagre and unvaried slopes were deprived of all pretension to a natural appearance, as much as the toes which were pinched, squeezed, and pared, that they might be screwed into the little glass slipper, were different from the graceful fairy foot which it fitted without effort. Thus, while Kent's system banished art from the province which might, in some degree, be considered as her own, he introduced her into that more especially devoted to Nature, and in which the character of her exertions always made her presence offensively conspicuous. For water-works and architectural ornaments, the professed productions of art, Kent produced *ha-has!* sheets of artificial water, formal clumps and belts of trees, and bare expanded flats or slopes of shaven grass, which, indicating the recent use of the levelling spade and roller, have no more resemblance to that nature which we desire to see imitated, than the rouge of an antiquated coquette, having all the marks of a sedulous toilet, bears to the artless blush of a cottage girl. His style is not simplicity, but affectation labouring to seem simple.

It is worth notice, that, while exploding the nuisance of graven images in the ancient and elaborate gardens, Kent, like some of the kings of Israel, though partly a reformer, could not altogether wean himself from every species of idolatry. He swept, indeed, the gardens clear of every representation of mythology, and the visitor's admiration was no longer excited by beholding

"Statues growing that noble place in,
All heathen godesses most rare,
Homer, Plutarch, and Nebuchadnezzar,
All standing naked in the open air."

But to make amends for their ejection, Kent and his followers had temples, obelisks, and gazabos of every description in the park, all stuck about on their respective high places, with as little meaning, and at least as little pretension to propriety, as the horticultural Pantheon which had been turned out of doors.

The taste for this species of simplicity spread far and wide. Browne, the successor of Kent, followed in his footsteps; but his conceptions, to judge from the piece of artificial water at Blenheim (formed, we believe, chiefly to blunt the point of an ill-natured epigram,) were more magnificent than those of his predecessor. We cannot, however, suppose old Father Thames so irritable as this celebrated professor intimated, when he declared that the river would never forgive him for having given him so formidable a rival.

The school of spade and mattock flourished the more, as it was a thriving occupation, when the projector was retained to superintend his improvements — which seldom failed to include some forcible alteration on the face of nature. The vanity of some capability-men dictated those violent changes which were recommended chiefly by the cupidity of others. While the higher-feeling class were desirous, by the introduction of a lake, the filling up a hollow, or the elevation of a knoll, to show to all the world that Mr. — — had laid out those grounds; the meaner brothers of the trade were covetous of sharing the very considerable sums which must be expended in making such alterations. Mannerists they were to the extremity of monotony, and what they extolled as new and striking, was frequently only some trick of affectation. For example, a pupil of Browne, Robertson by name, laid out the grounds of Duddingstone, near Edinburgh. The place was flat, though surrounded by many distinguished features. A brook flowed through the grounds, which, by dint of successive damheads, was arrested in its progress, twisted into the links of a string of pork-sausages, flung over a stone embankment, and taught to stagnate in a lake with islets, and swans *quantum sufficit.* The whole demesne was surrounded by a belt, which now, at the distance of forty or fifty years, is still a formal circuit of dwindled trees. It was to be expected that some advantage might have been

gained by looking out from some point of the grounds on Craigmillar Castle, a ruin beautiful in its form and interesting in its combinations with Scottish history; and the professor of landscape-gardening was asked, why so obvious a resource had not been made something of? He replied, with the gravity becoming such a character, that Craigmillar, seen over all the country, was a common prostitute. A less ludicrous, though equally nonsensical reason, for excluding Duddingstone Loch, a small and picturesque lake, was, that it did not fall within his lordship's property, and the mountain of Arthur's Seat was not excluded, only because it was too bulky to be kept out of sight. We have heard the excellent old Lord Abercorn mention these circumstances with hearty ridicule; but he suffered Mr. Robertson to take his own way, because, he said, every man must be supposed to understand his own business, — and partly, we may add, because he did not choose to take the trouble of disputing the point. Yet this Mr. Robertson was a man of considerable taste and acquirement, and was only unsuccessful because he wrought upon a bad system.

The founders of a better school were the late Mr. Payne Knight and Sir Uvedale Price, who still survives to enjoy the triumph he has achieved. These champions, and particularly Price, succeeded in demonstrating to a deceived public, that what had been palmed upon them as nature and simplicity were only formality and affectation. The contest on behalf of the new system was chiefly maintained by Mr. Repton, and in a manner which shows that the private feelings of that layer out of grounds — unquestionably a man of very considerable talents — were more than half converted to the opinions of Sir Uvedale, and that he was disputing rather to save his own honour and that of his brethren, than for any chance of actual victory. In fact, we do not much overstate the matter when we allege, that those who were least willing to own that Price was right, because it would have been a virtual acknowledgment that they themselves were wrong, were among the first to admit in practice the principles which he recommended, or at least to make use of them, whether they admitted them or no. There has been since this controversy — that is, for these thirty years past — a considerable and marked improvement in laying out of pleasure-grounds — the spade and shovel have been less in use — the strait-waistcoating of brooks has been less rigorously enforced — and improvers, while talking of Nature, have not so remorselessly shut her out of doors. We believe most landscape-gardeners of the present day would take a pride in preserving

scenery, which their masters of the last age would have made conscience to destroy. The mummery of temples and obelisks is abolished, while the propriety of retaining every shred connected with history or antiquity, is, in one system at least, religiously preserved, In such cases,

> "A cornerstone, by lighting cut,
> The threshold of a cottage hut,"

may have their value. The same rule is, we trust, generally observed in the scenes which Nature has herself ornamented; and the artist holds himself discharged if he consults and observes her movements without affecting to dictate to or control them. Those glens, groves, or mountains, which she has marked with a peculiar character, are no longer defaced by the impotent endeavours of man to erase it.

The tendency of our national taste, indeed, has been changed, in almost every particular, from that which was meagre, formal, and poor, and has attained, comparatively speaking, a character of richness variety, and solidity. An ordinary chair, in the most ordinary parlour, has now something of an antique cast — something of Grecian massiveness, at once, and elegance in its forms. That of twenty or thirty years since was mounted on four tapering and tottering legs, resembling four tobacco pipes; the present supporters of our stools have a curule air, curve outwards behind, and give a comfortable idea of stability to the weighty aristocrat or ponderous burgess who is about to occupy one of them. The same change in taste may be remarked out of doors, where, from the total absence of ornament, we are, perhaps, once more verging to its excess, and exhibiting such a tendency to ornament, in architecture and decoration, that the age may, we suspect, be nothing the worse for being reminded that, as naked poverty is not simplicity, so fantastic profusion of ornament is not good taste.

But in our landscape-gardening, as it has been rather unhappily called, although the best professors of the art have tacitly adopted the more enlarged and liberal views provided by the late Mr. Knight, and Sir U. Price, these are not, perhaps, so generally received and practised as could be desired. We say the art has been unfortunately named. The idea of its being, after all, a variety of the gardening art, with which it has little or nothing to do, has given a mechanical turn to the whole profession, and certainly encouraged many persons to practise it, with no greater qualifications than ought to be found in a tolerably skilful gardener. This certainly, however

intelligent and respectable the individuals may be, is not the sort of person, in point of taste and information, to whom we would wish to see the arrangement of great places intrusted. The degree of mechanical skill which they possess may render them adequate to the execution of plans arranged by men of more comprehensive abilities, better education, and a possession, as demanded by Price, of the knowledge connected with the higher branch of landscape-painting, and with the works of the first masters. Far from threatening the disposers of actual scenery with an abrogation of their profession, as was unjustly stated to be his object, Price's system went to demand from them a degree of scientific knowledge not previously required, and to elevate in proportion their rank and profession in general estimation.

The importance of this art, in its more elegant branches, ranks so high in our opinion, that we would willingly see its profession (and certainly it contains persons worthy of such honour) more closely united with the fine arts than it can now be esteemed. The improvers or layers out of ground would, in that case, be entitled to demand from their employers a greater degree of fair play than is, in many cases, allowed them at present. According to the common process, their time is estimated at a certain number of guineas per day, and the party consulting them is not unnaturally interested in getting as much out of the professor within as little time as can possibly be achieved. The landscape-gardener is, therefore, trotted over the grounds two, three, or four times, and called upon to decide upon points which a proprietor himself would hesitate to determine, unless he were to visit the ground in different lights, and at different seasons, and various times of the day during the course of a year. This leads to a degree of precipitation on the part of the artist, who knows his remuneration will be grudged, unless he makes some striking and notable alteration, yet has little or no time allowed him to judge what that alteration ought to be. Hence, men of taste and genius are reduced to act at random; hence an habitual disregard of the *genius loci,* and a proportional degree of confidence in a set of general rules, influencing their own practice, so that they do not receive from nature the impression of what the place ought to be, but impress on nature, at a venture, the stamp, manner, or character of their own practice, as a mechanic puts the same mark on all the goods which pass through his hands. Some practise the art, we are aware, upon a much more liberal footing; — it is on that more liberal footing that we would wish to see the

profession of the improver generally practised. We would have the higher professors of this noble art to be that for which nature has qualified some of them whom we have known, and, doubtless, many to whose characters we are strangers — we mean, to be physicians — liberally recompensed for their general advice — not apothecaries, to be paid in proportion to the drugs which they can contrive to make the patient swallow.

It may, perhaps, be thought that, by the change we propose, we would raise too high a standard for such artists as might attain great proficiency in their calling, and so limit the benefit of their efforts to the great and the wealthy. This would be a consequence far from answering our purpose — but we have no apprehension that it would follow. The rules of good taste, when once exemplified, are pretty sure to be followed. Let any one recollect the atrocious forms of our ordinary crockery and potter's ware forty years since, when the shapes were as vilely deformed as that of the pipkin which cost Robinson Crusoe so much trouble; and observe the difference since the classical outlines of the Etruscan vases have been adopted as models for our Staffordshire ware. Every form before was detestable, whatever pains might have been bestowed in the ornamenting and finishing: whereas, since the models introduced by Messrs. Wedgwood, the most ordinary earthenware is rendered pleasing to the eye, however coarse its substance, and mean the purpose for which it is designed. It is thus with good taste in every department. It cannot be established by canons and *dicta,* but must be left to force its way gradually through example. A certain number of real landscapes, executed by men adequate to set the example of a new school, which shall reject the tame and pedantic rules of Kent and Browne, without affecting the grotesque or fantastic — who shall bring back more ornament into the garden, and introduce a bolder, wider, and more natural character into the park, will have the effect of awakening a general spirit of emulation. There are thousands of proprietors who have neither scenes capable of exhibiting the perfection of the art, nor revenues necessary to reimburse the most perfect of the artists, but who may catch the principle on which improvers ought to proceed, and render a place pretty though it cannot be grand, or comfortable though it cannot aspire to beauty.

We are called at present from the general subject, to which, at some future period, we may, perhaps, return, by the duty of noticing a discovery, as it may be called, of one of the most powerful and speedy means of

effecting a general and most interesting change in the face of nature, for the purpose of ornamenting the vicinity of a gentleman's residence.

The three materials with which the rural designer must go to work — the colours, in other words, of which his landscape must be composed, are earth, water, and trees. Little change can be attempted, by means of digging away, or heaping together earth: the levelling of rising grounds, or the raising artificial hillocks, only serves to show that man has attempted what is beyond his powers. Water is more manageable, and there are places where artificial lakes and rivers have been formed with considerable effect. Of this our author, Sir Henry Steuart, has given a very pleasing instance in his own park. But, to speak generally, this alteration requires very considerable advantages in the previous situation of the ground, and has only been splendidly successful, where Nature herself had formerly designed a lake, though the water had escaped from its bed by the gradual lowering or sudden bursting of the banks at the lower end. These being replaced by a damhead, the lake will be restored to its bed, and man will only have brought back the state of the landscape to that which nature originally presented. But, we doubt if even the ingenious process recommended by Sir U. Price would satisfy his own just and correct taste, when carried into execution; and we are, at any rate, confident that it is only in rare instances, and at considerable expense, that artificial water can be formed with the desired effect.

Trees, therefore, remain the proper and most manageable material of picturesque improvement; and as trees and bushes can be raised almost any where — as by their presence they not only delight the eye, with their various forms and colours, but benefit the soil by their falling leaves, and improve the climate by their shelter, there is scarcely any property fitted for human habitation so utterly hopeless, as not to be rendered agreeable by extensive and judicious plantations. But, to obtain the immediate command of wood, mature enough to serve as shade, shelter, and ornament, has been hitherto denied to the improver. He has been compelled to form his plan while his plants are pigmies; to await their slow progress towards maturity; and to bequeath as a legacy to his successors and descendants the pleasure of witnessing the full accomplishment of his hopes and wishes. He also frequently bequeaths his land to the care of careless or ignorant successors, who, from want of taste or skill, leave his purposes unfulfilled.

Repton, indeed, has justly urged, in favour of the plans of Kent and Browne, that the formal belts and clumps which they planted were intended only to encourage the rise of the young plantations, which were afterwards to be thinned out into varied and picturesque forms, but which have, in many instances, been left in the same crowded condition and formal disposition which they exhibited at their being first planted. If the school of Kent and Browne were liable to be thus baffled by the negligence of those to whom the joint execution of their plans was necessarily intrusted, a much greater failure may be expected during the subsequent generation, from the neglect of plans which affect to be laid out on the principles of Price. We have already stated, that it is to be apprehended that a taste for the fantastic will supersede that which the last age have entertained in favour of the formal. We have seen various efforts, by artists of different degrees of taste and eminence, to form plantations which are designed at some future day to represent the wild outline and picturesque glades of a natural wood. When the line of these is dictated by the character of the ground, such attempts are extremely pleasing and tasteful. But when a bizarre and extravagant irregularity of outline is introduced upon a plain or rising ground, when its whole involutions resemble the irregular flourishes of Corporal Trim's harangue, and when we are told that this is designed to be one day a picturesque plantation, we are tempted to recollect the common tale of the German baron, who endeavoured to imitate the liveliness of Parisian society, by jumping over stools, tables, and chairs, in his own apartment, and when the other inhabitants of the hotel came to inquire the cause of the disturbance, answered them with the explanation, *Sh'apprends d'estre fif.* If the visitor applies to know the meaning of the angles and contortions introduced into the lines of the proposed plantations, in Petruchio's language —

> "What! up and down, carved like an apple tart;
> Here's snip, and nip, and cut, and slish, and slash,
> Like to a censer in a barber's shop" — —

he receives the plausible reply, that what he now sees is not the final result of the designer's art, but that all this fantastic zig-zaggery, which resembles the traces left by a dog scampering through snow, is but a set of preparations for introducing at a future period, as the trees shall come to maturity, those groups and glades, that advancing and retiring of the

woodland scene, which will realize the effects demanded by lovers of the picturesque. At present we are told, that the scene resembles a lady's tresses in *papillotes,* as they are called, and in training for the conquests which they are to make when combed into becoming ringlets. But, alas! art is in this department peculiarly tedious, and life, as in all cases, precarious and short. How many of these *papillotes* will never be removed at all, and remain unthinned-out, like the clumps and belts of Browne's school, disfiguring the scenes they were designed to adorn!

This has been hitherto the main obstruction to the art of laying out ground, that no artist could hope to see the perfection of his own labours; nay, the pleasure of superintending their progress till the effect begins to appear, is granted but to those who live long, or who commence their improvements early in life. The ambition of man has not remained passively quiescent under this restriction of his powers, and since the days of Sultan Adhim in the Tales of the Genii, down to the present time, various efforts have been made by different means, and under various circumstances, to transfer trees in a considerable state of maturity to the park or pleasure-ground, and apply them to the composition or improvement of real landscapes. The modes essayed may probably have been successful, in some instances, where the operation has been peculiarly favoured by circumstances; but, in general, the result has been fruitless expense and disappointment. The practice has been, therefore, latterly considered as, in a great measure, empirical, so slight were the chances of success. Miller dissuades his readers from the attempt; and Mr. Pontey judiciously considers the mutilated and decaying trees on which the experiment had been made, rather as a deformity than a beauty to the landscape. It was even denied that any real advance was gained by transplanting a tree of ten years old, and it was averred (and truly, according to the ordinary practice) that a plant from the nursery, placed beside it, would, in the course of a few years form by far the finer tree of the two.

Nevertheless, the obstacles which have been so long considered as insuperable, have given way, in our own time, before the courage, patience, and skill of an individual who has been enabled, with a success which appears almost marvellous, to cover a whole park at once with groups and single trees, combined with copse and underwood of various sizes, all disposed with exquisite taste. This accomplished person, Sir Henry Steuart of Allanton, is known to the literary world by an elaborate translation of

Sallust, accompanied with a body of notes intimating an uncommon degree of general knowledge and classical learning. Independent in circumstances, and attached by taste and habits to rural pursuits, and especially those of which we have been treating, Sir Henry has resided chiefly at the seat of his ancestors, to which, little distinguished by nature, his wonderful exertions have given, within a comparatively short period of time, all that could, according to the usual mode of improvement, have been conferred in the course of forty tedious years.

Allanton, an ancient possession of this branch of the house of Steuart, had not originally much to recommend it to the owner, except its recollections. Situated in the county of Lanark, it is removed from the vale of the Clyde, which presents such beautiful scenery to the eye of the traveller. The soil is moorish, and the view from the front of the house must, before it was clothed with wood, have consisted in irregular swells and slopes, presenting certainly no striking features either of grandeur or beauty, — probably "just not ugly." But fortune, that consigned a man of taste and observation to a spot which was not peculiarly favourable to his pursuits, gave him the power of indemnifying himself, by compelling nature to impart to his domain no inconsiderable portion of those silvan beauties with which she has spontaneously invested more favourite scenes; and we certainly cannot hesitate to avow our opinion, that the park of Allanton, as it now appears, its history being duly considered, is as well worthy of a pilgrimage as any of the established lions of "the North Countrie."

We cannot be surprised, nor ought Sir Henry Steuart to be offended, if the wonder excited by so great a triumph of art over nature, in a process which has been thought and found so extremely difficult, should be, on the first view, mingled with some incredulity. It is natural for the reader to suspect, that the zeal of the theorist may, in some degree, have imposed on the improver, and that he communicates to the public observations which he himself has made under a species of self-deception, and which are, perhaps, a little exaggerated in his account of their results. But Allanton has been visited by many intelligent judges, disposed to inquire with sufficient minuteness into the reality of the changes which have been effected there; and so far as we have had an opportunity of knowing, the uniform testimony of those visitors corresponds with the account given by Sir Henry Steuart himself.

A committee of gentlemen, * deputed by the

* The Lord Belhaven, Sir Archibald Campbell of Succoth, Bart., Sir Walter Scott of Abbotsford, Bart., George Cranstoun, Esq., now Lord Corehouse, Alexander Young, Esq., of Harburn. — *S.*

Scottish Highland Society, supposed to be well acquainted with country matters, and particularly with the management of plantations, visited the place in September, 1823. Their report embraces three principal objects of inquiry: 1st, The single trees and open groups on the lawn, which have suffered the operation of transplanting. Of this description, birch, ash, wyche, or Scotch elm, sycamore, lime, horse-chestnut, all of which having been, at one time or other, subjects of transplantation, were growing with vigour and luxuriance, and in the most exposed situations, making shoots of eighteen inches. The trees were of various sizes. Several, which had been transplanted some years since, were from thirty to forty feet high, or more. The girth of the largest was from five feet three to five feet eight inches, at a foot and a half from the ground. Other trees, which had been only six months transplanted, were from twenty to thirty feet high; and the gentlemen of the committee ascertained their girth to be about two feet and a half, or three feet, at eighteen inches from the ground. These trees were in every respect flourishing, but their leaves were perceptibly smaller than those of the trees around them, a difference which ceases to exist in the second, or at furthest the third, year after transplantation. Upon the whole, the committee were satisfied, first, with the singularly beautiful shape and symmetry of the trees; secondly, with their health and vigour, as they showed no decayed boughs or twigs, the usual consequence of transplantation under other systems; thirdly, with their upright and even position, though set out singly and in exposed situations without any adventitious support. Thus the single trees possessed all the advantages which the proprietor could desire in the qualities of beauty, health, and stability.

The second branch of the committee's inquiry related to enclosed groups, or masses of wood planted close together. There are several of these in the park, which correspond and occasionally contrast pleasingly with the open groups and single trees already observed. The committee particularly describe one of these close masses, intended as a screen to the approach. It had been clothed with wood in the course of one season by means of the transplanting system, trees from twenty to thirty feet high being first planted as standard or grove-wood, about twenty feet apart, and the

intervals filled up with bushes or stools of copse or underwood. The standard trees being in this mass sheltered by each other, made larger shoots than those which stood singly, and the underwood of oak, birch, holly, mountain-ash, horse-chestnut, common and Canadian birdcherry, and other species usually found in a natural wood, were making luxuriant progress in their new situation. And though it was but five years since this copse, interspersed with standard trees, had been formed by Sir Henry, his visitors assigned no less a space than from thirty to forty years as the probable time in which such a screen could have been formed by ordinary means. From the facts which they witnessed, the committee reported it as their unanimous opinion, that the *art of transplantation*, as practised by Sir Henry Steuart, is calculated to accelerate, in an extraordinary degree, the power of raising wood, whether for beauty or shelter. They added, that of all the trees they had examined, one alone seemed to have failed; and that, being particularly intent on this point of inquiry, they had looked closely for symptoms of any dead tree having been removed, without being able to discover any such, although the traces of such a process could not have escaped their notice had they existed.

The existence of the wonders — so we may call them — which Sir Henry Steuart has effected, being thus supported by the unexceptionable evidence of competent judges, what lover of natural beauty can fail to be interested in his own detailed account of the mode by which he has been able to make wings for time, and anticipate the operation of years, so as altogether to overthrow the authority of the old saying: —

"Heu! male transfertur senio com induruit arbor?"

It is the object of the present publication to give in full detail the measures employed by the author to anticipate in such a wonderful manner the march of time, and to force, as it were, his woodlands in somewhat the same manner as the domestic gardener forces his fruits; and the information which the work affords, is as full and explicit concerning the theory upon which our author has proceeded as upon the practical points necessary to carry that theory into effect. Sir Henry Steuart's method of transplantation is (as might have been expected from a scholar and philosopher) founded upon the strictest attention to vegetable physiology, as ascertained by consulting the best authors; and the rationale which he assigns as the cause of his success is not less deserving of strict attention, than the practical results which he has exhibited.

Sir Henry Steuart's first general proposition on the subject of transplantation will be conceded to him at once, although, in practice, we have known it most grossly neglected. It amounts simply to the averment, that success cannot be expected unless upon principles of selection, determining the subject to be transplanted with relation to the soil that it is to be transferred to. All will grant in theory that every plant has its soil and subsoil, to which it is particularly adapted, and where it will luxuriate; whereas in others it can scarce make shift to exist; yet the planter or the transplanter, nine times in ten, neglects this necessity of suiting his trees to the soil, and is at the expense of placing the trees which chance to be his favourites indiscriminately upon every soil. Sir H. Steuart has largely and conclusively illustrated this matter; and henceforth it may be held as a positive rule, that there can be little hope of a transplanted tree thriving unless it be removed to a soil congenial to its nature, and that it will become every planter to bestow the same care in selecting the species of his trees that a farmer fails not to use in adapting his crops to the soil of his farm. But there is a second principle of selection, no less necessary to be attended to, and which respects *the condition and properties of the individual trees* suited for transplantation. This requires to be considered more in detail.

It is familiar to all acquainted with plantations (although the honour belongs exclusively to Sir Henry Steuart of having deduced the natural consequences,) that the constant and uninterrupted action of the external air on a tree which stands completely exposed to it, gives that tree a habit, character, and properties entirely different, and in many respects directly opposite, to those acquired by one of the same species which has grown in absolute shelter, whose energies have exerted themselves in a different manner and for a different purpose, and have, therefore, made a most material difference in the attributes and constitution of the plant.

We must suppose that our reader has some general acquaintance with the circulation of the sap in trees, being the substance by which they are nourished, and resembling, in that respect, the chyle in the human system. This nutritive substance is collected by the roots with those fibres which form their terminations, and which, with a degree of address which seems almost sentient, travel in every direction, and with unerring skill, to seek those substances in the soil best qualified to supply the nourishment which it is their business to convey. The juice, or sap, thus extracted from the soil, is drawn up the tree by the efforts of vegetation, each branch and each leaf

serving, by its demand for nourishment, as a kind of forcing-pump to suck the juice up to the topmost shoot, to extend it to all the branches, and, in a healthy tree, to the extremity of each shoot. The roots, in other words, are the providers of the aliment; the branches, shoots, and leaves, are the appetite of the tree, which induce it to consume the food thus supplied to it. The analogy holds good betwixt the vegetable and animal world. If the roots of a tree are injured, or do not receive the necessary supplies of nourishment, the tree must perish, like an animal unsupplied with food, whatever be the power of the appetite in one case, and of the vegetation in the other, to consume the nutritive substance, if it could be procured. This is dying by hunger. If, on the other hand, the powers of vegetation are in any respect injured, and the tree, either from natural decline, from severe amputation, or from any other cause, ceases to supply those shoots and leaves which suck the sap up into the system, then the tree dies of a decay in the powers of digestion.

But the tree, like the animal, is not nourished by food alone; air is also necessary to it. If this be supplied in such extreme quantities as is usual in exposed situations, the trees will suffer from the action of the cold, like a man in an inclement climate, where he is, indeed, furnished with enough of pure air, but where the cold that attends it deranges his organic system. In like manner, when placed in a situation where air is excluded, both the vegetable and the animal are reduced to a state of suffocation equally fatal to their health, and, at a certain period, to their existence. Both productions of nature have, however, their resources; — the animal, exposed to a painful and injurious degree of cold, seeks shelter; man, however often condemned to face the extremity of cold, supplies his want of warmth by artificial clothing; and the inferior animals in the polar latitudes, on the Himalaya mountains, and so forth, are furnished by nature with an additional thickness of furs, which would be useless in warmer regions. * Trees placed

* The reader is referred to Bishop Heber’s travels in India for some most interesting details on this subject. — S.

in an exposed situation have also their resources; — the object being to protect the sap-vessels, which transmit nutriment, and which lie betwixt the wood and the bark, the tree never fails to throw out, and especially on the side most exposed to the blast, a thick coating of bark, designed to protect, and which effectually does protect, the sap-vessels and the process of circulation to which they are adapted, from the injury which necessarily

must otherwise ensue. Again, if the animal is in danger of suffocation from want of vital air, instead of starving by being exposed to its unqualified rigour, instinct or reason directs the sufferer to approach those apertures through which any supply of that necessary of human life can be attained, and induces man, at the same time, to free himself from any coverings which may be rendered oppressive by the state in which he finds himself. Now it may be easily proved, that a similar instinct to that which induced the unfortunate sufferers in the black-hole of Calcutta to struggle with the last efforts to approach the solitary aperture which admitted air to their dungeon, and to throw from them their garments, in order to encourage the exertions which nature made to relieve herself by perspiration, is proper, also, to the noblest of the vegetable tribe. Look at a wood or plantation which has not been duly thinned: — the trees which exist will be seen drawn up to poles, with narrow and scanty tops, endeavouring to make their way towards such openings to the sky as might permit the access of light and air. If entirely precluded by the boughs which have closed over them, the weaker plants will be found strangely distorted by attempts to get out at a side of the plantation; and, finally, if overpowered in these attempts by the obstacles opposed to them, they inevitably perish. As men throw aside their garments, influenced by a close situation, trees, placed in similar circumstances, exhibit a bark thin and beautifully green and succulent, entirely divested of that thick, coarse, protecting substance which covers the sap-vessels in an exposed position.

Another equally curious difference betwixt trees which have stood in exposed situations and those which have grown in such as are sheltered, is also so reasonable in appearance as to seem the act of volition, so curiously do the endeavours of nature in the vegetable world correspond with the instinct of animals and the reason of mankind. Man and beast make use of the position of their limbs to steady themselves against the storm, although, as their exposure to it is only temporary, the exertion bears the same character: but trees, incapable of locomotion, assume, when placed in an exposed situation, a permanent set of self-protecting qualities, and become extremely different in the disposition of the trunk, roots, and branches from those of the same species which remain in the shelter of crowded plantations. The stem of trees in an exposed situation is always short and thick, because, being surrounded by air and light all around, the tree has not the motive to *rush* up towards the free air which is so strongly perceptible

in close woods. For the same reason, its branches are thrown widely out in every direction, as if to balance itself against the storm, and to obtain, from the disposition of its parts, a power of resistance which may supply the place of the shelter enjoyed by plants more favourably situated. The roots of such trees, which are always correlative to the branches, are augmented in proportion as necessity obliges the former to extend themselves.

There is a singular and beautiful process of action and reaction which takes place betwixt the progress of the roots and of the branches. The former must, by their vigour and numbers, stretch out under ground before the branches can develope themselves in the air; and, on the other hand, it is necessary that the branches so develope themselves, to give employment to the roots, in collecting food. There is a system of close commerce between them; if either fail in discharging their part the other must suffer in proportion. The increase of the branches, therefore, in exposed trees, is and must be in proportion with that of the roots, and *vice versa;* and as the exposed tree spreads its branches on every side to balance itself against the wind, as it shortens its stem or trunk, to afford the mechanical force of the tempest a shorter lever to act upon, so numerous and strong roots spread themselves under ground, by way of anchorage, to an extent and in a manner unknown to sheltered trees.

These facts afford the principles on which our author selects the subjects of his operations. It may seem a simple proposition, that to succeed in the removal of a large tree to an open situation, the operator ought to choose one which, having grown up in a similar degree of exposure, has provided itself with those qualities which are peculiarly fitted for it. Every one will be ready to acknowledge its truth at the first statement; but Sir Henry has been the first to act upon it; and, having, ascertained its accuracy, to communicate it to the world. It is Columbus making the egg stand upright.

Our author has enumerated four properties which Nature has taught trees that stand unsheltered to acquire by their own efforts, in order to suit themselves for their situation. *First,* thickness and induration of bark; *secondly,* shortness and girth of stem; *thirdly,* numerousness of roots and fibres; and *fourthly,* extent, balance, and closeness of branches. These, Sir Henry has denominated the four protecting qualities; and he has proved, by a very plain and practical system of reasoning, founded upon an intimate acquaintance with the most distinguished writers on vegetable physiology,

that in proportion as the subject for transplantation is possessed of these four qualities, in the same degree it is fitted to encounter exposure as a single tree in its new position.

The characteristics of the trees which have grown in sheltered and warm situations are precisely the opposite of these; their bark is thin, glossy, and fresh-looking, without any of the rough, indurated substance necessary to protect the sap-vessels when exposed to the extremity of cold; the stem is tall, and slender, as drawn upwards in quest of light; the tops are small and thinly provided with branches, because they have not had the necessary room to expand themselves; and, lastly, the roots are spare and scanty. Sir Henry Steuart says, that a tree, in the situation, and bearing the character last described, is possessed of the "non-protecting properties." A greatcoat and a pair of overalls or mud-boots, may be called, with propriety, the protecting properties of a man who mounts his steed in rough weather; but he who sits at home, in a nightgown and slippers, can hardly be said to possess any non-protective qualities, or any thing, except a negation of the habiliments which invest his out-of-doors friend. We will not, however, disturb the subject by cavilling about expressions; it is enough that the reader understands that the presence of the "non-protecting qualities" implies the total absence of those which render trees fit to endure the process of transplantation.

Yet, though this principle of selection be, when once stated, so very satisfactory, it is no less certain, that no preceding author had so much as glanced at it; and that convenience, the usual, though by no means the safe guide of planting operations, has pointed out an entirely different course. Young woods, being usually planted far too thickly with hardwood, — or, in other words, the principals being in too great a proportion to the firs intended as nurses, — are found, after the lapse of twelve or fourteen years, to be crowded with tall, shapely plants, which have not room to grow, and are obviously damaging each other. The consequence of this is, that the proprietor, unwilling to lose so many thriving plants, is very often tempted, by the healthiness of their appearance, to select them as subjects for transplantation. Their graceful and lengthened stems, and smooth and beautiful bark, seem to be marks of health (as, indeed, they are, while they remain in the shelter for which they are qualified,) and the thinness of their heads will, it is supposed, prevent their suffering much by the wind. But almost all such attempts prove abortive. The tree comes, indeed, into leaf,

for one year, as some trees (the ash particularly) will do, if cut down and carried to the woodyard. But the next year the transplanted tree displays symptoms of decay. The leaves do not appear in strength and numbers enough to carry the sap to the ends of the branches; the stem becomes covered with a number of small sprays, which at once indicate that the sap has been arrested in its progress, and that the tree is making a desperate, we had almost said an unnatural, effort to avail itself of the nutriment in the stem, which it cannot transfer to the branches; the bark becomes dry, hide-bound, and mossed; the projecting branches wither down to the stem and must be cut off; and, after all, the young tree either dies utterly, or dwindles into a bush, which, perhaps, may recover elevation, and the power of vegetation, after a pause of ten or twelve years, but more likely is stubbed up as a melancholy and disagreeable object. This grand and leading error is avoided in the Allanton system, by the selection, from the beginning, of such trees as, having grown in an exposed situation, are provided with the protecting properties, and can, therefore, experience no rude change of atmosphere or habits by the change of place to which they are subjected.

But, it may be asked, where is the planter to find such trees as are proper for being transplanted? Our author replies, that there are few properties, however small in extent, or unimproved by plantations, which do not possess some subjects endowed, perfectly or nearly so, with the protecting qualities. The open groves, and scattered trees around old cottages, or in old hedgerows — where not raised upon an embankment, which gives the roots a determination downwards — are invaluable to the transplanter. They are already inured to the climate, and furnished with a quantity of branches and roots, — they possess the limited length and solidity of stem and the quality of bark necessary to enable them to endure exposure, — in other words, they are fit for being immediately transplanted. In most cases, however, the trees may have but partially gained the protecting qualities; and where such subjects occur, they must, by training, be made to complete the acquisition of them. The process to which they are subjected is various, according to the special protecting quality in which the tree is deficient. In general, and especially where the *bark* appears of too fine and thin a texture to protect the sap-vessels, a gradual, and, in the end, a free exposure to the elements, induces the trees selected fully to assume the properties which enable them to dispense with shelter. If, on the other hand, the bark is of a hardy quality, and the branches in sufficient number,

but the *roots* scanty and deficient — the tree ought to be cut round with a trench, of thirty inches deep, leaving only two or three strong roots uncut, to act as stays against the wind. The earth is then returned into the trench, and when taken up at the end of two or three years, with the purpose of final removal, it will be found that the roots have formed, at the points where they were severed, numbers of tassels (so to speak) composed of slender fibres, which must be taken the greatest care of at the time of removal, and will be found completely to supply the original deficiency of roots. Again, if the *branches* of the subject pitched upon be in an unfavourable state, this evil may be counteracted by a top-dressing of marl and compost, mixed with four times the quantity of tolerable soil, spread around the stem of the tree, at four feet distance. This mode Sir Henry Steuart recommends as superior to that of disturbing the roots, as practised in gardens for the same purpose of encouraging the growth of fruit-trees; and assures us, that the increase, both of the branches and roots, will be much forwarded, and that the tree will be fit for removal in the third year.

These modes of preparing individual trees are attended with some expense and difficulty; but here again the experience of Sir Henry Steuart suggests a plan, by which any proprietor, desirous to carry on the process upon a considerable scale, may, by preparing a number of subjects at once, greatly accelerate the time of commencing his operations, at an expense considerably less than would attach to the preparation of each tree separately. The grounds of Allanton had been, about forty years ago, ornamented with a belt and clumps, by a pupil of Browne. Sir Henry found in both, but especially in the clumps, the means of obtaining subjects in sufficient number and quantity for his own purposes. The ground where these were set had been prepared by trenching and taking a potato-crop.

"About the twelfth or fifteenth year, I began to cut away the larch and spruce-firs. These had been introduced merely as nurses to the deciduous trees; and, from the warmth and shelter they had afforded, and the previous double-digging, the whole had rushed up with singular rapidity. The next thing I did was, to thin out the trees to single distance, so as that the tops could not touch one another, and to cut away the side-branches, within about three, or three and a half feet of the surface. By this treatment, it will be perceived, that a considerable deal of air was admitted into the plantations. The light, which before had had access only at the top was now equally diffused on all sides; and the trees, although for a few years they

advanced but little in height, made surprising efforts towards a full developement of their most important properties. They acquired greater strength of stem, thickness of bark, and extension of roots, and consequently of lateral branches. But, at this time, it was apparent, that the clumps had a remarkable advantage over the belt, or continuous plantation. While in no part so deep as to impede the salutary action of the atmosphere, the circular or oval figure of the clumps, and their free exposure to the elements, furnished them with a far greater proportion of good outside trees; and these, having acquired, from the beginning, a considerable share of the protecting properties, were in a situation to shelter the rest, and also to prevent the violence of the wind from acting injuriously on the interior of the mass. It therefore became necessary to thin the belt for the second time, which was now done to double distance; that is to say, to a distance such as would have admitted of a similar number of trees in every part, to stand between the existing plants. Thus, within four years from the first thinning, I began to have tolerable subjects for removal, to situations of moderate exposure; while every succeeding season added fresh beauty and vigour to these thriving nurseries, and made a visible accession to all the desirable pre-requisites." — Pp. 203-205.

The author proceeds, with his usual precision, to give directions how each country-gentleman, that is so minded, may, by a peculiar treatment adapted to accelerate the acquisition of the protecting properties applied to a portion of any existing plantation, secure a grand repository of materials high and low, light and massive, from which his future plans of transplantation may be fully supplied. Indeed, he adds, that all grove woods, which have been regularly and properly thinned, and so treated that the tops have not been suffered to interfere, may be esteemed good transplanting nurseries, provided the soil be loose and friable.

Thus much being said about the principle of selection, the reader will naturally desire to know, what size of trees can be subjected to the process of transplantation. According to Sir Henry's general statement, this is a mere question of expense. A large tree may be removed with the same certainty of success as a lesser one; but it requires engines of greater power, a more numerous band of labourers, and the expense is found to increase in a rapidly progressive ratio. We presume to add, although our author has not explicitly stated it, that to sustain this violent alteration, trees ought to be selected that have not arrived at maturity, far less at the point from which

they decline; and this, in order that the subject of transplantation may be possessed of all the energy and force of vegetation belonging to the period of youth. In the practice at Allanton, a tree of six or eight inches in diameter, or two feet in girth, is the least size which is considered as fit to encounter the elements; if planted out singly, eighteen inches and two feet in diameter are among the largest specimens, and plants of about a foot in diameter may be considered as a medium size, being both manageable and of size enough to produce immediate effect upon the landscape, and to oppose resistance to the storm.

We are next to trace the Allantonian process of removing and replanting the tree.

The tree is loosened in the ground by a set of labourers, named pickmen, who, with instruments made for the purpose, first ascertain with accuracy how far the roots of the subject extend. This is easily known when the subject has been cut round, as the trench marks the line where the roots have been amputated. If the tree has not sustained this previous operation, the extent of the roots will be found to correspond with that of the branches. The *pickers* then proceed to bare the roots from the earth with the utmost attention not to injure them in the operation. It is to the preservation of these fibres that the transplanter is to owe the best token of his success, namely, the feeding the branches of the tree with sap even to their very extremities. The roots are then extricated from the soil. A mass of earth is left to form a ball close to the stem itself, and it is recommended to suffer two or three feet of the original sward to adhere to it. The machine is next brought up to the stem of the tree with great caution. This is the engine devised by Browne, and considerably improved by Sir Henry Steuart. It is of three sizes, that being used which is best adapted to the size of the tree, and is drawn by one, or, at most, two horses. It consists of a strong pole, mounted upon two high wheels. It is run up to the tree, and the pole, strongly secured to the tree while both are in a perpendicular posture, is brought down to a horizontal position, and in descending in obedience to the purchase operates as a lever, which, aided by the exertions of the pickmen, rends the tree out of the soil. The tree is so laid on the machine, as to balance the roots against the branches, and it is wonderful how slight an effort is necessary to pull the engine when this equilibrium is preserved. To keep the balance just, one man, or two, are placed aloft among the branches of the tree, where they shift their places, like a sort of moveable ballast, until the just distribution

of weight is ascertained. The roots, as well as the branches, are tied up during the transportation of the tree, it being of the last consequence that neither should be torn or defaced by dragging on the ground or interfering with the wheels. The mass, when put in motion, is manœuvred something like a piece of artillery, by a steersman at the further end. It requires a certain nicety of steerage, and the whole process has its risks, as may appear from a very good story told by Sir Henry, at page 232.

The pit for receiving the transplanted tree, which ought to have been prepared at least a twelvemonth before, is now opened for its reception, the earth being thrown out for such a depth as will suit its size; with this caution, that the tree be set in the earth as shallow as possible, but always so as to allow room for the dipping of the vertical roots on the one hand, and sufficient cover at top on the other. This is preferred, even though it should be found necessary to add a cartload or two of earth to the mound afterwards.

It is well known that in all stormy and uncertain climates every species of tree shows what is called a weather side, that is, its branches shoot more freely to that side which is leeward during the prevailing wind, than in the opposite direction. Hence the trees, in a windy climate, excepting, perhaps, the sycamore, are but indifferently balanced, and seem, from their growth, to be in the act of suffering a constraint which they cannot resist. Now an ancient rule which is echoed and repeated by almost all who touch on the subject, affirms that a transplanted tree must be so placed in its new site, that the same side shall be weather and lee which formerly were so. Sir Henry Steuart, in direct opposition to this rule, recommends strongly that the position of the tree be reversed, so that the lee side, where the branches are elongated, shall be pointed towards the prevailing wind, and what was formerly the weather-side, being now turned to leeward, shall be encouraged, by its new position, to shoot out in such a manner as to restore the balance and symmetry of the top. This change is, indeed, in theory a departure from Sir Henry Steuart's general principle, because it exposes to the greatest severity of the element that side of the tree whose bark has been least accustomed to face it. But, nevertheless, as the practice is found successful, it must rank among those powers of control by which human art can modify and regulate the dispensations of nature, and the beauty given to the tree, which is thus brought to form an upright and uniform, instead of an irregular and sidelong head, is not less important than the shelter and power

of resistance which is acquires on mechanical principles, by turning its heaviest and strongest branches against the most frequent and severe blast. Sir Henry claims the merit of being the first planter who ever dared to rectify the propensity of trees to shoot their branches to leeward by moving the position; and as, in his extensive experience, he has never found his doing so injure the tree, or impede its growth, we must thank him for breaking through the prejudice in question.

A second and most important deviation from the common course of transportation is the total disuse of the barbarous practice of pollarding or otherwise mutilating and dismembering the trees which are to be transplanted. This almost universal custom, which subjected the tree, at the very moment when it was to sustain its change of place, to the amputation of onethird, onehalf, or even the whole of its top, seems to be founded on a process of false reasoning. “We cut off the roots,” say these reasoners, “and thereby diminish the power of procuring supply for the branches; let us also cut off a similar proportion of the branches which are to be supplied, and the remaining roots will be adequate to support the remainder of the top.” In this argument, it is assumed that the branches are themselves of no use to the process of vegetation, and can be abridged with as much ease as the commandant of a besieged town, when provisions grow scarce, can rid himself of the superfluous part of his garrison. But it is not so; we cannot deprive the tree of a healthy branch, without, to a certain extent, deranging the economy of vegetation: each leaf, in its degree, forms a forcing-pump, which draws up a certain quantity of sap, the natural food of the tree; and, moreover, it forms a portion of the lungs of the tree, as the leaves inhale a certain quantity of air, an operation which may be compared to respiration. To destroy the branches, therefore, further than for the moderate purpose of pruning, is to attempt to fit the tree to rest satisfied with an inferior supply of nourishment, by depriving it of a part of its appetite and a part of its power of inhaling the air, which is no less necessary to its healthful existence. The case comes to be the same with that of a worthy chaplain, who, with the crew of a vessel he belonged to, was thrown by shipwreck on a desolate rock, where there were no means of food. His shipmates suffered grievously, “But for my part,” says the chaplain, “I bless heaven that I was in a burning fever the whole time, and desired nothing but cold water, of which there was plenty on the island.” Now, though the good man seems to have been grateful even for his burning fever (having, it must be observed,

safely recovered from it,) it will generally be thought rather too hazardous a remedy to be desired by others in similar situations, and those who treat their trees on the same principle ought to remember, that to cure one injury they are exposing their subjects to two.

The sagacious Miller long ago noticed these facts, and ascribed this fashion of thinning and pollarding to the ignorance of planters, who, not being aware of the principles of vegetation, did not know that trees were nourished as well by their leaves, sprays, and branches, as by their roots: —

"For (says that judicious writer) were the same severities practised on a tree of the same age *unremoved,* it would so much stint the growth, as not to be recovered in several years; nor would it ever arrive at the size of such as had all their branches left upon them." *

* Miller's Gardener's and Botanist's Dictionary, voc. "Planting."

But were this species of mutilation less directly injurious to vegetation than it certainly is, we ought to remember that the purpose of transplanting trees is chiefly or entirely ornamental; and if we render them, by decapitation and dismemberment of every kind, disgusting and miserable spectres, we destroy the whole purpose and intention for which they were transplanted, and present the eye with a set of naked and mutilated posts and poles, resembling the unhealthy and maimed tenants of a military hospital after a great battle, instead of the beautiful objects which it was the purpose of the improver to procure by anticipating the course of nature. It is true, good soil, and a tract of years, may restore such illused subjects to form and beauty, but, considering the length of time that they must remain disgusting and unsightly, we would far rather trust to such plants as nature might rear on the spot — plants which would come to maturity as soon, and prove incomparably more thriving in their growth, and more beautiful in their form. But the Allanton system, by planting the subjects without mutilation, boasts to obtain the immediate effect of trees complete and perfect in all their parts, without loss of the time required to replace the havoc of axe and saw.

There is a third material point in which Sir Henry Steuart's system differs from general practice, not indeed, absolutely, but in degree. The only absolute requisite which the old school of transplantation enjoined, was that the tree should be taken up with as large a ball of earth as could possibly be managed. In obeying this direction, there was considerable expense incurred by the additional weight, not to mention that the transplanter was

often disappointed by the ball falling to pieces by the way. In short, the difficulty was so great, that the operation was often performed in severe weather, to secure the adhesion of the earth to the roots, at the risk of exposing the extremities of the fibres and rootlets to the highly unfavourable agency of frost. The Allanton system limits the earth, which is, if possible, to be retained, to that lying immediately under the stem of the tree, where a ball of moderate extent is to be preserved: the roots extending from it are, as already explained, entirely denuded of earth by the pickmen, in their process of loosening the tree from the soil. When the tree is borne by the machine up to the spot where it is to be finally placed, it is carefully brought to a perpendicular posture by means of elevating the pole of the machine, and the centre of the stem is received, with the ball of earth adhering to it, into a cavity in the middle of the pit, so shallow, however, that the trunk of the tree stands rather high, and the roots have a tendency downwards. The roots are then freed from the tyings which have bound them up for temporary preservation, and are divided into the tiers or ranks in which they diverge from the trunk. The lowest of these tiers is next arranged, as nearly as possible in the manner in which it lay originally, each root, with its rootlets and fibres, being laid down and imbedded in the earth with the utmost precaution. They must be handled as a lover would dally with the curls of Neæra's hair, for tearing, crushing, or turning back these important fibres, is in the highest degree prejudicial to the growth of the tree. The earth is then laid over this the lowest tier of roots with much precaution; it is carefully worked in by the hand, and the aid of a sort of small rammer, with such attention to the safety of the fibres, as to encourage them immediately to resume their functions, as if they had never been disquieted. Additional earth is then gradually sifted in, and kneaded down, till it forms a layer on which the second tier of roots is extended; and these are put in order, and disposed of in the same way as the lower tier. The same process of handling and arranging the roots then takes place with the third tier, and the fourth, if there is one. This attention to incorporating with the soil each root, nay, each fibre, as far as possible, answers a double purpose. It not only induces the roots to commence their usual and needful office of collecting the sap, but also secures them against the effect of storms of wind, which, blowing on trees transplanted in the ordinary way with a ball, makes them rock like a bowl in a socket, the ball, with the roots, having no communication with the pit except by adhesion. The sense of this

great evil suggested to former transplanters the necessity of stakes, ropes, and other means of adventitious support, which were always ugly, and expensive, and generally inefficient. Whereas, according to the Allanton system, the tree, reversed so as to present its weightier branches against the wind, and picketed to the firm earth by a thousand roots and rootlets, carefully incorporated with the soil, is not found to require any support, is seldom swayed to a side, and almost never blown down by the heaviest gales. Here, therefore, is a third and important difference between the Allanton system and all that have preceded it, occasioned by the stability which the mode of laying the roots imparts to the tree, and the power of dispensing with every other species of support, except what arises from well-balanced boughs and roots received in the ground. We have to add, that Sir Henry's own territory lies considerably exposed to those storms from the North, which are the heaviest and most prevailing gales of the Scottish climate.

When the soil has been placed about the roots, tier after tier, the rest of the earth is filled into the pit regularly, so that the depth around the stem shall be twelve or fourteen inches, and subjected to a gentle and uniform pressure, but by no means to severe ramming or treading in, leaving it to nature to produce that consolidation, which, if attempted by violence, is apt to injure the fine fibres of the roots. If there is turf, it is replaced around the stem in regular order. We ought not to have omitted, that the tree is subjected to a plentiful watering when the roots are fixed, and to another when the operations are completed.

From our own experience, we should consider this last requisite as of the highest consequence. Count Rumford, in his various experiments upon the food of the poor, arrived at the economical discovery, that water alone contained a great deal of nutritive aliment. Without extending our averment as far as that practical philosopher, we are much of his opinion, in so far as transplanted trees are considered; for we have seen hollies of ten and twelve feet high removed from the centre of a forest, and planted in a light and sandy soil, without any other precaution than placing them in a pit half-filled with earth, mingled with such a quantity of water that it had the consistence of thin porridge. Every forester knows the shyness of the holly, yet, set in soil thus prepared, and refreshed by copious watering during the season, they throve admirably well. Accordingly, we observe that Sir Henry recommends watering as one of the principal points respecting the

subsequent treatment of the transplanted tree. When the trees stand singly, or in loose and open disposition, he recommends that the earth around them shall be finally beat down by a machine resembling that of a pavior, but heavier, about the month of April or May, when the natural consolidation shall have, in a great measure, taken place. To exclude the drought, he then recommends that the ground immediately under the stem of the oak, birch, and other trees which demand most attention, shall be covered with a substance called *shews,* being the refuse of a flax-mill, which, of course, serves to exclude the drought, like the process which gardeners call mulching. Lastly, in the case of such transplanted trees as do not seem disposed to thrive equal to the others, we are instructed to lay around the stem four cartloads of earth, with a cartload of coal-ashes, carefully sifted: this composition is spread round the tree, in a proportion of nine inches in depth, around the stem or centre, and five inches at the extremity of the roots.

It is most important to observe, that the success of the whole operation seems to depend as much upon this species of treatment, which takes place after the transplantation, as on observation of the rules laid down as to preparing the tree for its removal, and as to the method of the transplantation itself. We have already mentioned the efficacy of frequent watering: the excluding drought from the roots of the transplanted tree by the intervention of *shews,* or some equivalent subject (leaves, perhaps, or a layer of wet straw,) is of the last consequence; and not less so is the application of manure to the roots of such trees as seem, in the language of planters, to fail or go back. When these things are attended to, the tree seldom or never fails. It is surrounded with a very neat species of defence against the deer, sheep, or other animals with which the park may be stocked, and which is more handsome as well as less expensive than the ugly tubs in which transplanted trees seem usually to be set out in the ground which they are designed to occupy. Taking the medium degree of thriving, a tree thus transplanted may be expected to suffer in its growth of leaves for the first year or two. In the second particularly, it has less the air of general health than at any future time. In the third, if regularly attended to in its after-treatment, it shows little sign of suffering any thing. In two or three seasons more, it begins to show growth, and resume the progress of active vegetation.

We have thus gone hastily through the general requisites of the Allanton system of transplantation, for the details of which we must refer to the work itself. The merit to be assigned to the ingenious baronet is exalted by the character of his discovery, relating to such a fascinating branch of the fine arts as that of improving the actual landscape. He has taught a short road to an end which almost all landed proprietors, possessed of the slightest degree of taste, must be desirous of attaining. In a word, the immediate effect of wood is obtained — an entire park — may, as in the case of Allanton, be covered with wood of every kind: trees, arranged singly, in scattered groups, or in close masses, intermixed with copse of every description, and boasting, in the course of four or five years, all the beauty which the improver, in the ordinary case, can expect, after the lapse of thirty or forty. Even in the first year, indeed, a great general effect is produced; but as, upon close inspection, the trees will for some time show a thinness of leaves and check of vegetation, we have taken that period at which the transplanted wood may, with ordinary management, be expected to have lost all appearance of the operation which it has sustained.

It is now time to attend to a formidable consideration, the expense, namely, at which a victory over nature, so complete as that which we have described, is to be attained. Sir Henry Steuart complains, with justice, of reports, which, assigning the price of ten or twelve pounds to the removal of each tree, and circulated by envy or ignorance, have represented his system as beyond the reach of any, excepting the most opulent individuals; whereas he himself contends, that the art which he has disclosed has the opposite merit of being within the easy compass of any person of moderate fortune. As the practical utility of this ingenious system depends entirely on this point, we feel it our duty to notice the evidence on the subject.

The days of Orpheus are no more, and no man can now pretend to make the rooted denizens of the forest shift their places at the simple expense of an old song. It must be held sufficient if the expenditure does not so far exceed the object to be obtained, as to cause the alterations produced to rank with the extravagant freaks of Nero, who was the first of landscape-gardeners, and his successors in the school of gigantic embellishment. But the country-gentleman, of easy fortune, who does not hesitate to lay out two or three hundred pounds for a tolerable picture or two to adorn the inside of his house, should not surely be induced to grudge a similar expenditure to form the park, by which it is surrounded, into a natural landscape, which

will more than rival the best efforts of the pencil. The power of adorning nature is a luxury of the highest kind, and must, to a certain extent, be paid for, but the following pieces of evidence serve to show, that the price is uncommonly moderate, if contrasted with the effects produced.

The committee of the Highland Society remark, that the transplantation of grown trees belongs to the fine arts rather than those which have had direct and simple utility for their object, and that the return is to be expected rather in pleasure than in actual profit:

"Value, no doubt, every proprietor acquires, when he converts a bare and unsightly common into a clothed, sheltered, and richly ornamented park. But, excepting in the article of shelter, he has no more immediate value than the purchaser of a picture."

But this apologetical introduction is so far short of the truth, since it omits to notice that the improver *has* created a value — unproductive, indeed, while he continues to retain possession of his estate, but which can be converted into actual productive capital so soon as he chooses to part with it. The difference between Allanton, with its ornamented park, and Allanton as it was twenty years since, would soon be ascertained were the proprietor disposed to bring his ancient heritage into the market. The committee proceed to state, that the formation of the two acres of copse, intermingled with standard trees, already mentioned, appears to have amounted to £30 per acre; and they express their belief that no visible change, to the same purpose, could have been effected by the landscape-gardener, which could have had effect before it had cost the proprietor *three times* the sum.

Mr. Laing Meason, who had personally attended some operations on Allanton park, mentions the transplantation of two trees, from twenty to thirty years old. The workmen began their operations at six o'clock in the morning. The first tree was, by measurement, twenty feet; the second, thirty-two feet high, the girth from twentyfour to thirty-six inches. The one was moved a mile, the other about a hundred yards, and the whole operation was concluded before six in the evening. The wages of the men amounted to fifteen shillings, so that each tree cost seven shillings and sixpence. Adding the expense of a pair of horses, the sum could not exceed twelve shillings, and we must needs profess, that the mere pleasure of witnessing such a wonderful transmigration successfully accomplished, was, in our opinion, worth half the money. Mr. Laing Meason proceeds to say, "that if a

comparison was to be drawn between the above expense and that of planting groups of plants from the nursery, keeping enclosures up for twenty years, and losing the rent on the ground occupied, the Allanton system is much preferable on the point of economy."

The evidence of various gentlemen who have already adopted Sir Henry Steuart's system on their own estates, is given at length in the book before us: — Mr. Smith, of Jordanhill, in Lanarkshire, appears to have made the largest experiments next to the inventor himself; and he states the results as uniformly successful. Before his workmen attained proficiency in the art, the individual trees cost from fifteen to eighteen shillings each, when transported about a mile; but in his later operations the charge was reduced to eight shillings for very handsome subjects, and six shillings for those of an inferior description.

Mr. MacCall, of Ibroxhill, another gentleman in the same neighbourhood, estimates the cost of his operations on trees, from eighteen to twenty-eight feet high, at eight shillings and tenpence per tree. Mr. Watson of Linthouse, in Renfrewshire, reckons that his trees, being on an average thirty feet high, cost him fourteen shillings the tree. Sir Charles Macdonald Lockhart, of Lee, and Sir Walter Scott, of Abbotsford, mention their expenses as *trifling;* and Mr. Elliot Lockhart, (M.P. for Selkirkshire) states ten shillings as the average cost of transplanting trees from twentyfour to thirtyfive feet in height. All these gentlemen attest the success of their operations, and their thorough belief in the soundness of their ingenious master's doctrine.

It ought to be observed, that no special account seems, in any of these cases, to have been kept of the after treatment of the transplanted tree, by watering and manuring, which must differ very much, according to circumstances. Something, however, must be added on this account to almost all the prices quoted by the experimentalists above mentioned.

We now come to Sir Henry's account of his own expenses, which, with the laudable and honourable desire to be as communicative and candid as possible, he has presented under various forms. The largest trees which Sir Henry Steuart himself has been in the habit of removing

"being from twentyfive to thirtyfive feet high, may be managed," he informs us, "by expert and experienced workmen, for from 10s. to 13s. each, at half a mile's distance: and the smallest, being from eighteen to five-and-twenty feet, for from 6s. to 8s. With workmen awkward or

inexperienced, it will not seem surprising, that it should require a third part, or even a half more, fully to follow out the practice which has been recommended. As to wood for close plantations, or for bush-planting in the park, the trees may be transferred for about 3s. 6d., and the stools of underwood for from 1s. to 2s. per stool." — P. 341.

In another view of his expenditure, Sir Henry Steuart fixes on a very considerable space of ground, which he had fully occupied with wood during a period of eight years, and shows *data* for rating his annual expenditure at fifty-eight pounds ten shillings yearly — a sum certainly not too extravagant to be bestowed on any favourite object of pursuit, and far inferior in amount to that which is, in most instances, thrown away on a pet-farm. We have dwelt thus long on the subject of expense, because it forms the most formidable objection to every new system, is most generally adopted, and most completely startling to the student. But where so many persons, acting with the very purpose of experiment, after allowance has been made for difference of circumstances, are found to come so near each other in their estimates, and that *twelve shillings* for the *expense* of transplanting a tree of *thirty feet high* forms *the average of the calculation,* it will not surely be deemed an extraordinary tax on so important an operation.

But, although we have found the system to be at once original, effectual, and attended with moderate expense, we are not sanguine enough to hope that it will at once find general introduction. The application of steam and of gas to the important functions which they at present perform, was slowly and reluctantly adopted, after they had been opposed for many years by the prejudices of the public. Yet these were supported by such effective arguments *ad crumenam,* as might, one would have thought, have ensured their advocates a favourable hearing. The present discoverer is a gentleman of liberal fortune, who, after having ornamented his own domain, has little interest whether his neighbours imitate his example or no. The system, too, must be subjected to the usual style of sneering misrepresentation which is applied to all innovators, until they gain the public to their side, and rise above the reach of detraction. We have also to anticipate the indifference of country gentlemen, too indolent to conquer the difficulty of getting the fitting and indispensable machinery, or to procure the assistance of experienced workmen. Even in the cases in which the new system may be brought to a trial, it may fall under discredit from the haste of the proprietor,

or the no less formidable conceit and prejudices of the workman. The one may be disposed to leave out or hurry over some of the details, which are peculiarly slow and gradual, though producing such an immediate effect when completed; the other, unless closely watched, will assuredly revert to his own ancient practice, in despite of every charge to the contrary. In either case, the failure which may ensue will be imputed to the Allanton system, though it should be rather attributed to departure from its rules.

Notwithstanding all these obstacles, the principle is so good, and the application so successful, that we shall be much surprised if, ere long, some professional person does not make himself master of the process, and proceed to strive for that eminence which he cannot fail to achieve when it is found he possesses the art of changing the face of nature, like the scenes in a theatre, and can convert, almost instantly, a desert to an Eden. Nurserymen and designers will then find it for their interest to have the necessary machinery, and gangs of experienced workmen, to enable them to contract for raising, transferring, and upholding any particular number of trees, which a country gentleman of moderate fortune may desire to place in groups, or singly, in his park. The alteration will be thus effected without the proprietor, who wishes but to transplant some score or two of trees, being obliged to incur the full expenses of providing and instructing superintendents, as if he meant to countermarch the whole advance of Birnam wood to Dunsinane. Earlier or later, this beautiful and rational system will be brought into general action, when *it* will do more to advance the picturesque beauty of the country in five years than the slow methods hitherto adopted can attain in fifty.

Our readers are now enabled to answer with confidence the question of Macbeth: —

"Who can impress the forest? Bid the tree unfix his earth-bound root?"

But the subject, though to ourselves of special interest, has already, perhaps, detained some readers too long. *Non omnes arbusta juvant.*

TRIAL OF DUNCAN TERIG ALIAS CLERK, AND ALEXANDER BANE MACDONALD

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FEBRUARY, M.DCCC.XXXI.

THE BANNATYNE CLUB.

M.DCCC.XXXI.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BAR[T].

[PRESIDENT.]

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN, K.T.
RIGHT HON. WILLIAM ADAM,
LORD CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF THE JURY COURT.
JAMES BALLANTYNE, ESQ.
SIR WILLIAM MACLEOD BANNATYNE.
5
LORD BELHAVEN AND STENTON.

GEORGE JOSEPH BELL, ESQ.

ROBERT BELL, ESQ.

WILLIAM BELL, ESQ.

JOHN BORTHWICK, ESQ.

WILLIAM BLAIR, ESQ.

THE REV. PHILIP BLISS, D.C.L.

GEORGE BRODIE, ESQ.

CHARLES DASHWOOD BRUCE, ESQ.

THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH AND QUEENSBERRY.

JOHN CALEY, ESQ.

JAMES CAMPBELL, ESQ.

HON. JOHN CLERK, LORD ELDIN.

WILLIAM CLERK, ESQ.

HENRY COCKBURN, ESQ.

DAVID CONSTABLE, ESQ.

ANDREW COVENTRY, ESQ.

JAMES T. GIBSON CRAIG, ESQ.

WILLIAM GIBSON CRAIG, ESQ.

HON. GEORGE CRANSTOUN, LORD COREHOUSE.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE.

JAMES DENNISTOUN, ESQ.

ROBERT DUNDAS, ESQ.

RIGHT HON. W. DUNDAS, LORD CLERK REGISTER.

CHARLES FERGUSSON, ESQ.

ROBERT FERGUSON, ESQ.

LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR RONALD C. FERGUSON.

THE COUNT DE FLAHAULT.

HON. JOHN FULLERTON, LORD FULLERTON.

LORD GLENORCHY.

THE DUKE OF GORDON.

WILLIAM GOTT, ESQ.

SIR JAMES R. G. GRAHAM, BAR^{T}.

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LORD GRAY.

RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE.

THE EARL OF HADDINGTON.

THE DUKE OF HAMILTON AND BRANDON.

E. W. A. DRUMMOND HAY, ESQ.

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JOHN HOPE, ESQ.

COSMO INNES, ESQ.

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JAMES IVORY, ESQ.

THE REV. JOHN JAMIESON, D.D.

ROBERT JAMESON, ESQ.

SIR HENRY JARDINE.

FRANCIS JEFFREY, ESQ. LORD ADVOCATE.

JAMES KEAY, ESQ.

THOMAS FRANCIS KENNEDY, ESQ.

JOHN G. KINNEAR, ESQ. [TREASURER.]

THE EARL OF KINNOULL.

DAVID LAING, ESQ. [SECRETARY.]

THE EARL OF LAUDERDALE, K.T.

THE REV. JOHN LEE, D.D.

THE MARQUIS OF LOTHIAN.

HON. J. H. MACKENZIE, LORD MACKENZIE.

JAMES MACKENZIE, ESQ.

JAMES MAIDMENT, ESQ.

THOMAS MAITLAND, ESQ.

THE HON. WILLIAM MAULE.

GILBERT LAING MEASON, ESQ.

VISCOUNT MELVILLE, K.T.

WILLIAM HENRY MILLER, ESQ.

THE EARL OF MINTO.

HON. SIR J. W. MONCREIFF, LORD MONCREIFF.

JOHN ARCHIBALD MURRAY, ESQ.

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JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ.

THE EARL OF ROSSLYN.

ANDREW RUTHERFURD, ESQ.

THE EARL OF SELKIRK.

RIGHT HON. SIR SAMUEL SHEPHERD.

ANDREW SKENE, ESQ.

JAMES SKENE, ESQ.

GEORGE SMYTHE, ESQ.

EARL SPENCER, K.G.

JOHN SPOTTISWOODE, ESQ.

THE MARQUIS OF STAFFORD, K.G.

MAJOR-GENERAL STRATON.

SIR JOHN ARCHIBALD STEWART, BAR^{T}.

THE HON. CHARLES FRANCIS STUART.

ALEXANDER THOMSON, ESQ.

THOMAS THOMSON, ESQ. [VICE-PRESIDENT.]

W. C. TREVELYAN, ESQ.

PATRICK FRASER TYTLER, ESQ.

ADAM URQUHART, ESQ.

RIGHT HON. SIR GEORGE WARRENDER BAR^{T}.

THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON WRANGHAM.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
SIR SAMUEL SHEPHERD,
THIS CURIOUS TRACT,
RESPECTING PERHAPS THE ONLY SUBJECT OF LEGAL ENQUIRY
WHICH HAS ESCAPED BEING INVESTIGATED BY HIS SKILL,
AND ILLUSTRATED BY HIS GENIUS,
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY HIS AFFECTIONATE FRIEND, AND MUCH OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,
WALTER SCOTT.

15th Feb., 1831.

Introduction

Although the giving information concerning the unfair manner in which they were dismissed from life, is popularly alleged to have been a frequent reason why departed spirits revisit the nether world, it is yet only in a play of the witty comedian, Foote, that the reader will find their appearance become the subject of formal and very ingenious pleadings. In his farce called the Orators, the celebrated Cocklane Ghost is indicted by the name of Fanny the Phantom, for that, contrary to the King's peace, it did annoy, assault, and terrify divers persons residing in Cocklane and elsewhere, in the county of Middlesex. The senior counsel objects to his client pleading to the indictment, unless she is tried by her equals in rank, and therefore he moves the indictment be quashed, unless a jury of ghosts be first had and obtained. To this it is replied, that although Fanny the Phantom had originally a right to a jury of ghosts, yet in taking upon her to knock, to flutter, and to scratch, she did, by condescending to operations proper to humanity, wave her privileges as a ghost, and must consent to be tried in the ordinary manner. It occurs to the Justice who tries the case, that there will be difficulty in impanelling a jury of ghosts, and he doubts how twelve spirits who have no body at all, can be said to take a corporal oath, as required by law, unless, indeed, as in the case of the Peerage, the prisoner may be tried upon her honour. At length the counsel for the prosecution furnishes the list of ghosts for the selection of the jury, being the most celebrated apparitions of modern times, namely, Sir George Villiers, the evil genius of Brutus, the Ghost of Banquo, and the phantom of Mrs Veal. The counsel for the prosecution objects to a woman, and the court dissolves, under the facetious order, that if the Phantom should plead pregnancy, Mrs Veal will be admitted upon the jury of matrons.

This admirable foolery is carried by the English Aristophanes nearly as far as it will go; yet it is very contrary to the belief of those, who conceive that injured spirits are often the means of procuring redress for wrongs committed upon their mortal frames, to find how seldom in any country an allusion hath been made to such evidence in a court of justice, although, according to their belief, such instances must have frequently occurred. One or two cases of such apparition-evidence our researches have detected.

It is a popular story, that an evidence for the Crown began to tell the substance of an alleged conversation with the ghost of a murdered man, in which he laid his death to the accused person at the bar. “Stop,” said the judge, with becoming gravity, “this will not do; the evidence of the ghost is excellent, none can speak with a clearer cause of knowledge to any thing which befell him during life. But he must be sworn in usual form. Call the ghost in open court, and if he appears, the jury and I will give all weight to his evidence; but in case he does not come forward, he cannot be heard, as now proposed, through the medium of a third party.” It will readily be conceived that the ghost failed to appear, and the accusation was dismissed.

In the French *Causes Célèbres et Interessantes*, is one entitled, *Le Spectre, ou l’Illusion Réprouvé*, reported by Guyot de Pittaval [vol. xii. edition La Haye, 1749], in which a countryman prosecutes a tradesman named Auguier for about twenty thousand francs, said to have been lent to the tradesman. It was pretended, that the loan was to account of the proceeds of a treasure which Mirabel, the peasant, had discovered by means of a ghost or spirit, and had transferred to the said Auguier, that he might convert it into cash for him. The case had some resemblance to that of Fanny the Phantom. The defendant urged the impossibility of the original discovery of the treasure by the spirit to the prosecutor; but the defence was repelled by the influence of the principal judge, and on a charge so ridiculous, Auguier narrowly escaped the torture. At length, though with hesitation, the prosecutor was nonsuited, upon the ground, that if his own story was true, the treasure, by the ancient laws of France, belonged to the Crown. So that the ghost-seer, though he had nearly occasioned the defendant to be put to the question, profited in the end nothing by his motion.

This is something like a decision of the great Frederick of Prussia. One of his soldiers, a Catholic, pretended peculiar sanctity, and an especial devotion to a particular image of the Virgin Mary, which, richly decorated with ornaments by the zeal of her worshippers, was placed in a chapel in one of the churches of the city where her votary was quartered. The soldier acquired such familiarity with the object of his devotion, and was so much confided in by the priests, that he watched for and found an opportunity of possessing himself of a valuable diamond necklace belonging to the Madonna. Although the defendant was taken in the manner, he had the impudence, knowing the case was to be heard by the King, to say that the

Madonna herself had voluntarily presented him with her necklace, observing that, as her good and faithful votary, he had better apply it to his necessities, than that it should remain useless in her custody.

The King, happy of the opportunity of tormenting the priests, demanded of them, whether there was a possibility that the soldier's defence might be true. Their faith obliged them to grant that the story was possible, while they exhausted themselves on the improbabilities which attended it. "Nevertheless," said the King, "since it is possible, we must, in absence of proof, receive it as true, in the first instance. All I can do to check an imprudent generosity of the saints in future, is to publish an edict, or public order, that all soldiers in my service, who shall accept any gift from the Virgin, or any saint whatever, shall, *eo ipso*, incur the penalty of death."

Amongst English trials, there is only mention of a ghost in a very incidental manner, in that of John Cole, fourth year of William and Mary, State Trials, vol. xii. The case is a species of supplement to that of the wellknown trial of Henry Harrison, which precedes it in the same collection, of which the following is the summary.

A respectable doctor of medicine, Clenche, had the misfortune to offend a haughty, violent, and imperious woman of indifferent character, named Vanwinckle, to whom he had lent money, and who he wished to repay it. A hackney-coach, with two men in it, took up the physician by night, as they pretended, to carry him to visit a patient. But on the road they strangled him with a handkerchief, having a coal, or some such hard substance, placed against their victim's windpipe, and escaped from the coach. One Henry Harrison, a man of loose life, connected with this Mrs Vanwinckle, the borrower of the money, was tried, convicted, and executed, on pretty clear evidence, yet he died denying the crime charged. The case being of a shocking nature, of course interested the feelings of the common people, and another person was accused as an accessory, the principal evidence against whom was founded on this story.

A woman, called Millward, pretended that she had seen the ghost of her deceased husband, who told her that one John Cole had assisted him, the ghost, in the murder of Dr Clenche. Cole was brought to trial accordingly; but the charge was totally despised, both by judge and jury, and produced no effect whatever in obtaining conviction.

Such being the general case with respect to apparitions, really alluded to or quoted in formal evidence in courts of justice, an evidence of that kind

gravely given and received in the High Court of Justiciary in Scotland, has some title to be considered as a curiosity.

The Editor's connexion with it is of an old standing, since, shortly after he was called to the bar in 1792, it was pointed out to him by Robert M'Intosh, Esq., one of the counsel in the case, then and long after remarkable for the interest which he took, and the management which he possessed, in the prolix and complicated affairs of the York Building Company.

The cause of the trial, bloody and sad enough in its own nature, was one of the acts of violence which were the natural consequences of the Civil War in 1745.

It was about three years after the battle of Culloden that this poor man, Sergeant Davis, was quartered, with a small military party, in an uncommonly wild part of the Highlands, near the country of the Farquharsons, as it is called, and adjacent to that which is now the property of the Earl of Fife. A more waste tract of mountain and bog, rocks and ravines, extending from Dubrach to Glenshee, without habitations of any kind until you reach Glenclunie, is scarce to be met with in Scotland. A more fit locality, therefore, for a deed of murder, could hardly be pointed out, nor one which could tend more to agitate superstitious feelings. The hill of Christie, on which the murder was actually committed, is a local name, which is probably known in the country, though the Editor has been unable to discover it more specially, but it certainly forms part of the ridge to which the general description applies. Davis was attached to the country where he had his residence, by the great plenty of sport which it afforded, and, when dispatched upon duty across these mountains, he usually went at some distance from his men, and followed his game without regarding the hints thrown out about danger from the country people. To this he was exposed, not only from his being intrusted with the odious office of depriving the people of their arms and national dress, but still more from his usually carrying about with him a stock of money and valuables, considerable for the time and period, and enough of itself to be a temptation to his murder.

On the 28th day of September, the Sergeant set forth, along with a party, which was to communicate with a separate party of English soldiers at Glenshee; but when Davis's men came to the place of rendezvous, their commander was not with them, and the privates could only say that they

had heard the report of his gun after he had parted from them on his solitary sport. In short, Sergeant Arthur Davis was seen no more in this life, and his remains were long sought for in vain. At length a native of the country, named M'Pherson, made it known to more than one person that the spirit of the unfortunate huntsman had appeared to him, and told him he had been murdered by two Highlanders, natives of the country, named Duncan Terig alias Clerk, and Alexander Bane Macdonald. Proofs accumulated, and a person was even found to bear witness, that lying in concealment upon the hill of Christie, the spot where poor Davis was killed, he and another man, now dead, saw the crime committed with their own eyes. A girl whom Clerk afterwards married, was, nearly at the same time, seen in possession of two valuable rings which the Sergeant used to have about his person. Lastly, the counsel and agent of the prisoners were convinced of their guilt. Yet, notwithstanding all these suspicious circumstances, the panels were ultimately acquitted by the jury.

This was chiefly owing to the ridicule thrown upon the story by the incident of the ghost, which was enhanced seemingly, if not in reality, by the ghost-seer stating the spirit to have spoken as good Gaelic as he had ever heard in Lochaber. — "Pretty well," answered Mr M'Intosh, "for the ghost of an English sergeant!" This was indeed no sound jest, for there was nothing more ridiculous, in a ghost speaking a language which he did not understand when in the body, than there was in his appearing at all. But still the counsel had a right to seize upon whatever could benefit his clients, and there is no doubt that this observation rendered the evidence of the spectre yet more ridiculous. In short, it is probable that the ghost of Sergeant Davis, had he actually been to devise how to prevent these two men from being executed for his own murder, could hardly have contrived a better mode than by the apparition in the manner which was sworn to.

The most rational supposition seems to be, that the crime had come to M'Pherson, the ghost-seer's knowledge, by ordinary means, of which there is some evidence, but desiring to have a reason for communicating it, which could not be objected to by the people of the country, he had invented this machinery of the ghost, whose commands, according to Highland belief, were not to be disobeyed. If such were his motives, his legend, though it seemed to set his own tongue at liberty upon the subject, yet it impressed on his evidence the fate of Cassandra's prophecies, that, however true, it should not have the fortune to be believed.

Abbotsford, 18th March, 1830.

Trial of Duncan Terig Alias Clerk, And Alexander Bain Macdonald.

CURIA JUSTICIARIA S. D. N. Regis tenta in Nova Sessionis Domo Burgi de Edinburgh, Decimo die Mensis Junij 1754, per honorabiles viros Carolum Areskine de Alva, Justiciarij Clericum, Magistros Alexandrum Fraser de Strichen, Patricium Grant de Elchies, et Hugonem Dalrymple de Drummore, et Dominum Jacobum Ferguson de Killkerran, Commissionarios Justiciarij dicti S. D. N. Regis.

Curia legittime affirmata,
Intran.

Duncan Terig *alias* Clerk, and Alexander Bain Macdonald, both now prisoners in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, Pannels,

Indicted and accused at the instance of William Grant of Prestongrange, Esq., His Majesties Advocate, for His Majesties interest, for the crime of murder committed by them in manner at length mentioned in the indictment raised against them thereanent, which indictment maketh mention, That whereas, by the laws of God, and of this and all other well governed realms, Murder or Homicide is a most atrocious crime, and severely punishable, especially committed with an intent to rob the person murdered, and that by persons of bad fame and character, who are habite and repute thieves, yet true it is, and of verity, that they, and each of them, or one or other of them, are guilty, actors, or art and part, of the foresaid crime, aggravated as aforesaid, in so far as the deceast Arthur Davies, serjeant in the regiment of foot commanded by General Guise, being in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, quartered or lodged alongst with a party of men or soldiers belonging to the said regiment in Dubrach, or Glendee, in Braemar, in the parish of — — and sheriffdom of Aberdeen, he, the said Arthur Davies, did, upon the twenty-eighth day September, one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, or upon one or other of the days of that month, or of the month of August immediately preceding, or October immediately

following, go from thence to a hill in Braemar, commonly called Christie, at the head of Glenconie, in the parish of — — and sheriffdom aforesaid. As also that same day, both of them, the said Duncan Terig alias Clerk, and Alexander Bain Macdonald, went from the house of John Grant, in Altalaat, armed with guns and muskets, pretending when they went from thence that they were going to shoot or hunt deer upon the said hill, to which place both of them having accordingly gone, and there meeting with the said Arthur Davies, each, or one or other of them, did, on the said twenty-eighth of September, 1749, or upon one or other of the days of that month, or of the months aforesaid, cruelly and barbarously fire a loaded gun or guns at him, which were in their hands, whereby he was mortally wounded, and of which wounds he died on the said hill, immediately or soon thereafter, where his dead body remained concealed for sometime, and was afterwards found, together with a hat, having a silver button on it, with the letters A. R. D. marked on it. Likeas, soon after the said Arthur Davies was murdered, each of the said two panels, being persons of bad fame and character, and who were habite and repute thieves, were, by the general voice of the country, reputed to have perpetrated the said murder, and to have robbed and taken from him a silver watch, two gold rings and a purse of gold, which it was known or believed in the country he generally wore or carried about him, which said opinion or belief of the neighbourhood, that both of them had been guilty of the said murder and robbery, has been since that time rendered the more credible, particularly with respect to him, the said Duncan Clerk, in so far as, although he was not possesst of any visible funds or effects which could enable him to stock a farm before the period of the said murder, yet soon thereafter he took and obtained a lease from Lord Bracco, of a farm called the Craggan, for which he was bound to pay thirty pounds Scots of yearly rent; as also thereafter he obtained a lease of the farm of Gleney, from — — Farquharson of Inverey, for which at present he was bound to pay a yearly rent, or tack duty, of one hundred and five merks Scots, as appears from the judicial declaration of him, the said Duncan Clerk, to be hereafter more particularly taken notice of; and both of the said panels having been apprehended in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-three, for being guilty of the foresaid murder, and upon the twenty-third day of January last, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four years, brought into the presence of the Right Honourable Alexander Fraser of Strichen and Hugh Dalrymple of Drummore, two of the Lords

Commissioners of Justiciary each of them gave different and contradictory accounts of themselves, in so far as the said Duncan Clerk did then acknowledge, in presence of the said Judges, that he was on the hill of Gleneye, alongst with the said Alexander Bain Macdonald, both armed as above set forth, on the day the said Arthur Davies was amissing; that the said Alexander Macdonald fired a shot at some deer, but that about ten o'clock the said Duncan Clerk parted with him on the hill, and came back to his father's house, to which likewise the said Alexander Macdonald came the same evening, where he lodged or stayed all night; as also a paper containing a list of debts, beginning with the words, "I, Duncan Clerk, in Gleneye, was put in Perth Jail," and ending, "Angus Macdonald, 12 sh.," now marked on the back with the name and sirname of the said Lord Drummore, being exhibited to him the said Duncan Clerk, he acknowledged the same to be his handwriting, and that it contains a list of debts due to him when he was imprisoned, as is at more length to be seen in his said confession or declaration, signed by him and the said Lord Drummore. Likeas he the said Alexander Bain Macdonald did, upon the twenty-third day of January last, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four years, in presence of the said Judges, acknowledge and declare, that one year, while he was Lord Bracco's forrester, he went with the said Duncan Clerk to the Hill of Gleneye, to search for deer, where he fired at them, but that about nine or ten o'clock in the forenoon, Duncan Clerk went home to his father's house, and thereafter the said Alexander Macdonald returned to his own house in Allanquoich, where he staid all that night, not seeing the said Duncan Clerk more that day, as is at more length to be seen in his said confession or declaration, signed by the said Lord Drummore, he having declared he could not write; both which confessions or declarations, with the list of debts above specified, said to be due to him, the said Duncan Clerk, as also, the hat mentioned to be found in summer one thousand seven hundred and fifty in the hill of Gleneye, are all now lodged in the hands of the Clerk to the Court of Justiciary, before which they are to be tried, that they may see the same: At least time and place aforesaid, the said Arthur Davies was murdered or bereaved of his life, and they, and each of them, or one or other of them, are guilty, actor or art and part of the said murder, aggravated as above set furth; all which, or part thereof, being found proven by the verdict of an Assize, before the Lords Justice General, Justice Clerk, and Commissioners of Justiciary, he, the said Duncan Terig alias Clerk, and

Alexander Bain Macdonald, ought to be punished with the pains of law, to the terror of others to commit the like in time coming.

(Signed)
Alex. Home, A.D.

Pursuers.

Procurators in defence.
William Grant, of Prestongrange, Esq.,
Mr Alexander Lockhart,
His Majesties Advocate.
Mr Robert M'Intosh,
Mr Patrick Haldane, and
Advocates.
Mr Alexander Home,

both His Majesties Solicitors.

Mr Robert Dundas, Advocate.

The Libel being openly read in Court, and the panels interrogate thereupon, they both denied the same, and referred their defences to their Lawiers.

Lockhart, &c., for the panel, denying the libel, or any guilt or accession of the panels to the murder charged, pled that the panels were persons of good fame and reputation, and that as no cause of malice in them against Serjeant Davies was alleged, so the circumstances founded on in the indictment, though they were true, were not in any sort sufficient to infer a proof of the panels' guilt. And further, the panels would be able to prove a true and warrantable cause for going to the hill libelled on in arms, and that they went openly and avowedly; and that in the circumstances they were in, it was impossible they could have any wicked design against, or expect to have an opportunity of executing such a design against Serjeant Davies: That they were not so much as suspected of murdering him at the time of his being amissing, or for several months thereafter, when many different accounts were given, and suspicions raised and entertained concerning that matter. They also objected and alleged for the panels, that as murder was the only crime charged against them in this indictment, no vague or general allegation of robbery, or other crime or accusation against their characters, could be allowed to go to the knowledge of an assize, though they were

noways apprehensive of the consequences of it, other than from the false and malicious reports, raised and propagated against them, since their commitment for the foresaid crime; and the panels had great reason to complain of the undue delays in bringing them to trial for this offence: In so far as, after they were committed for the same in September last, and had taken out letters of intimation, and upon expiry of the days, had also obtained letters of liberation, they were again committed upon a new warrant for alleged theft, upon which new commitment they raised new letters of intimation, and when the sixty days were just expiring, they were served with an indictment for the theft, which was fixed to within a few days of the expiry of the forty days allowed by law, and then allowed to drop; and after all, there was again a new warrant of commitment obtained against them for wearing the Highland dress; and last of all they were served with this indictment; all which steps plainly show the oppression they have met with, which the panels do by no means lay to the charge of the prosecutor, but are willing to allow the same to be owing to the malicious information of some private informer, which they hope to be able to make appear if they were allowed an exculpatory proof, and that very undue means had been used both before and since the citation of the witnesses to influence them to give evidence against the panels in this matter; and the panels, amongst many other things for their exculpation, would be able to prove, that after they returned from the hill upon the day upon which the Serjeant is said to have been murdered, he, the Serjeant, was seen with his party in that hill. So that it is impossible the panels could be the perpetrators of the murder.

Lord Advocate, &c., answered, that as the defence resolved altogether into a denial of the libel, it was sufficient for him to say, that according to the information he had received, such facts and circumstances would come out upon proof as would be sufficient to convince the Jury of the panels' guilt: That it was not meant that the circumstances libelled were sufficient without others to connect with them, the only intention of libelling upon these circumstances being to show the panels what written evidence was to be adduced against them: That he does not oppose the panels being allowed a proof of every fact and circumstance that may tend to their exculpation: That as to the delay complained of, the prosecutor can for himself say, that it is owing to no intention of his to oppress the panels; he had early information of the murder charged upon, and was very willing and desirous

it might come to light. The panels were at last accused and committed for it, by the general voice of the country; and though at first the proof against them did not appear so pregnant, yet it was hoped, and was the general expectation of all in that part, that the murder would be brought to light. This was the reason of continuing the panels in confinement. And now that the prosecutor was ready to go on to trial, he hoped their Lordships would find the indictment relevant, and remit the panels to the knowledge of an assize, allowing them at the same time a proof of every circumstance that may appear necessary for their exculpation.

The Lords Justice Clerk and Commissioners of Justiciary, having considered the indictment pursued at the instance of William Grant of Prestongrange, Esq., His Majesties Advocate for his Majesties interest, against Duncan Terig *alias* Clerk, and Alexander Bain Macdonald, both now prisoners in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, panels, with the foresaid debate thereupon: They find the said indictment relevant to infer the pains of law; but allow the panels to prove all facts and circumstances that may tend to elide the indictment, or exculpate them, or either of them, from the guilt of the crime therein libelled: And remit the panels, with the indictment as found relevant, to the knowledge of an assize.

(Signed)
Ch. Areskine, I.P.D.

The Lords continue the diet at the instance of his Majesties Advocate, against the said two panels, till tomorrow at seven o'clock in the morning, and witnesses and assizers then to attend, each under the pain of law, and the panels to be carried back to prison.

CURIA JUSTICIARIA S. D. N. Regis tenta in Nova Sessionis Domo Burgi de Edinburgh undecimo die mensis Junij 1754, per honorabiles viros Carolum Areskine de Alva, Justiciarium Clericum, Dominum Gilbertum Elliot de Minto, Magistros Alexandrum Fraser de Strichen, Patricium Grant de Elchies, et Hugonem Dalrymple de Drummore, et Dominum Jacobum Ferguson de Killkerran, Commissionarios Justiciarios dict. S. D. N. Regis.

Curia legittime affirmata,
Intran.

Duncan Terig *alias* Clerk, and Alexander Bain Macdonald, both prisoners in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, panels indicted and accused as in the former Sederunt.

The Lords proceeded to make choice of the following persons to pass upon the assize of the said Duncan Terig alias Clerk, and Alexander Bain Macdonald; to wit, —

- Archibald Wallace, merchant in Edinburgh.
- William Tod, senior, merchant there.
- Andrew Bonnar, merchant there.
- Robert Forrester, merchant there.
- Walter Hogg, merchant there.
- Alexander Crawford, baker in Edinburgh.
- John Heriot, candlemaker there.
- John Sword, merchant there.
- William Ormiston, bookbinder there.
- William Braidwood, candlemaker.
- William Sands, bookseller in Edinburgh.
- John Dalgleish, watchmaker there.
- George Gray, merchant there.
- John Welsh, goldsmith there.
- James Gilliland, goldsmith there.

The above assize all lawfully sworn, and no objection to the contrary —

The panels and their procurators admitted the two judicial declarations libelled on, were emitted by them, before the two Judges therein named; and the said panels both now judicially adhere to the same, with this variation for Alexander Bain Macdonald, that it was a mistake in his said declaration, where it is said, that he went home to the house in Allanquoich, where he staid that night, and did not see Duncan Clerk any more that day after they parted on the hill, the true fact being, that he did not go home to the house in Allanquoich where he resided, till the night thereafter, and in the evening of that night went to the house of Duncan Clerk's father, where he found Duncan Clerk, and staid all night, and that the reason of his former mistake was, that he by himself went again to the hills upon the twentyninth in quest of the deer which he had wounded the preceding day, and returned to his own house the evening of the said twentyninth; and this admission is

signed by the said Duncan Clerk, and by Mr Alexander Lockhart, procurator for the other panel, who declares he cannot write.

(Signed)
Duncan Clerk.

Alex. Lockhart.

Thereafter, His Majesty's Advocate for proof adduced the following witnesses; *viz.* —

Jean Ghent, relict of Arthur Davies, serjeant in the regiment commanded by LieutenantGeneral Guise, aged about thirtythree years, who being solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, and interrogate: Depones, That she was married for the space of ten months to Serjeant Davies the day he was missing, and that in summer seventeen hundred and forty-nine, her husband, with eight private men under his command, marched from Aberdeen to Dubrach in Braemar, in the shire of Aberdeen, which was assigned to him as his station; and that there was another party of the same regiment whose headquarters was at Aberdeen, stationed at the Spittle of Glenlee, within eight miles of Dubrach, under the command of a corporal: That the two parties did meet twice a-week in patrol, about half way between the foresaid two places: That her husband was a keen sportsman, and used to go out a-shooting or fishing generally every day; and when he went along with the party on patrol, sent the men home and followed his sport; and on other occasions went out a-shooting by himself alone: That her husband was a sober man, a good manager, and had saved money to the value of about fifteen guineas and a half, which he had in gold, and kept in a green silk purse, which he inclosed within a leather purse along with any silver he had: That besides this gold, he generally wore a silver watch in his pocket, and two gold rings upon one of his fingers, one of which was of pale yellow gold, and had a little lump of gold raised upon it in the form of a seal, with a gold stamp on the inside of the ring, and a weaved line like a worm round the upper side of the plate: That the other was a plain gold ring, which the deponent had got from David Holland, her first husband, with the letters D. H. on the inside, and had this posie on it, "When this you see remember me:" That the said David Holland was paymaster-serjeant in General Guise's regiment: And further depones, That the said Serjeant

Davies commonly wore a pair of large silver buckles in his shoes, marked also with the same letters D. H. in the inside, which likewise had belonged to her said former husband, as also wore silver knee-buckles, and had two dozen silver buttons upon a double-breasted vest, made of stript lutstring: That he frequently had about him a folding penknife, that had a brown tortoise-shell handle, and a plate upon the end of it, on which was cut a naked boy, or some such device, with which he often sealed his letters: That one day when he was dressing some hooks while the deponent was by, she observed that he was cutting his hat with his penknife, and she went towards him, and asked him what he meant by cutting his hat? To which he answered, that he was cutting his name upon it: To which the deponent replied, she could not see what he could mean by putting his name upon a thing of no value, and pulled it out of his hand in a jocular way, but he followed her, and took the hat from her, and she observed that the A. was then cut out in the hat; and after he got it, she saw him cut out the letter D., which he did in a hurry, and which the deponent believed was occasioned by the toying that was between them concerning this matter, for when she observed it, she said to him you have made a pretty sort of work of it, by having misplaced the letters: To which he answered, that it was her fault, having caused him do it in a hurry. And the hat now upon the table, and which is lying in the clerk's hands, and referred to in the indictment, being shown to her, Depones, That to the best of her judgment and belief, that is the hat above mentioned: Depones, That she never has seen neither the said Serjeant, the gold purse, or silver purse, above mentioned, nor the buckles for his shoes and knees, watch, or penknife, since he marched from his quarters with the party at the time at which he is supposed to have been murdered: Depones, That on Thursday, being the day immediately preceding Michaelmas, being the twenty-eighth of September, one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, her husband went out very early in the morning from Dubrach, and that four men of the party under his command soon after followed him, in order to meet the patrol from Glenshye, and in the afternoon before four o'clock, the four men returned to Dubrach, and acquainted the deponent that they had seen and heard him fire a shot, as they believed, at Tarmatans, but that he did not join company with them: That at the place appointed they met with a corporal and a party from Glenshee, and then retired home: Depones, That her husband never returned; that she has never met with any body that saw him after the party

returned from the foresaid place, excepting the corporal that that day commanded the party from Glenshee, who told her that, after the forementioned party from Dubrach had gone away from the foresaid appointed place, Serjeant Davies came up to him all alone, upon which the corporal told him, he thought it was very unreasonable in him to venture upon the hill by himself, as for his part he was not without fear even when he had his party of four men along with him; to which Serjeant Davies answered, that when he had his arms and ammunition about him, he did not fear any body he could meet: Depones, That her husband, Serjeant Davies, made no secret of his having the gold above mentioned, but upon the many different occasions he had to pay and receive money, he used to take out his purse and show the gold; and that even when he was playing with children, he would frequently take out his purse and rattle it for their diversion, from which it was generally known by all the neighbourhood that the serjeant was worth money, and carried it about him: Depones, That from the second day after the serjeant and party went from Dubrach as aforesaid, when the deponent found he did not return, she did believe, and does believe at this day, that he was murdered; for that he and she lived together in as great amity and love as any couple could do that ever were married, and that he never was in use to stay away a night from her, and that it was not possible he could be under any temptation to desert, as he was much esteemed and beloved by all his officers, and had good reason to believe he would have been promoted to the rank of serjeant-major upon the first vacancy: Depones, That when her husband went away from Dubrach on the morning of the twenty-eighth of September aforesaid, he was dressed in a blue surtout coat, with a stripped silk vest, and teiken breeches and brown stockings: That he had in his purse fifteen guineas and a half in gold, a crown piece and three shillings in silver, his silver watch in his pocket, with a silver seal at it, his silver buckles in his shoes, and his silver buttons on his waistcoat, and the above mentioned rings on his fingers; and being asked how she came to know all these things were on him or about him when he went away as aforesaid? Depones, That she was privy and knew every thing that related to his money; and the night before the said twenty-eighth of September, the serjeant from Braemar had come to Dubrach, and in the deponent's presence had given some money which was gold to Serjeant Davies, who gave him silver that he had by him for it, to pay the party; and upon occasion of this, she saw the quantity of gold above

mentioned, which was in her husband's possession, and that she saw the vest with the buttons and rings on his fingers, and also the watch, before he went away, he having in her presence put on the teiken drawers above mentioned, desired from her somewhat to keep the watch dry, upon which she gave him a piece of cloth, the said drawers being a little damp, in which he wrapt it, and put it into his pocket: Depones, That he had dark mouse-coloured hair, tied up with a black silk ribband behind, and wore a hat with a silver lace and silver button, marked with the letters D. A. on the outside of the crown of the hat: And the deponent verily believes, that the hat now shown to her, and above referred to, is the hat he took out with him: Depones, That he wore that day a pair of brogues which he had bespoke to be made so as they could fit buckles, and not to be tied with latches, conform to the common use of that country: That these brogues the deponent saw when they were first brought home from Glenshee: Depones, That a gun now exhibited and shown to the deponent, is the gun which her husband, Serjeant Davies, received in a present from Lieutenant Brydon, of the same regiment with him, and the gun which he always used when he went a-shooting, and which he carried out with him in the morning of the twenty-eighth of September, one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine aforesaid: That the stock of the gun is altered about the butt, and a plate that was on the butt-end is taken away, and the wood pared, but that she knows the barrel by a cross rent that is in it a little above the middle, and which her husband told her had been occasioned by his firing a shot when the gun was overloaded and the ball had stuck at that part of the barrel when he was loading her: Depones, That from the time her husband was quartered at Dubrach in the month of June to the foresaid twenty-eighth of September one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, he was never absent a night from his command at Dubrach except one, that he went to the doctor of the regiment to take his advice about a strain, and he returned next morning: Depones, That upon the Monday after the Serjeant was believed to be murdered, the country was raised to make search for the body, but it was not found; and that she spoke to one of the prisoners, Clerk, whom she took to be a particular friend, to try if he could find the body, but it was not found: That afterwards the deponent went to the garrison in Braemar, and from that to the regiment: And being interrogate for the panels, whether her husband had received any information before the party marched out upon the day above mentioned that there were people in arms in that country

where he was stationed? Depones, That her husband was stationed there, as she believes, because it was said that severals of the Highlanders had not delivered up their arms since the Rebellion, and wore the highland garb; but that she knows nothing of any particular information he had about that time, except that about the beginning of harvest, on a Sunday afternoon, a woman, who said she had been in the hill, came in where the Serjeant and the deponent were sitting at dinner, and said, that she had seen two men in highland clothes, and armed, lying at the mouth of a cave, who seemed to be herding two cows which she saw, and upon her coming near them, consulted among themselves whether they should not bind her lest she should return and advertise Serjeant Davies and his party; but however, she had got away, and had come immediately to give notice to the Serjeant and his party, whereupon he and a party of six men went up in quest of them, but found nobody, neither did the deponent hear any more of that matter afterwards, *Causa scientiæ patet*: And this is truth, as she shall answer to God; and declares she cannot write.

(Signed)
Ch. Areskine.

Donald Farquharson, in Glendee, married man, who being solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, and interrogate, depones, That in summer one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, Arthur Davies, late serjeant in General Guise's regiment, was with a serjeant's command of soldiers stationed in Dubrach, in Glendee, in Braemar, in Aberdeenshire; and the Serjeant, with his wife, the preceding witness, stayed in the house of Michael Farquharson, the deponent's father, where the deponent also stayed: Depones, That the Serjeant was a sober well behaving man, very civil to the country, and, so far as the deponent knew, had the goodwill of the country: That he was a good manager of his money; and the deponent has seen with him a good deal of gold, which he commonly kept in a long purse, either blue or green, the deponent does not remember which, and he had also another purse, in which he kept his silver: That he had a silver watch, with a seal hanging at it, and silver buckles in his shoes, and knees of his breeches: That the deponent has seen two vests with him, one with a white stripe, and the other of a roe's skin; and that he had a set of silver buttons for a vest, which he used with the one or other as he had occasion: That he had also two rings, which he told the deponent were gold, the one

of them a large coarse ring, with a knob on the one side of it, either of the shape of a seal or a heart, the deponent does not remember which: Depones, That when Serjeant Davies went a-shooting or fishing, he was commonly dressed in one of the above vests, and a blue meet upper coat, or surtout, with highland brogues, which he had purchased for the purpose, and had caused to be made so as to be tied with silver buckles: Depones, That on the above gold ring with the knob, there was upon the upper side of the knob some scores that the deponent did not understand the meaning of: Depones, That the Serjeant was wont frequently to take out his purse, either in paying or receiving money, or some time even in playing with children; and that when he went a-hunting or shooting, he always wore a laced hat, with a silver button: Depones, That the last time the deponent saw him was on Wednesday the twenty-seventh day of September, one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, the deponent having gone that day to the fair at Kirkmichael, eighteen miles from his father's house, and did not return till Saturday thereafter: Depones, That at his return, passing by the house where the soldiers were quartered, one of them named Patrick Ogilvie, asked the deponent whether he had seen Serjeant Davies at the fair? and the deponent having answerd that he did not see him, and that certainly he had not been there, or he would have seen him, Ogilvie then said he was afraid of him, for that he had gone away upon the Thursday to meet a patrol from Glenshee, and had not yet returned; that they supposed he had gone with that patrol to the fair, but that since he was not there, he suspected he had been murdered; and the deponent never saw him alive since that time: Depones, That the captain of that command to whom the Serjeant belonged, hearing that he was amissing, sent a party of men on the Sunday to Dubrach to search for his body, and went with them for three or four following days, but without any success: Depones, That in the month of June seventeen hundred and fifty, the deponent was told by the people in his father's house, that Alexander Macpherson, alias M'Gillas, had been there inquiring for him, and wanted much to see him, and desired the deponent would go to his master's sheilling in Glenconie, about two miles' distance from Dubrach, and that he wanted much to speak to him: That after some days the deponent went to him, when Macpherson told him that he was greatly troubled with an apparition, the ghost of the deceased Serjeant Davies, who insisted that he should bury his bones; and that he having declined to bury them, the ghost insisted that he should apply to the deponent, saying that he

was sure Donald Farquharson would help to bury his bones: That the deponent could not believe that he had seen such an apparition, upon which Macpherson desired him to go along with him, and he would show him the bones, and the place where he had found them: That the deponent went along with him, which he did the rather that he thought it might possibly be true, and if it was, he did not know but the apparition might trouble himself: Depones, That they accordingly found the bones in a peat-moss, where peats had been casten above ground, and near to the top of a hill: That the place was distant from Dubrach between two and three miles, between Glenchristie and Glenconie, and about half a mile from the road the patroling parties commonly take from Dubrach to Glenshee: That the spot where the body was lying had the surface of the ground entire, and no peats had been casten there: That the flesh had been mostly consumed from the bones, and the head separated from the body, and the hair lying by itself, separated from the head; and depones, that the hair was of the same colour with the Serjeant's hair, a mouse colour: That they also found some blue cloth, all torn in rags, some of it under the body, and some of it lying by the body; and it appeared to the deponent to be of the same kind of cloth with that of the blue coat that the Serjeant commonly wore when he went a-shooting: Depones, That the bones were not all lying together, but were scattered asunder, particularly some of the joints of his arms, and one of his legs; and that some of them were scattered at the distance of several yards: Depones, That Macpherson told him that when he first found the bones, which was about eight days before, that they were lying farther off, under a bank, and he drew them out with his staff: Depones, That they also found a pair of brogues, which appeared to the deponent to be of the same kind with what the Serjeant wore, only with this difference, that the taggs for the buckles were cut away, which seemed to have been done with a knife: Depones, That he asked Macpherson whether the apparition had told him by whom he had been murdered: That Macpherson said he had asked the question, and the apparition answered, that if he had not asked him, he would have power to have told him: That the deponent also asked him if the apparition had given him any orders about carrying his bones to a churchyard: Depones, That Macpherson said he had given no answer, and thereupon they agreed to bury him in that place; and accordingly they dug a hole in the moss, with the shaft of a shovel that Macpherson had, and buried the bones there, and laid a part of the blue cloth under the bones, and a part

of it above it, and covered all with some turfs that they had tore up from the moss; and being showed a fusee, depones, that one day the Serjeant and the deponent went out a-deer-hunting, and the Serjeant, in loading his gun, which was either a French or a Spanish piece, happened to put in a ball that was too large for the bore, so that he could not, with the ram-rod, drive it down to the powder: That the deponent advised him to go to his father's sheilling to get a stronger ram-rod; but the Serjeant, being impatient to go about his diversion, fired the fusee, and cracked the barrel about the middle; and having examined the fusee now produced, observed that the barrel is cracked about the same place, and, so far as appears to him, may be the same barrel: Depones, That there appears to be some alterations made upon the stock since the Serjeant had it: That the but was thicker than it is now, and clad with iron at the end; and there was also another ring for the keeping of the ram-rod, other than that now shown him: Depones, That the gun was shown to the deponent on Wednesday last by James Growar, son to Donald Growar in Glendee, who told him that he found it in the hill in sight of Glenconie: Depones, That after Serjeant Davies was killed or amissing as aforesaid, he saw yellow rings on Elizabeth Downie's fingers, spouse to the prisoner, Duncan Terig alias Clerk, one of which had a knob upon it, as Serjeant Davies's ring also had, but does not remember the shape of either of these knobs: Depones, That he asked her whether it was gold, and she said it was: Depones, That he saw this ring upon Elizabeth Downie's finger before she was married to the prisoner; but it was then reported in the country that he was in suit of her for marriage, and has at several times, before and since Serjeant Davies was amissing, seen other yellow rings upon her fingers, but never saw the ring with the knob upon her finger till after the Serjeant was amissing, nor never saw it on her finger after she was married; and being asked whether it did not strike him, when he saw the ring with the knob on it upon Elizabeth Downie's hand, that it was Serjeant Davies's ring, Depones, that it did not; and further depones, that he has known Elizabeth Downie change her rings every other year: Depones, That after she was married, the deponent asked her if she had a gold ring, and she answered she never had one but one which was her mother's, which made the deponent suppose that the said ring with the knob had been her mother's; and depones, that the panel, her husband, was in prison when he asked her this question: Depones, That at first there was a report in the country that Serjeant Davies had deserted, then it was supposed that he had

been killed by the thieves, but last of all, the report was, that he had been killed by the prisoners, and that has continued to be the report of the country for these three years: And being asked what he took to be the grounds of that report, Depones, that he took it to be, that Macdonald, as Lord Bracco's forrester, had a warrant for carrying guns for killing of deer, and he carried Clerk alongst with him, and none other of the country had any warrant to carry arms; but he heard that some of the people in the country suspected that the ring with the knob that he had seen on Elizabeth Downie's finger was Serjeant Davies's ring; and being interrogate as to the character of the two panels, depones, that he has heard Clerk habite and repute a sheep-stealer, but that he never heard any thing of Macdonald, but that he once broke the chest of one Corbie, and took some money out of it: Depones, That he never heard Clerk get the character of a good deer-stalker, though he could shoot wild fowl: Depones, That Alexander Macpherson, before mentioned, once served the deponent's father, and is accounted an honest lad; but on the panel's interrogatory, Depones, that he has been charged with telling of stories, and that all is not to be believed that he says; though that is the general character, the deponent knows no reason for it: Depones, That Duncan Clerk once pursued his accusers before a Sheriff Court at Braemar, and freed himself at that time, and, as he heard, got some mends of his accusers, but what it was he knows not: That the only particular act of theft he heard him accused of, was the stealing of a parcel of sheep from Alexander Farquharson in Inverey, and which was the ground of the process before mentioned before the Sheriff: Depones, That the Sabbath before the Serjeant was amissing, a woman came to the deponent's father's house, and told them that, coming through the hills, she had seen four thieves in arms, who had separated fourteen of his father's cattle, upon which the Serjeant, with a party, went in quest of them immediately, but could find none of them, they having, it seems, gone off and left the cattle: Depones, That upon the Friday, the twentyninth of September, the corporal stationed at Glenshee met with the deponent at the fair of Kirkmichael, while the deponent was buying a pair of shoes, and he told the corporal that they were for Serjeant Davies, and the corporal told him that he had parted with the Serjeant the day before at the Water of Benow; the Serjeant, after that, was going to the hill to get a shot of the deer; which Water of Benow is about half a mile's distance from the place where the patrolling parties used to meet: Depones, That the prisoner Clerk was a common dealer in buying

of sheep and cattle; and the deponent has seen him both buying and paying the price, and his father was reputed one of the richest tenants in Inverey's grounds. *Causa scientiæ patet*; and this is truth, as he shall answer to God.

(Signed)
Donald Farquharson.

P. Grant.

Alexander M'Pherson *alias* M^{c}Gillas, in Inverey, being solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, and interrogate, aged twentysix years, unmarried, Depones, That in summer one thousand seven hundred and fifty, he found lying in a moss bank in the hill of Christie, a human body, at least the bones of a human body, of which the flesh was mostly consumed, and he believed it to be the body of Serjeant Davies, because it was reported in the country that he had been murdered in that hill the year before. That when he first found this body, there was a bit of blue cloth upon it pretty entire, which he took to be what is called English cloth; he also found the hair of the deceased, which was of a dark mouse colour, and tied about with a black ribbon: That he also observed some pieces of a stripped stuff, and found also lying there a pair of brogues, which had been made with latches for buckles, which had been cut away by a knife: That he, by help of his staff, brought out the body, and laid it upon plain ground, in doing whereof some of the bones were separated one from another: Depones, That for some days he was in a doubt what to do, but meeting with John Growar in the moss, he told John what he had found, and John bid him tell nothing of it, otherways he would complain of the deponent to John Shaw of Daldownie, upon which the deponent resolved to prevent Growar's complaint, and go and tell Daldownie of it himself; and which having accordingly done, Daldownie desired him to conceal the matter, and go and bury the body privately, as it would not be carried to a kirk unkent, and that the same might hurt the country, being under the suspicion of being a rebel country: Depones, That some few days thereafter, he acquainted Donald Farquharson, the preceding witness, of his having seen the body of a dead man in the hill, which he took to be the body of Serjeant Davies: That Farquharson at first doubted the truth of his information, till the deponent having told him that a few nights before when he was in bed, a vision appeared to him as of a man clad in blue, who told the deponent, "I am

Serjeant Davies;" but that before he told him so, the deponent had taken the said vision at first appearance to be a real living man, a brother of Donald Farquharson's: That the deponent rose from his bed, and followed him to the door, and then it was, as has been told, that he said he was Serjeant Davies who had been murdered in the Hill of Christie, about near a year before, and desired the deponent to go to the place he pointed at, where he would find his bones, and that he might go to Donald Farquharson, and take his assistance to the burying of him: That upon giving Donald Farquharson this information, Donald went along with him, and finding the bones as he informed Donald, and having then buried it with the help of a spade which he the deponent had alongst with him: And for putting what is above deponed upon out of doubt, Depones, that the above vision was the occasion of his going by himself to see the dead body, and which he did before he either spoke to John Growar, Daldownie, or any other body: And further Depones, that while he was in bed another night after he had first seen the body by himself, but had not buried it, the vision again appeared naked, and minded him to bury the body; and after that he spoke to the other folks above mentioned, and at last complied, and buried the bones above mentioned: Depones, That upon the vision's first appearance to the deponent in his bed, and after going out of the door, and being told by it he was Serjeant Davies, the deponent asked him who it was that had murdered him, to which it made this answer, that if the deponent had not asked him, he might have told him, but as he had asked him, he said he either could not or would not, but which of the two expressions the deponent cannot say; but at the second time the vision made its appearance to him, the deponent renewed the same question, and then the vision answered, that it was the two men now in the panel that had murdered him: And being further interrogate in what manner the vision disappeared from him first and last, Depones, That after the short interviews above mentioned, the vision at both times disappeared and vanished out of his sight in the twinkling of an eye; and that in describing the panels by the vision above mentioned as his murderers, his words were, Duncan Clerk and Alexander Macdonald: Depones, That the conversation betwixt the deponent and the vision was in the Irish language: Depones, That several times in the harvest before the Martinmas after seeing the said vision, he was applied to by Duncan Clerk, the panel, then to enter home to his service at that time, which accordingly he did, and staid in his service just a year, and he being in the hill together

with Duncan Clerk, spying a young cow, desired the deponent to shoot it; and tho Duncan did not bid him carry it home after it should be shot, yet the deponent understood that to be the purpose, when Duncan desired him to shoot it, and which the deponent refused to do, adding, that it was such thoughts as these were in his head when he murdered Serjeant Davies, upon which some angry expressions happened between Duncan and the deponent; but when the deponent insisted upon it that he could not deny the murder, Duncan fell calm, and desired the deponent to say nothing of that matter, and that he would be a brother to him, and give him every thing he stood in need of, and particularly would help him to stock a farm when he took one; and the time of deponing, the deponent exhibited a paper, which is marked on the back by the Lord Examiner, the deponent averring he cannot write: And depones, That the said paper was put in his hands by the said Duncan Clerk, who at the time told him it was a premium of twenty pounds Scots to hold his tongue of what he knew of Serjeant Davies: Depones, That while the deponent was in the panel Duncan Clerk's service, and about Lammas seventeen hundred and fifty-one, he showed to the deponent a long green silk purse, and that he showed also to the deponent the contents which were in it, *viz.* sixteen guineas in gold, and some silver: And being interrogate what was the occasion of showing this purse and money to the deponent, Depones, it was one of two which he does not remember, either he had come from Aberdeen with money, which he had got for his wool, or was going to Badenoch to buy sheep: Depones, That he saw upon the finger of Elizabeth Downie, the panel Duncan Clerk's wife, a yellow ring, which she told him was gold, with a plate on the outside of it, in the form of a seal, and that he saw it on her finger six or eight weeks before her marriage; and that after her marriage, she having one day taken it off her finger, he saw upon the inside of it a stamp, but what that stamp is he does not know. And being interrogate, Depones, That he had a suspicion that this ring was Serjeant Davies's ring, having heard it reported in the country that Serjeant Davies had such a ring upon his finger when he was murdered, but does not remember his having told his suspicion to any body; and being further interrogate, depones, That since the panel Duncan's imprisonment, the deponent was solicited by Donald Clerk, the panel Duncan's brother, to conceal what he knew when he came to give evidence; but this was after his having first solicited the deponent to leave the country, that he might not give evidence, and upon the deponent's saying he offered

him nothing to leave the country with; but then it was that Donald proposed his not giving true evidence, adding, that of every penny Donald was worth, the deponent should have the half; and being interrogate, at the desire of the Jury, if ever he had asked payment of the twenty pounds contained in the above-mentioned paper produced by him, Depones, That he once did, shortly after the term of payment, to which Duncan answered, that it would be as well to let it ly in his hands, to which he was satisfied, and that he never asked payment of the annual rent; and being further interrogate, Depones, that before the deponent went home to the panel's service at Martinmas one thousand seven hundred and fifty, it was well known and reported in the country that the bones of the dead body found upon the above mentioned hill had been buried by the deponent and Donald Farquharson, as also was the story of the vision or apparition whereof the deponent had told Donald Farquharson; and being interrogate for the panel, Depones, that he not only told the story of the vision or apparition to Donald Farquharson, as above mentioned, but that he also told it to John Growar and Daldownie before he mentioned it to Donald Farquharson: Depones, That there were folks living with him at the sheilling the time the vision appeared to him as above, but that he told it to none of them; and adds, that Isobel M'Hardie, in Inveray, a woman then in the sheilling with him, has told him since, that she saw such a vision as the deponent has above described, and has told him herself so much; and upon the panel's interrogatory, depones, that upon the vision's appearing to him, it described the place where he would find the bones so exactly, that he went within a yard of the place where they lay upon his first going out: And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God; and depones he cannot write.

(Signed)
Ja. Ferguson.

Compeared Duncan Campbell, one of the captains of the City Guard of Edinburgh, and was solemnly sworn, as he should answer to God, that he should interrogate in the Irish language such of the witnesses as should be afterwards adduced in this trial, as could not speak or understand the English language, and reduce the depositions, as they should emit the same, faithfully in the English language into writing.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Ja. Ferguson.

Isobel M'Hardie in Inverey, who being solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, aged forty and upwards, married, examined and interrogate: Depones, That one night about four years ago, when the deponent was lying in one end of the shealling, and Alexander M'Pherson, who was then her servant, lying in the other, she saw something naked come in at the door, which frighted her so much that she drew the clothes over her head: That when it appeared, it came in in a bowing posture, and that next morning she asked M'Pherson what it was that had troubled them the night before? to which he answered, she might be easy, for that it would not trouble them any more. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is truth, as she shall answer to God. And this deposition is subscribed by the said sworn interpreter.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Ja. Ferguson.

Compeared, James Macdonald in Allanquoich, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, aged thirty-one years, married, examined and interrogate: Depones, That it is about two or three years since Clerk, the panel, was married to Elizabeth Downie, Alexander Downie's daughter, and hearing it reported in the country, that he should have said, that if his son-in-law had not killed Serjeant Davies, Serjeant Davies would have killed him: That the deponent asked of Alexander Downie, about lentron last, whether he had said so? and Alexander Downie acknowledged to him that he had said so: And the deponent heard that the occasion of this report in the country was, that Alexander Downie being at a miln, some of the people there upbraided Alexander Downie with his son-in-law Clerk, the panel, his having killed the said Serjeant: And Downie said, as the deponent heard, what could his son-in-law do, since it was in his own defence: Depones further, That he saw upon Elizabeth Downie, Clerk's wife, her thumb, a yellow ring, which he took to be gold; and this he saw after her marriage, having a little knap upon it like into a seal, having scores or lines round about it, and this he saw frequently upon her hand, which ring the deponent suspected to be Serjeant Davies's ring, and it was so suspected in the

country. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth: And says further, That Clerk the panel, was reputed to be guilty of thieving in the country, but that he heard nothing to the prejudice of M'Donald's character: And being interrogate for the panel, depones, That he never heard Clerk the panel, guilty of any particular theft except one of a parcel of sheep, from one Alexander Farquharson in Inverey, about nine or ten years ago. All which is truth, as he shall answer to God; and depones he cannot write.

(Signed)

Alex^{r} Fraser.

Compeared Peter M'Nab in Wester Micras, aged fifty-seven years, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, examined and interrogate: Depones, That it is now about four years ago, since he heard it reported in the country, that the two men, Clerk and Macdonald, the panels, were the people who murdered Serjeant Davies, and a little time after Elizabeth Downie was married to Clerk the panel: The deponent happened to be in Alexander Downie her father's house, and then saw upon her finger a ring, pretty massy, having a lump upon it pretty large; and the deponent got the ring into his hand, and the lump appeared to the deponent to be something in the shape of a heart: And the deponent asked Elizabeth Downie how she came by that ring? to which she answered, that she had bought it from one James Lauder, a merchant: The deponent replied, that he thought it was cheap and worth more money, and that it was reported in the country, that the said Elizabeth Downie was wearing rings of Serjeant Davies's, but he never saw her have any but that one: And further adds, that he never heard any other suspected of the murder of Serjeant Davies but the panels, except once, that it was suspected to have been done by caterers; and he also heard, for a twelvemonth after Serjeant Davies was amissing, that he had deserted; nevertheless the general report or belief of the country was, that the two panels had murdered him. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God.

(Signed)

Peter MacNab.

Alex^{r} Fraser.

Compeared Isobel Ego, in Teantoul, aged eighteen years, or thereby, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, examined and interrogate by the sworn interpreter aforesaid, Depones, That about four years ago she found upon the Hill of Christie a silver-laced hat, with a silver-button on it; which hat she carried home to her master, Alexander Macdonald in Inverey, and delivered it to him. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as she shall answer to God; and depones she cannot write. And this deposition is subscribed by the foresaid sworn interpreter.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Alex^{r} Fraser.

Compeared Alexander Macdonald, in Inverey, aged thirty years and upwards, married; solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, examined and interrogate, Depones, That about four or five years ago, after Serjeant Davies was amissing, his servant-maid, Isobel Ego, the immediate preceding witness, being sent to the hills of Inverey to look for some horses, when the said servant-maid returned, she told the deponent's wife, as she told him, that she had come home richer than she went out, having found in the hill a silver-laced hat: That his wife, upon seeing the said hat, had no peace of mind, believing it to be Serjeant Davies's hat, and desired it might be put out of her sight: That the deponent, who was abroad, having come home, took the hat and put it below a stone near to a burn which run by his shealling, where his wife then was: That the hat was carried away from under the said stone, but who it was that carried it off the deponent knows not. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God; and depones he cannot write. And this deposition is signed by the said sworn interpreter.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Alex^{r} Fraser.

Donald Downie, at the miln of Inverey, aged thirty years or thereby; solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, by the sworn interpreter aforesaid, and by him interrogate, Depones, That he was loading

his horse with corn, to be carried into the barnyeard at the miln of Inverey, upon that day that Serjeant Davies was amissing: That between the midday and sunset he heard three gunshots, but cannot tell from what particular place the sound came: That the three shots were pretty near one another, and all within less than a quarter of an hour. Depones, That the Hill of Christie, libelled, is about a mile's distance to the entrance thereof from the place where he then was, and that it will be at least three miles from there to the place where the bones were found. Depones, That he was told that Isobel Ego, a preceding witness, found a hat in the Hill of Christie, which she brought home and delivered to her master: That he heard her master hid it at the Burnside, under a stone: That some time thereafter some of the bairns of Inverey found the said hat, and brought it to his the deponent's father's house, where he saw it; and the hat libelled being shown to him, depones, he having inspected it, That it is the same hat which was so brought to his father's house, and pointed out the letters D. A. thereon at deponing, and that he himself delivered the said hat to James Small, factor on the estate of Strowan. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Alex^{r} Fraser.

John Cook, barrackmaster at Braemar Castle, aged thirty years and upwards, *solutus*, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, examined and interrogate, Depones, That the hat libelled now shown to him, was delivered by Donald Downie, the preceding witness, to James Small, before designed, at the house of one Charles, in Castletown of Braemar, and was delivered to the said deponent by Mr Small, to be kept by him till it should be called for; and that he brought it along with him to town, and he knows it to be the same by the letters D. A. which he often observed thereon, and now at deponing: Depones, That after Serjeant Davies was amissing, a report sprung up, that one Levingston, a soldier, having a prejudice at him, had murdered him; but, upon enquiry, it being found, who had had leave of absence, returned to the garrison the afternoon of that day on which the Serjeant was amissing; the report thereon ceased, and about ten days thereafter it was reported that the Serjeant had been

murdered by two young men about Inverey. And about a year and a half after the Serjeant had been amissing, he heard Duncan Clerk the panel named as one of them, but never heard any thing of Alexander Macdonald, the other panel, till he was committed prisoner to the Castle of Braemar in September last. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God.

(Signed)
John Cook.

Hew Dalrymple.

Compeared John Grant, in Altalaat, aged forty years and upwards, married, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, examined and interrogate: Depones, That both the panels lodged in his house upon the night of the twenty-seventh of September, one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine: That next morning they breakfasted, after the sun rising, with him; and as he was going to a Michaelmas fair, when he came out of his house, he looked and saw the two panels at his door, each having a gun in his hand, and they told him that they intended to go a deer hunting, but did not mention to what place: That the deponent accordingly went to the fair, and returned in about four days home, and then heard that a soldier who had been upon some of the hills was amissing, and in a very short time heard it was Serjeant Davies: That at first it was rumoured that some of the Serjeant's own men had killed him; and afterwards that he had been killed by some outlaws; and after that it was clattered that the panels had killed him: Depones, That the night the panels lodged with him as above, one of them talked of going the next morning in quest of horses for leading in corn, without mentioning from where. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God. This deposition signed by Duncan Campbell, sworn interpreter.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Hew Dalrymple.

John Grant, son to the said John Grant in Altalaat, aged twenty years, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, by the sworn interpreter aforesaid, and by him interrogate: Depones, That he knows the

panels, and that they lodged with his father the night of the twenty-seventh of September, one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine: That next morning the panels, each of them having a gun, and Duncan Clerk a grey plaid about him, went up the water to the hill of Gleneye, which is about a mile and a half distant from the hill of Christie: That the road they took was not the direct road to the hill last named; and before they went they said they were going a deer hunting and for horses to lead in their corns: That three or four days after this, they heard that Serjeant Davies was amissing, and that he was killed in the hill of Christie; but the last part of this he did not hear till some time, a year or two thereafter. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is truth, as he shall answer to God.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Hew Dalrymple.

Elspeth Macara, in Inverey, late servant to Duncan Clerk, one of the panels, aged thirty-two years; solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, as aforesaid, and interrogate, Depones, That she was fellow-servant, about three years ago, with Alexander Macgillies, a preceding witness, in Duncan Clerk, the panel's house: That she once saw in the said Alexander's hands a yellow ring, but knows not if it was gold, with a knob upon it of the same metal; which ring she frequently observed on the finger of the wife of the said Duncan Clerk. And further depones, That the said knob was bigger above and smaller below, and shaped something like a heart. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is truth, as she shall answer to God. This deposition signed by the above interpreter.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Hew Dalrymple.

John Growar, in Inverey, aged fifty years and upwards, a widower; who being solemnly sworn, purged of partial council, and interrogate, Depones, That upon the 28th of September, 1749, the deponent having gone to a glen called Glenconie, to bring home his horses to lead in the corns, he met with Serjeant Davies, of whom he had some acquaintance before; and he had at that time a good deal of conversation with him, particularly with relation to

a tartan coat which the Serjeant had observed the deponent to drop, and after strictly enjoining him not to use it again, dismissed him, instead of making him prisoner: That the deponent went home with his horses, and saw no more of the Serjeant, who was alone; and that their meeting was about an hour after sunrising, to the best of the deponent's knowledge: That some time thereafter, about four years ago, he was told by Alexander Macpherson *alias* M'Gillies, a former witness, that the Serjeant's ghost had appeared to him, M'Gillies, and had desired him to bury his, the Serjeant's, bones, and to bring Donald Farquharson, also a former witness, along with him; but M'Gillies at that time did not mention the place where the bones were to be found, but afterwards told the deponent that the Serjeant's bones were found in the place to which the ghost had directed him; and one day the said M'Gillies and the deponent being in the hill together, he, M'Gillies, pointed to him the place where they were found, which was not far from the place in which he had formerly met Serjeant Davies, upon the 28th of September aforesaid; and that two years ago, in labouring time, the said M'Gillies told him that the said ghost came to M'Gillies's master's house, and the door flung open, and took M'Gillies out of the house, and told him that the panels had been his murderers. Depones, That about two years ago he had a conversation with M'Gillies, who told him, that one day coming from the hill with Duncan Clerk, the panel, then his master, and another time when in bed, he had a conversation with the said Duncan concerning Serjeant Davies's murder, and all the answer Duncan made was, What can you say of an unfortunate man? Depones, That about ten or eleven years ago, Duncan Clerk, the panel, was said to have stolen some sheep from one Alexander Farquharson, in Inverey, and there was a Sheriff-court held upon that matter at the Mill of Achindryne, in which nothing was found against the said Duncan, but John Ewes alias M'Donald was fined, and the deponent became cautioner for him, that he should never speak about it again. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God.

(Signed)
John Grewer.

Hew Dalrymple.

Angus Cameron, in Easter Finart, Rannach, aged thirty years and upwards, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, by Duncan

Campbell, sworn interpreter, and by him interrogate, Depones, That he was in Braemaar four years past at Michaelmas last; that is, in the year 1749: That about an hour and a half before sun-set on the 28th of September, he being on the hill of Galcharn, on the side thereof, saw a man in a blue coat, with a gun in his hand, with a hat which had a white edging about it, he knows not whether it was silver or not; and saw other two men, one of whom was the panel Duncan Clerk, who he had seen upon former occasions, and another man of a lower stature than the said Duncan Clerk, coming up the hill towards the first mentioned man, who was distant from him, the deponent, about a gunshot, upon, or near the top of a hill opposite to him, the deponent, the name of which he does not know, he being a stranger in that country; that there was another man along with him, the deponent, named Duncan Cameron, and that they were waiting there for other travellers, and his said companion is dead about three years ago: Depones, That he saw Duncan Clerk, the panel, and his companion, whom he did not, nor does not know, meet with the man clad in blue, as aforesaid; and after they had stood for some time together, he saw Duncan Clerk, the panel, strike at the man in blue, as he thought, with his naked hand only, upon the breast; but, upon the stroke, he heard the man struck cry out, and clap his hand upon the place struck, turn about, and go off: That the panel Duncan Clerk and the other man stood still for a little, and then followed after the man in blue, and saw him, the said Duncan and the other man, each of whom had a gun, fire at the man in blue: That the two shots were very near one another; and immediately upon them, the man in blue fell: That Duncan Clerk, the panel, had upon him a grey plaid, with some red in it, whom he saw that same day, and his companion along with him, (but spoke to none of them,) about mid-day, and that they passed him as he was lying upon the same hill; and that both times that same day, that he had occasion to see the said Duncan Clerk and his companion, he was lying in a little hollow upon the side of the said hill of Galcharn, in such a manner, as he thinks, neither the said Duncan Clerk, or his companion did see him: And depones, That there was no long heather in the said hollow where he was lying: Depones, That after the man in blue fell, in manner above mentioned, the panel Duncan Clerk, and his companion, went up to him; and as it was the deponent's opinion the man was dead, he saw them stoop down, and handle his body; and while they were so employed, he, the deponent, and his companion, got up, and made off: Depones, That he did

not mention any thing of the premises to any body for nine months or a twelve month, and then he spoke of it to one Donald Cameron, and to Duncan Cameron, a different man from him above mentioned, who advised him to say nothing of it, as it might get illwill to himself, and bring trouble on the country; some people that he told it to said, that people would not believe him, but rather think he was telling lies: That it was six months after what he saw, and has deponed upon, that he heard that Serjeant Davies was amissing. And being interrogate for the panels, depones, That he came to the said hill of Galcharn, and lay down in the hollow about two hours after sunrising; and depones, That he and his companion were, the night before the twenty-eighth of September aforesaid, in Glenbruar Braes, which is about ten miles distant from the hill of Galcharn; and that he left these braes about the end of said night; and that the travellers that he expected to pass that day were Donald Cameron, who was afterwards hanged, together with some of the said Donald's companions from Lochaber. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God. This deposition signed by the sworn interpreter aforesaid.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Hew Dalrymple.

Duncan Cameron, in Dunan, aged twenty-eight years, unmarried, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, examined and interrogate, Depones, That in the summer after he had heard that one Serjeant Davies was amissing, Angus Cameron, a preceding witness, told the deponent that he saw Duncan Clerk, and another person unknown, shoot a man in Braemaar, whom the said Angus, by his dress, believed to be a serjeant or officer; upon which the deponent said he did not want to hear any more on that subject. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Gilb. Elliot.

Donald Dow Cameron, in Milntown of Ashintilly, Strathardle, aged forty-four years, married; who being solemnly sworn, and purged of partial

council, by Duncan Campbell, sworn interpreter aforesaid, and by him interrogate, Depones, That in the summer after he heard that a serjeant in Braemaar was amissing, whose name he thinks was Davidson, or something like that, Angus Cameron, a preceding witness, told the deponent that he had seen Duncan Clerk the panel, and another man along with him, shoot a man, like a gentleman or an officer, upon a hill in Braemaar: That upon this the deponent told the said Angus Cameron that he did not want to hear more any such stories, nor to have such a report raised of the country; and the deponent at the same time advised Angus to keep the thing secret, and to speak no more on the subject. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God. This deposition signed by the sworn interpreter aforesaid.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Gilb. Elliot.

Lauchlan M'Intosh, in Inverey, aged near thirty years, unmarried, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, examined and interrogate by the sworn interpreter aforesaid, Depones, That the panel, Duncan Clerk's father, his house is within less than a quarter of a mile of the deponent's house: That upon the afternoon of that day in which Serjeant Davies was amissing, as he thinks, or at least the afternoon of the day following, he cannot be altogether positive which, he saw Duncan Clerk, panel, come from the hill to his father's house, with a gun in his hand, and a sort of grey plaid about him: That he does not remember that he saw him about his father's house before that time in the afternoon of that day. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God.

(Signed)
Lauchlan M'Intosh.

Gilb. Elliot.

Jean Davidson, spouse to Gregor Keir, in Inverey, aged thirty years, married; who being solemnly sworn, and purged of malice and partial council, by the sworn interpreter aforesaid, Depones, That she lived in the same town with Duncan Clerk, the panel's father, who is now dead: That the evening of the day upon which Serjeant Davies was first amissing, she

saw Duncan Clerk, the panel, return from the hill to his father's house about sun-setting, having a plaid upon him, with a good deal of red in it, but whether he had a gun in his hand the deponent did not observe: That Duncan Clerk's father was that day working among his corns; and the deponent did not see the said Duncan about the town till the evening, as above deponed upon. And further depones, being interrogate for the panel, That when she first saw Duncan Clerk, she was among the corns with his father a little below the town, and that Duncan was about a gunshot from her, coming towards his father's house from the hill, and that he came near to the place where she was with his father. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as she shall answer to God. And this deposition is signed by the foresaid sworn interpreter.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Alex^{r} Fraser.

Lauchlan M'Intosh, servant to William Grant of Burnside, aged twenty-one years, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, examined and interrogate, Depones, That he was a servant to Michael Farquharson in Dubrach, in whose house Serjeant Davies quartered: That he saw the Serjeant have a little penknife, upon the end of the haft of which there was a seal for sealing of letters, and he heard the Serjeant say that was the use he made of the said seal: That he saw Serjeant Davies leave his master's house about sunrising that day upon which he was amissing; that he never saw him since: That about two years thereafter, being on the hill with Alexander Macdonald the panel, and the said Alexander Macdonald had in his hand a penknife, which the deponent saw, very like the penknife which Serjeant Davies had above mentioned: That the deponent, upon seeing that penknife, told Macdonald that the penknife he then had was very like Serjeant Davies's penknife, and Macdonald made answer that there were many siclikes: And further depones, That he saw the Serjeant have a green silk purse, in which he saw the Serjeant put in and take out several pieces of gold: The deponent does not remember what the handle of the Serjeant's knife was made of, nor does he remember what was engraven on the end of the handle of the penknife which the Serjeant had, nor the end of the handle of the penknife which Macdonald had, but that both seals were white.

Causa scientiæ patet. And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God. And depones he cannot write.

(Signed)

Alex^{r} Fraser.

John Brown in Drumcraggan, aged sixty years, or thereby, solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council by the sworn interpreter aforesaid, and by him interrogate, Depones, That he was ground-officer for the lands of Inverey, and was so at the time when Serjeant Davies's body was amissing: That he was ordered by the Chamberlain of Inverey, to call out the country people in search for Serjeant Davies's body, which accordingly he did search for with the country people for two days, without finding it: That the last of the two days, as the deponent and the country people were returning home, and had given over the search, the panel, Duncan Clerk, challenged the deponent for troubling the country people with such an errand, and upon this the deponent and the said Duncan Clerk had some scolding words. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God. And depones he cannot write. And this disposition is signed by the foresaid sworn interpreter.

(Signed)

Duncan Campbell.

Alex^{r} Fraser.

Follows the Witnesses adduced by the Panels in exculpation.

Captain John Forbes of New, aged fortyfive years, married, who being solemnly sworn, purged of malice and partial council, examined and interrogate, Depones, That James Small having suggested to the deponent that it might be proper that Duncan Clerk the panel's wife, should be examined upon what rings she had in her possession, and that some other witnesses in relation thereto, might be precognosced, presented a petition to the deponent, as the next Justice of Peace to where she lived, craving, to the purpose above mentioned: That the deponent went for that end to Braemaar; and she being summoned to appear at the Castletown of Braemaar, appeared before the deponent, and declared, in substance, as follows: That since she was married, a small brass ring, which she then presented to the deponent, and a gold ring which she got from her mother, and wore

sometimes, were the only rings that she had since her marriage; and that before her marriage she got a copper ring from one Allan M'Donald, brother to James Macdonald, in Allanquoich, with a round knot of the same metal raised upon it, which, the summer before she was married, she gave to Alexander M'Intosh alias Rioch, then a glen-herd, and now servant to Thomas Gordon in Fetherletter, in Strathaven, and that she was married to the said Duncan Clerk, panel, in harvest 1751. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God.

(Signed)
John Forbes.

Hew Dalrymple.

Duncan Keir, in Glenmuick, aged twenty and upwards, unmarried, solemnly sworn, purged and interrogate, Depones, That the day that the Braemaar men were going to the Michaelmas fair in Strathaven, which was the day before the said fair held, he saw Duncan Clerk, the panel, at Gleney, where the deponent then lived, before he and the other shearers there had got their dinner, and that they dined sometimes later and sometimes more early, and cannot tell at what time they dined that day, but the sun was a good while high when he saw him: That he had on a plaid, which he thinks was grey: That Gleney is a mile farther up the water than Inverey towards the hill; and the next day, after he saw the said Duncan Clerk as above, he heard that Serjeant Davies was amissing. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God. And depones he cannot write.

(Signed)
Hew Dalrymple.

Elizabeth Macdonald, in Tulloch of Invercauld, aged twenty-eight years, unmarried, solemnly sworn, purged and interrogate by the sworn interpreter aforesaid, Depones, That the day before she heard Serjeant Davies was amissing, she saw Duncan Clerk, the panel, at the shearers of Gleney, but did not observe from whence he came: That she does not remember that he had either a gun or a plaid, but thinks that he had a short blue coat upon him, and that Gleney is a mile farther up the water towards the hill than Inverey: That when she saw the said panel it was before dinner, which they took early that day, being betwixt twelve and one; and that Duncan Keir, the

preceding witness, was one of the said shearers; and that Gleney is about a mile from Glenconie. *Causa scientiæ patet.* And this is the truth, as she shall answer to God. This deposition signed by the said sworn interpreter.

(Signed)
Duncan Campbell.

Hew Dalrymple.

The Lords Commissioners of Justiciary fine and amerciate Ronald Macdonald, brother to James Macdonald in Allanquoich, and Alexander Macintosh *alias* Reoch, now servant to Thomas Gordon of Fetterletter, in Strathaven, and each of them, in the sum of one hundred merks Scots money, for their not appearing this day and place, to bear leal and soothfast witnessing, in so far as they knew, or should be asked at them, anent the said panels, Duncan Terig *alias* Clerk, and Alexander Bain Macdonald, their guiltiness of the crime of murder mentioned in the said indictment, raised at the instance of his Majesty's advocate against them thereanent, as they, who were lawfully cited for that effect, thrice called, and not compearing.

(Signed)
Gilb. Elliot

The Lords ordain the assize forthwith to inclose in the Exchequer-Room, and to return their verdict against six o'clock in the afternoon tomorrow, in this place; and ordain the haill fifteen then to be present, and the panels to be carried back to prison.

CURIA JUSTICIARIA S. D. N. Regis tenta in Nova Sessionis Domo Burgi de Edinburgh, Duodecimo die Mensis Junij, 1754, per honorabiles viros Carolum Areskine de Alva, Justiciarium Clericum, Dominum Gilbertum Elliot de Minto, Magistros Alexandrum Fraser de Strichen, Patricium Grant de Elchies, et Hugonem Dalrymple de Drummore, Commissionarios Justiciarios dict. S. D. N. Regis.

Curia legittime affirmata.

Intran.

Duncan Terig *alias* Clerk, and Alexander Bain Macdonald, — Panels.

Indicted and accused as in the former Sederunt.

The persons who past upon the assize of the said panels, returned their verdict, in presence of the saids Lords, whereof the tenor follows:

At Edinburgh, the twelfth day of June, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four years.

The above assize having inclosed, and having made choice of Robert Forrester to be their chancellor, and William Sands to be their clerk; and having considered the criminal indictment pursued at the instance of William Grant of Prestongrange, Esq., his Majestie's Advocate, for his Majestie's interest, against Duncan Terig alias Clerk, and Alexander Bain Macdonald, both now prisoners in the tolbooth of Edinburgh, panels, with the Lords Justice-Clerk and Commissioners of Justiciary, their interlocutor thereupon; together with the depositions of the witnesses adduced for proving thereof; and the depositions of the witnesses adduced for the exculpation of the panels, they all, in one voice, find the above-named panels not guilty of the crimes libelled. In witness whereof, their said chancellor and clerk, in their names, have subscribed thir presents, place and date foresaid.

(Signed)

Rob^{t} Forrester, *Chanl^{r}*.

William Sands, *Clerk*.

The Lords Justice-Clerk and Commissioners of Justiciary, in respect of the foresaid verdict of assize returned against the said Duncan Terig *alias* Clerk, and Alexander Bain Macdonald, panels, assoilzie them simpliciter, and dismiss them from the bar.

(Signed)

CH. ARESKINE, I.P.D.

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SIR WALTER SCOTT by George Saintsbury

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Preface

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To the very probable remark that ‘Another little book about Scott is not wanted,’ I can at least reply that apparently it is, inasmuch as the publishers proposed this volume to me, not I to them. And I believe that, as a matter of fact, no ‘little book about Scott’ has appeared since the *Journal* was completed, since the new and important instalment of *Letters* appeared (in both cases with invaluable editorial apparatus by Mr. David Douglas), and especially since Mr. Lang’s *Lockhart* was published. It is true that no one of these, nor any other book that is likely to appear, has altered, or is likely to alter, much in a sane estimate of Sir Walter. His own matchless character and the genius of his first biographer combined to set before the world early an idea, of which it is safe to say that nothing that should lower it need be feared, and hardly anything to heighten it can be reasonably hoped. But as fresh items of illustrative detail are made public, there can be no harm in endeavouring to incorporate something of what they give us in fresh abstracts and *aperçus* from time to time. And for the continued and, as far as space permits, detailed criticism of the work, it may be pleaded that criticism of Scott has for many years been chiefly general, while in criticism, even more than in other things, generalities are deceptive.

Chapter I

LIFE TILL MARRIAGE

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Scott's own 'autobiographic fragment,' printed in Lockhart's first volume, has made other accounts of his youth mostly superfluous, even to a day which persists in knowing better about everything and everybody than it or they knew about themselves. No one ever recorded his genealogy more minutely, with greater pride, or with a more saving sense of humour than Sir Walter. He was connected, though remotely, with gentle families on both sides. That is to say, his great-grandfather was son of the Laird of Raeburn, who was grandson of Walter Scott of Harden and the 'Flower of Yarrow.' The great-grandson, 'Beardie,' acquired that cognomen by letting his beard grow like General Dalziel, though for the exile of James II., instead of the death of Charles I. — 'whilk was the waur reason,' as Sir Walter himself might have said.

Beardie's second son, being more thoroughly sickened of the sea in his first voyage than Robinson Crusoe, took to farming and Whiggery, and married the daughter of Haliburton of Newmains — there was also Macdougal and Campbell blood on the spindle side of the older generations of the family. Their eldest son Walter, father of Sir Walter, was born in 1729, and, being bred to the law, became the original, according to undisputed tradition, of the 'Saunders Fairford' of *Redgauntlet*, the most autobiographical as well as not the least charming of the novels. He married Anne Rutherford, who, through her mother, brought the blood of the Swintons of Swinton to enrich the joint strain; and from her father, a member of a family distinguished in the annals of the University of Edinburgh, may have transmitted some of the love for books which was not the most prominent feature of the other ingredients.

Walter himself was the third 'permanent child' (to adopt an agreeable phrase of Mr. Traill's about another person) of a family of twelve, only five of whom survived infancy. His three brothers, John, Thomas, and Daniel, and his sister Anne, all figure in the records; but little is heard of John and not much of Anne. Thomas, the second, either had, or was thought by his indulgent brother to have, literary talents, and was at one time put up to

father the novels; while Daniel (whose misconduct in money matters, and still more in showing the white feather, brought on him the only display of anything that can be called rancour recorded in Sir Walter's history) concerns us even less. The date of the novelist's birth was 15th August 1771, the place, 'the top of the College Wynd,' a locality now whelmed in the actual Chambers Street face of the present Old University buildings, and near that of Kirk of Field. Escaping the real or supposed dangers of a consumptive wet-nurse, he was at first healthy enough; but teething or something else developed the famous lameness, which at first seemed to threaten loss of all use of the right leg. The child was sent to the house of his grandfather, the Whig farmer of Sandyknowe, where he abode for some years under the shadow of Smailholm Tower, reading a little, listening to Border legends a great deal, and making one long journey to London and Bath. This first blessed period of 'making himself' lasted till his eighth year, and ended with a course of sea-bathing at Prestonpans, where he met the original in name and perhaps in nature of Captain Dalgetty, and the original in character of the Antiquary. Then he returned (*circ.* 1779) to his father's house, now in George Square, to his numerous, if impermanent, family of brothers and sisters, and to the High School. The most memorable incident of this part of his career is the famous episode of 'Greenbreeks.'

His health, as he grew up, becoming again weak, the boy was sent once more Borderwards — this time to Kelso, where he lived with an aunt, went to the town school, and made the acquaintance there, whether for good or ill, who shall say? of the Ballantynes. And he had to return to Kelso for the same cause, at least once during his experiences at College, where he did not take the full usual number of courses, and acquired no name as a scholar. But he always read.

As it had not been decided whether he was to adopt the superior or the inferior branch of the law, he was apprenticed to his father at the age of fifteen, as a useful preparation for either career. He naturally enough did not love 'engrossing,' but he did not cross his father's soul by refusing it, and though returns of illness occurred now and then, his constitution appeared to be gradually strengthening itself, partly, as he thought, owing to the habit of very long walks, in which he took great delight. He tried various accomplishments; but he could neither draw, nor make music, nor (at this time) write. Still he always read — irregularly, uncritically, but enormously, so that to this day Sir Walter's real learning is underestimated. And he

formed a very noteworthy circle of friends — William Clerk, ‘Darsie Latimer,’ the chief of them all. It must have been just after he entered his father’s office that he met Burns, during that poet’s famous visit to Edinburgh in 1786-87.

Considerably less is known of his late youth and early manhood than either of his childhood or of his later life. His letters — those invaluable and unparalleled sources of biographical information — do not begin till 1792, the year of his majority, when (on July 11) he was called to the Bar. But it is a universal tradition that, in these years of apprenticeship, in more senses than one, he, partly in gratifying his own love of wandering, and partly in serving his father’s business by errands to clients, etc., did more than lay the foundation of that unrivalled knowledge of Scotland, and of all classes in it, which plays so important a part in his literary work. I say ‘of all classes in it,’ and this point is of the greatest weight. Scott has been accused (for the most part foolishly) of paying an exaggerated respect to rank. If this had been true, it would at least not have been due to late or imperfect acquaintance with persons of rank. Democratic as the Scotland of this century has sometimes been called, it is not uncommon to find a considerable respect for aristocracy in the greatest Scotch Radicals; and Scott was notoriously not a Radical. But his familiarity with all ranks from an early age is undoubted, and only very shallow or prejudiced observers will doubt the beneficial effect which this had on his study of humanity. The uneasy caricature which mars Dickens’s picture of the upper, and even the upper middle, classes is as much absent from his work as the complete want of familiarity with the lower which appears, for instance, in Bulwer. It is certain that before he had written anything, he was on familiar terms with many persons, both men and women, of the highest rank — the most noteworthy among his feminine correspondents being Lady Louisa Stuart (sister of the Marquis of Bute and granddaughter of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu) and Lady Abercorn. With the former the correspondence is always on the footing of mere though close friendship, literary and other; in part at least of that with Lady Abercorn, I cannot help suspecting the presence, especially on the lady’s side, of that feeling,

‘Too warm for friendship and too pure for love,’

which undoubtedly sometimes does exist between men and women who cannot, and perhaps who would not if they could, turn love into marriage.

However this may be, it is, let it be repeated, certain that Scott, in the six years from his fifteenth, when he is said to have first visited the Highlands and seen Rob Roy's country, to his majority, and yet again in the five or six between his call to the Bar and his marriage, visited many, if not all, parts of Scotland; knew high and low, rich and poor, with the amiable interest of his temperament and the keen observation of his genius; took part in business and amusement and conviviality (he accuses himself later of having been not quite free from the prevalent peccadillo of rather deep drinking); and still and always *read*. He joined the 'Speculative Society' in January 1791, and, besides taking part in the debates on general subjects, read papers on Feudalism, Ossian, and Northern Mythology, in what were to be his more special lines.

His young lawyer friends called him 'Colonel Grogg,' a *sobriquet* not difficult to interpret on one of the hints just given, and 'Duns Scotus,' which concerns the other; while yet a third characteristic, which can surprise nobody, is indicated in the famous introduction of him to a boisterous party of midshipmen of the Marryat type by James Clerk, the brother of Darsie Latimer, who kept a yacht, and was fond of the sea: 'You may take Mr. Scott for a poor *lamiter*, gentlemen, but he is the first to begin a row and the last to end it.'

It appears that it was from a time somewhat before the call that the beginning of Scott's famous, his unfortunate, and (it has been the fashion, rightly or wrongly, to add) his only love affair dates. Some persons have taken the trouble to piece together and eke out the references to 'Green Mantle,' otherwise Miss Stuart of Belches, later Lady Forbes. It is better to respect Scott's own reticence on a subject of which very little is really known, and of which he, like most gentlemen, preferred to say little or nothing. The affection appears to have been mutual; but the lady was probably not very eager to incur family displeasure by making a match decidedly below her in rank, and, at that time, distinctly imprudent in point of fortune. But the courtship, such as it was, appears to have been long, and the effects of the loss indelible. Scott speaks of his heart as 'handsomely pieced' — 'pieced,' it may be observed, not 'healed.' A healed wound sometimes does not show; a pieced garment or article of furniture reminds us of the piecing till the day when it goes to fire or dustbin. But it has been supposed, with some reason, that those heroines of Scott's who show most

touch of personal sympathy — Catherine Seyton, Die Vernon, Lilias Redgauntlet — bear features, physical or mental or both, of this Astarte, this

'Lost woman of his youth, yet unpossessed.'

And no one can read the *Diary* without perceiving the strange bitter-sweet, at the moment of his greatest calamity, of the fact that Sir William Forbes, who rendered him invaluable service at his greatest need, was his successful rival thirty years before, and the widower of 'Green Mantle.'

This affair came to an end in October 1796; and it may astonish some wise people, accustomed to regard Scott as a rather humdrum and prosaic person, who escaped the scandals so often associated with the memory of men of letters from sheer want of temptation, to hear that one of his most intimate friends of his own age at the time 'shuddered at the violence of his most irritable and ungovernable mind.' There is no reason to doubt the fidelity of this description. And those who know something of human nature will be disposed to assign the disappearance of the irritableness and ungovernableness precisely to this incident, and to the working of a strong mind, confronted by fate with the question whether it was to be the victim or the master of its own passions, fighting out the battle once for all, and thenceforward keeping its house armed against them, it may be with some loss, but certainly with much gain.

It has been said that he states (with a touch of irony, no doubt) that his heart was 'handsomely pieced'; and it is not against the theory hinted in the foregoing paragraph, but, on the contrary, in favour of it, that the piecing did not take long. In exactly a year Scott became engaged to Miss Charlotte Margaret Carpenter or Charpentier, and they were married on Christmas Eve, 1797, at St. Mary's, Carlisle. They had met at Gilsland Spa in the previous July, and the courtship had not taken very long. The lady was of French extraction, had an only brother in the service of the East India Company, and, being an orphan, was the ward of the Marquis of Downshire, — circumstances on which gossips like Hogg made impertinent remarks. It is fair, however, to 'the Shepherd' to say that he speaks enthusiastically both of Mrs. Scott's appearance ('one of the most beautiful and handsome creatures I ever saw in my life'; 'a perfect beauty') and of her character ('she is cradled in my remembrance, and ever shall be, as a sweet, kind, and affectionate creature'). She was very dark, small, with hair which the Shepherd calls black, Lockhart dark brown; her features not regular, but her complexion, figure, and so forth 'unusually attractive.' Not

very much is said about her in any of the authentic accounts, and traditional tittle-tattle may be neglected. She does not seem to have been extremely wise, and was entirely unliterary; but neither of these defects is a *causa redhibitionis* in marriage; and she was certainly a faithful and affectionate wife. At any rate, Scott made no complaints, if he had any to make, and nearly the most touching passage in the *Diary* is that written after her death.

The minor incidents, not literary, of his life, between his call to the Bar and his marriage, require a little notice, for they had a very great influence on the character of his future work. His success at the Bar was moderate, but his fees increased steadily if slowly. He defended (unsuccessfully) a Galloway minister who was accused among other counts of 'toying with a sweetie-wife,' and it is interesting to find in his defence some casuistry about *ebrius* and *ebriosus*, which reminds one of the Baron of Bradwardine. He took part victoriously in a series of battles with sticks, between Loyalist advocates and writers and Irish Jacobin medical students, in the pit of the Edinburgh theatre during April 1794. In June 1795 he became a curator of the Advocates' Library, and a year later engaged (of course on the loyal side) in another great political 'row,' this time in the streets.

Above all, in the spring and summer between the loss of his love and his marriage, he engaged eagerly in volunteering, becoming quartermaster, paymaster, secretary, and captain in the Edinburgh Light Horse — an occupation which has left at least as much impression on his work as Gibbon's equally famous connection with the Hampshire Militia on his. His friendships continued and multiplied; and he began with the sisters of some of his friends, especially Miss Cranstoun (his chief confidante in the 'Green Mantle' business) and Miss Erskine, the first, or the first known to us, of those interesting correspondences with ladies which show him perhaps at his very best. For in them he plays neither jack-pudding, nor coxcomb, nor sentimentalist, nor any of the involuntary counterparts which men in such cases are too apt to play; and they form not the least of his titles to the great name of gentleman.

But by far the most important contribution of these six or seven years to his 'making' was the further acquaintance with the scenery, and customs, and traditions, and dialects, and local history of his own country, which his greater independence, enlarged circle of friends, and somewhat increased means enabled him to acquire. It is quite true that to a man with his gifts any microcosm will do for a macrocosm in miniature. I have heard in

conversation (I forget whether it is in any of the books) that he picked up the word ‘whomled’ (= ‘bucketed over’ — ‘turned like a tub’), which adds so much to the description of the nautical misfortune of Claud Halcro and Triptolemus in *The Pirate*, by overhearing it from a scold in the Grassmarket. But still the enlarged experience could not but be of the utmost value. It was during these years that he saw Glamis Castle in its unspoiled state, during these that, in connection with the case of the unfortunate but rather happily named devotee of Bacchus and Venus, M’Naught, he explored Galloway, and obtained the decorations and scenery, if not the story, of *Guy Mannering*. He also repeated his visits to the English side of the Border, not merely on the occasion during which he met Miss Carpenter, but earlier, in a second excursion to Northumberland.

But, above all, these were the years of his famous ‘raids’ into Liddesdale, then one of the most inaccessible districts of Scotland, under the guidance of Mr. Shortreed of Jedburgh — raids which completed the information for *Guy Mannering*, which gave him much of the material for the *Minstrelsy*, and the history of which has, I think, delighted every one of his readers and biographers, except one or two who have been scandalised at the exquisite story of the Arrival of the Keg. Of these let us not speak, but, regarding them with a tender pity not unmixed with wonder, pass to the beginnings of his actual literary life and to the history of his early married years. The literature a little preceded the life; but the life certainly determined the growth of the literature.

Chapter II

EARLY LITERARY WORK

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It is pretty universally known, and must have been perceived even from the foregoing summary, that Scott was by no means a very precocious writer. He takes rank, indeed, neither with those who, according to a famous phrase, ‘break out threescore thousand strong’ in youth; nor with those who begin original composition betimes, and by degrees arrive at excellence; nor yet with those who do not display any aptitude for letters till late in life. His class — a fourth, which, at least as regards the greater names of literature, is perhaps the smallest of all — comprises those who may almost be said to drift into literary work and literary fame, whose first production is not merely tentative and unoriginal, but, so to speak, accidental, who do not discover their real faculty for literary work till after a pretty long course of casual literary play.

Part of this was no doubt due to the fact — vouched for sufficiently, and sufficiently probable, though not, so far as I know, resting on any distinct and firsthand documentary evidence — that Walter Scott the elder had, even more than his *eidolon* the elder Fairford, that horror of literary employment on the part of his son which was for generations a tradition among persons of business, and which is perhaps not quite extinct yet. For this opposition, as is well known, rather stimulates than checks, even in dutiful offspring, the noble rage. It was due partly, perhaps, to a metaphysical cause — the fact that until Scott was well past his twentieth year, the wind of the spirit was not yet blowing, that the new poetical and literary day had not yet dawned; and partly to a more commonplace reason or set of reasons. About 1790 literary work was extremely badly paid; and, even if it had been paid better, Scott had no particular need of money. Till his marriage he lived at home, spent his holidays with friends, or on tours where the expenses were little or nothing, and obtained sufficient pocket-money, first by copying while he was still apprenticed to his father, then by his fees when he was called. He could, as he showed later, spend money royally when he had it or thought he had it; but he was a man of no extravagant tastes of the ordinary kind, and Edinburgh was not in his days at all an extravagant place of

living. Even when he married, he was by no means badly off. His wife, though not exactly an heiress, had means which had been estimated at five hundred a year, and which seem never to have fallen below two hundred; Scott's fees averaged about another two hundred; he evidently had an allowance from his father (who had been very well off, and was still not poor), and before very long the Sheriffship of Selkirkshire added three hundred more, though he seems to have made this an excuse for giving up practice, which he had never much liked. His father's death in 1799 put him in possession of some property; legacies from relations added more. Before the publication of the *Lay* (when he was barely three-and-thirty), Lockhart estimates his income, leaving fees and literary work out of the question, at nearly if not quite a thousand a year; and a thousand a year at the beginning of the century went as far as fifteen hundred, if not two thousand, at its close.

Thus, with no necessity to live by his pen, with no immediate or extraordinary temptation to use it for gain, and as yet, it would seem, with no overmastering inducement from his genius to do so, while he at no time of his life felt any stimulus from vanity, it is not surprising that it was long before Scott began to write in earnest. A few childish verse translations and exercises of his neither encourage nor forbid any particular expectations of literature from him; they are neither better nor worse than those of hundreds, probably thousands, of boys every year. His first published performance, now of extreme rarity, and not, of course, produced with any literary object, was his Latin call-thesis on the rather curious subject (which has been, not improbably, supposed to be connected with his German studies and the terror-literature of the last decade of the century) of the disposal of the dead bodies of legally executed persons. His first English work was directly the result of the said German studies, to which, like many of his contemporaries, he had been attracted by fashion. It consisted of nothing more than the wellknown translations of Bürger's *Lenore* and *Wild Huntsman*, which were issued in a little quarto volume by Manners & Miller of Edinburgh, in October 1796 — a date which has the special interest of suggesting that Scott sought some refuge in literature from the agony of his rejection by Miss Stuart.

These wellknown translations, or rather imitations, the first published under the title of *William and Helen*, which it retains, the other as *The Chase*, which was subsequently altered to the better and more literal

rendering, show unmistakably the result of the study of ballads, both in the printed forms and as orally delivered. Some crudities of rhyme and expression are said to have been corrected at the instance of one of Scott's (at this time rather numerous) Egerias, the beautiful wife of his kinsman, Scott of Harden, a young lady partly of German extraction, but of the best English breeding. Slight books of the kind, even translations, made a great deal more mark sometimes in those days than they would in these; but there were a great many translations of *Lenore* about, and except by Scott's friends, little notice was taken of the volume. There were some excuses for the neglect, the best perhaps being that English criticism at the time was at nearly as low an ebb as English poetry. A really acute critic could hardly have mistaken the difference between Scott's verse and the fustian or tinsel of the Della Cruscans, the frigid rhetoric of Darwin, or the drivel of Hayley. Only Southey had as yet written ballad verses with equal vigour and facility; and, I think, he had not yet published any of them. It is Scott who tells us that he borrowed

'Tramp, tramp, along the land they rode, Splash, splash, along the sea,'

from Taylor of Norwich; but Taylor himself had the good taste to see how much it was improved by the completion —

'The scourge is red, the spur drops blood, *The fashing pebbles flee*' —

which last line, indeed, Coleridge himself hardly bettered in the not yet written *Ancient Mariner*, the *ne plus ultra* of the style. It must be mainly a question of individual taste whether the sixes and eights of the *Lenore* version or the continued eights of the *Huntsman* please most. But any one who knows what the present state of British poetry was in October 1796 will be more than indifferently well satisfied with either.

It was never Scott's way to be cast down at the failure or the neglect of any of his work; nor does he seem to have been ever actuated by the more masculine but perhaps equally childish determination to 'do it again' and 'shame the fools.' It seems quite on the cards that he might have calmly acquiesced in want of notoriety, and have continued a mere literary lawyer, with a pretty turn or verse and a great amount of reading, if his most intimate friend, William Erskine, had not met 'Monk' Lewis in London, and found him anxious for contributions to his *Tales of Wonder*. Lewis was a coxcomb, a fribble, and the least bit in the world of a snob: his *Monk* is not very clean fustian, and most of his other work rubbish. But he was, though not according to knowledge, a sincere Romantic; he had no petty jealousy

in matters literary; and, above all, he had, as Scott recognised, but as has not been always recognised since, a really remarkable and then novel command of flowing but fairly strict lyrical measures, the very things needed to thaw the frost of the eighteenth-century couplet. Erskine offered, and Lewis gladly accepted, contributions from Scott, and though *Tales of Wonder* were much delayed, and did not appear till 1801, the project directly caused the production of Scott's first original work in ballad, *Glenfinlas* and *The Eve of St. John*, as well as the less important pieces of the *Fire King*, *Frederick and Alice*, *etc.*

In *Glenfinlas* and *The Eve* the real Scott first shows, and the better of the two is the second. It is not merely that, though Scott had a great liking for and much proficiency in 'eights,' that metre is never so effective for ballad purposes as eights and sixes; nor that, as Lockhart admits, *Glenfinlas* exhibits a Germanisation which is at the same time an adulteration; nor even that, well as Scott knew the Perthshire Highlands, they could not appeal to him with the same subtle intimacy of touch as that possessed by the ruined tower where, as a half-paralysed infant, he had been herded with the lambs. But all these causes together, and others, join to produce a freer effect in *The Eve*. The eighteenth century is farther off; the genuine mediæval inspiration is nearer. And it is especially noticeable that, as in most of the early performances of the great poetical periods, an alteration of metrical etiquette (as we may call it) plays a great part. Scott had not yet heard that recitation of *Christabel* which had so great an effect on his work, and through it on the work of others. But he had mastered for himself, and by study of the originals, the secret of the *Christabel* metre, that is to say, the wide licence of equivalence in trisyllabic and dissyllabic feet, of metre catalectic or not, as need was, of anacrusis and the rest. As is natural to a novice, he rather exaggerates his liberties, especially in the cases where the internal rhyme seduces him. It is necessary not merely to slur, but to gabble, in order to get some of these into proper rhythm, while in other places the mistake is made of using so many anapæsts that the metre becomes, not as it should be, iambic, with anapæsts for variation, but anapæstic without even a single iamb. But these are 'sma' sums, sma' sums,' as saith his own Bailie Jarvie, and on the whole the required effect of vigour and variety, of narrative giving place to terror and terror to narrative is capitally achieved. Above all, in neither piece, in the less no more than in the more successful, do we find anything of what the poet has so well characterised in one of his

early reviews as the ‘spurious style of tawdry and affected simplicity which trickles through the legendary ditties’ of the eighteenth century. ‘The hunt is up’ in earnest; and we are chasing the tall deer in the open hills, not coursing rabbits with toy terriers on a bowling-green.

The writing of these pieces had, however, been preceded by the publication of Scott’s second volume, the translation of *Goetz von Berlichingen*, for which Lewis had arranged with a London bookseller, so that this time the author was not defrauded of his hire. He received twentyfive guineas, and was to have as much more for a second edition, which the short date of copyright forestalled. The book appeared in February 1799, and received more attention than the ballads, though, as Lockhart saw, it was in fact belated, the brief English interest in German *Sturm und Drang* having ceased directly, though indirectly it gave Byron much of his hold on the public a dozen years later. At about the same time Scott executed, but did not publish, an original, or partly original, dramatic work of the same kind, *The House of Aspen*, which he contributed thirty years later to *The Keepsake*. Few good words have ever been said for this, and perhaps not many persons have ever cared much for the *Goetz*, either in the original or in the translation. Goethe did not, in drama at least, understand adventurous matter, and Scott had no grasp of dramatic form.

It has been said that there was considerable delay in the publication of the *Tales of Wonder*; and some have discussed what direct influence this delay had on Scott’s further and further advance into the waters of literature. It is certain that he at one time thought of publishing his contributions independently, and that he did actually print a few copies of them privately; and it is extremely probable that his little experiments in publication, mere *hors-d’œuvre* as they were, had whetted his appetite. Even the accident of his friend Ballantyne’s having taken to publishing a newspaper, and having room at his press for what I believe printers profanely call ‘job-work,’ may not have been without influence. What is certain is that the project of editing a few Border ballads — a selection of his collection which might make ‘a neat little volume of four or five shillings’ — was formed roughly in the late autumn of 1799, and had taken very definite shape by April 1800. Heber, the great bibliophile and brother of the Bishop, introduced Scott to that curious person Leyden, whose gifts, both original and erudite, are undoubted, although perhaps his exile and early death have not hurt their fame. And it so happened that Leyden was

both an amateur of old ballads and (for the two things went together then, though they are sternly kept apart now) a skilful fabricator of new. The impetuous Borderer pooh-poohed a ‘thin thing’ such as a four or five shilling book, and Scott, nothing loath, extended his project. Most of his spare time during 1800 and 1801 was spent on it; and besides corresponding with the man who ‘fished this murex up,’ Bishop Percy, he entered into literary relations with Joseph Ritson. Even Ritson’s waspish character seems to have been softened by Scott’s courtesy, and perhaps even more by the joint facts that he had as yet attained no literary reputation, and neither at this nor at any other time gave himself literary airs. He also made the acquaintance of George Ellis, who became a warm and intimate friend. These were the three men of the day who, since Warton’s death, knew most of early English poetry, and though Percy was too old to help, the others were not.

The scheme grew and grew, especially by the inclusion in it of the publication not merely of ballads, but of the romance of *Sir Tristrem* (of the authorship of which by someone else than Thomas the Rhymer, Scott never would be convinced), till the neat four or five shilling volume was quite out of the question. When at last the two volumes of the first (Kelso) edition appeared in 1802, not merely was *Sir Tristrem* omitted, but much else which, still without ‘the knight who fought for England,’ subsequently appeared in a third. The earliest form of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* is a very pretty book; it deservedly established the fame of Ballantyne as a printer, and as it was not printed in the huge numbers which have reduced the money value of Sir Walter’s later books, it is rather surprising that it is not more sought after than it is at present. My copy — I do not know whether by exception or not — wears the rather unusual livery of pink boards instead of the common blue, grey, or drab. The paper and type are excellent; the printing (with a few slips in the Latin quotations such as *concedunt* for *comedunt*) is very accurate, and the frontispiece, a view of Hermitage Castle in the rain, has the interest of presenting what is said to have been a very faithful view of the actual state of Lord Soulis’ stronghold and the place of the martyrdom of Ramsay, attained by the curious stages of (1) a drawing by Scott, who could not draw at all; (2) a rifacimento by Clerk, who had never seen the place; and (3) an engraving by an artist who was equally innocent of local knowledge.

The book, however, which brought in the modest profit of rather less than eighty pounds, would have been of equal moment under whatever guise it had pleased to assume. The shock of Percy's *Reliques* was renewed, and in a far more favourable atmosphere, before a far better prepared audience. The public indeed had not yet been 'ground-baited' up to the consummation of thousands of copies of poetry as they were later by Scott himself and Byron; but an edition of eight hundred copies went off in the course of the year, and a second, with the additional volume, was at once called for. It contained, indeed, not much original verse, though 'Glenfinlas' and 'The Eve,' with Leyden's 'Cout of Keeldar,' 'Lord Soulis,' etc., appeared in it after a fashion which Percy had set and Evans had continued. But the ballads, familiar as they have become since, not merely in the *Minstrelsy* itself, but in a hundred fresh collections, selections, and what not, could never be mistaken by anyone fitted to appreciate them. 'The Outlaw Murray,' with its rub-a-dub of *e* rhymes throughout, opens the book very cunningly, with something not of the best, but good enough to excite expectation, — an expectation surely not to be disappointed by the immortal agony (dashed with one stroke of magnificent wrath) of 'Helen of Kirkconnell,' the bustle, frolic, and battle-joy of the Border pieces proper, the solemn notes of 'The LykeWake Dirge,' the eeriness of 'Clerk Saunders' and 'The Wife of Usher's Well.'

Even Percy had not been lucky enough to hit upon anything so characteristic of the *average* ballad style at its best as the opening stanza of 'Fause Foodrage' —

'King Easter courted her for her lands, King Wester for her fee, King Honour for her comely face And for her fair bodie';

and Percy would no doubt have been tempted to 'polish' such more than average touches as Margaret's 'turning,' without waking, in the arms of her lover as he receives his deathblow, or as the incomparable stanza in 'The Wife of Usher's Well' which tells how —

'By the gates of Paradise That birk grew fair enough.'

Those who study literature in what they are pleased to call a scientific manner have, as was to be expected, found fault (mildly or not, according to their degree of sense and taste) with Scott, for the manner in which he edited these ballads. It may be admitted that the practice of mixing imitations with originals is a questionable one; and that in some other cases, Scott, though he was far from the illegitimate and tasteless fashion of

alteration, of which in their different ways Allan Ramsay and Percy himself had set the example, was not always up to the highest lights on this subject of editorial faithfulness. It must, for instance, seem odd to the least pedantic nowadays that he should have thought proper to print Dryden's *Virgil* with Dr. Somebody's pedantic improvements instead of Dryden's own text. But the case of the ballads is very different. Here, it must be remembered, there is no authentic original at all. Even in the rare cases, where very early printed or MS. copies exist, we not only do not know that these are the originals, we have every reasonable reason for being pretty certain that they are not. In the case of ballads taken down from repetition, we know as a matter of certainty that, according to the ordinary laws of human nature, the reciter has altered the text which he or she heard, that that text was in its day and way altered by someone else, and so on almost *ad infinitum*. 'Mrs. Brown's version,' therefore, or Mr. Smith's, or Mr. Anybody's, has absolutely no claims to sacrosanctity. It is well, no doubt, that all such versions should be collected by someone (as in this case by Professor Child) who has the means, the time, and the patience. But for the purposes of reading, for the purposes of poetic enjoyment, such a collection is nearly valueless. We must have it for reference, of course; nobody grudges the guineas he has spent for the best part of the last twenty years on Professor Child's stately, if rather cumbrous, volumes. But who can *read* a dozen versions, say, of 'The Queen's Marie' with any pleasure? What is exquisite in one is watered, messed, spoiled by the others.

Therefore I shall maintain that though the most excellent way of all might have been to record his alterations, and the original, in an appendix-dustbin of *apparatus criticus*, Scott was right, and trebly right, in such dealing as that with the first stanza of 'Fause Foodrage,' which I have quoted and praised. That stanza, as it stands above, does not occur in any of the extant quasi-originals. 'Mrs. Brown's MS.,' from which, as Professor Child says, with almost silent reproach, Scott took his text, 'with some forty small changes,' reads —

'King Easter has courted her for her gowd, King Wester for her fee, King Honour for her lands sae braid, And for her fair bodie.'

Now this is clearly wrong. Either 'gowd' or 'lands' is a mere repetition of 'fee,' and if not, the reading does not point any ethical antithesis between Kings Easter and Wester and their more chivalrous rival. As it happens, there are two other versions, shorter and less dramatic, but one of them

distinctly giving, the other implying, the sense of Scott's alteration. Therefore I say that Scott was fully justified in adjusting the one text that he did print, especially as he did it in his own right way, and not in the wrong one of Percy and Mickle. There is here no Bentleian impertinence, no gratuitous meddling with the at least possibly genuine text of a known and definite author. The editor simply picks out of the mud, and wipes clean, something precious, which has been defaced by bad usage, and has become masterless.

The third volume of the *Minstrelsy* was pretty speedily got ready, with more matter; and *Sir Tristrem* (which is in a way a fourth) was not very long in following. This last part contained a *tour de force* in the shape of a completion of the missing part by Scott himself, a completion which, of course, shocks philologists, but which was certainly never written for them, and possesses its own value for others.

Not the least part of the interest of the *Minstrelsy* itself was the editor's appearance as a prose-writer. Percy had started, and others down to Ritson had continued, the practice of interspersing verse collections with dissertations in prose; and while the first volume of the *Minstrelsy* contained a long general introduction of more than a hundred pages, and most of the ballads had separate prefaces of more or less length, the preface to 'Young Tamlane' turned itself into a disquisition on fairy lore, which, being printed in small type, is probably not much shorter than the general introduction. In these pieces (the Fairy essay is said to be based on information partly furnished by Leyden) all the wellknown characteristics of Scott's prose style appear — its occasional incorrectness, from the strictly scholastic point of view, as well as its far more than counterbalancing merits of vivid presentation, of arrangement, not orderly in appearance but curiously effective in result, of multifarious facts and reading, of the bold pictorial vigour of its narrative, of its pleasant humour, and its incessant variety.

Nor was this the only opportunity for exercising himself in the medium which, even more than verse, was to be his, that the earliest years of the century afforded to Scott. The *Edinburgh Review*, as everybody knows, was started in 1802. Although its politics were not Scott's, they were for some years much less violently put forward and exclusively enforced than was the case later; indeed, the Whig Review started with much the same ostensible policy as the Whig Deliverer a century before, the policy, at least

in declared intention, of using both parties as far as might be for the public good. The attempt, if made *bona fide*, was not more successful in one case than in the other; but it at least permitted Tories to enlist under the blue-and-yellow banner. The standard-bearer, Jeffrey, moreover, was a very old, an intimate, and a never-quite-to-be-divorced friend of Scott's. At a later period, Scott's contributions to periodicals attained an excellence which has been obscured by the fame of the poems and novels together, even more unjustly than the poems have been obscured by the novels alone. His reviews at this time on Southey's *Amadis*, on Godwin's *Chaucer*, on Ellis's *Specimens*, etc., are a little crude and amateurish, especially in the direction (well known, to those who have ever had to do with editing, as a besetting sin of novices) of substituting a mere account of the book, with a few expressions of like and dislike, for a grasped and reasoned criticism of it. But this is far less peculiar to them than those who have not read the early numbers of the great reviews may suppose. The fact is that Jeffrey himself, Sydney Smith, Scott, and others were only feeling for the principles and practice of reviewing, as they themselves later, and the brilliant second generation of Carlyle and Macaulay, De Quincey and Lockhart, were to carry it out. Perhaps the very best specimens of Scott's powers in this direction are the prefaces which he contributed much later and gratuitously to John Ballantyne's *Novelists' Library* — things which hardly yield to Johnson's *Lives* as examples of the combined arts of criticism and biography. At the time of which we speak he was 'making himself' in this direction as in others. I hope that Jeffrey and not he was responsible for a fling at Mary Woollstonecraft in the Godwin article, which would have been ungenerous in any case, and which in this was unpardonable. But there is nothing else to object to, and the *Amadis* review in particular is a very interesting one.

We must now look back a little, so as to give a brief sketch of Scott's domestic life, from his marriage until the publication of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, which, with that of *Waverley* and the crash of 1825-26, supplies the three turning-points of his career. After a very brief sojourn in lodgings (where the landlady was shocked at Mrs. Scott's habit of sitting constantly in her drawingroom), the young couple took up their abode in South Castle Street. Hence, not very long afterwards, they moved to the house — the famous No. 39 — in the northern division of the same street, which continued to be her home for the rest of her Edinburgh life, and Scott's so

long as he could afford a house in Edinburgh. Their first child was born on the 14th of October 1798, but did not live many hours. As was (and for the matter of that is) much more customary with Edinburgh residents, even of moderate means, than it has been for at least a century with Londoners, Scott, while his own income was still very modest, took a cottage at Lasswade in the neighbourhood. Here he lived during the summer for years; and in March 1799 he and his wife went to London, for the first time in his case since he had been almost a baby. His father died during this visit, after a painful breakdown, which is said to have suggested the touching particulars of the deathbed of Chrystal Croftangry's benefactor (not 'the elder Croftangry,' as is said in a letter quoted by Lockhart), and was repeated to some extent in Scott's own case.

His appointment to the Sheriff[depute]ship of Selkirkshire was made in December 1799, and gave, for light work, three hundred a year. It need not have interfered with even an active practice at the Bar had such fallen to him, and at first did not impose on him even a partial residence. The LordLieutenant, however, Lord Napier of Ettrick, insisted on this, and though Scott rather resented a strictness which seems not to have been universal, he had to comply. He did not, however, do so at once, and during the last year of the century and its two successors, Lasswade and Castle Street were Scott's habitats, with various radiations; while in the spring of 1803 he and Mrs. Scott repeated their visit to London and extended it to Oxford. It is not surprising to read his confession in sad days, a quarter of a century later, of the 'ecstatic feeling' with which he first saw this, the place in all the island which was his spiritual home. The same year saw the alarm of invasion which followed the resumption of hostilities after the armistice of Amiens; and Scott's attention to his quartermastership, which he still held, seems to have given Lord Napier the idea that he was devoting himself, not only *tam Marti quam Mercurio*, but to Mars rather at Mercury's expense. Scott, however, was never fond of being dictated to, and he and his wife were still at Lasswade when the Wordsworths visited them in the autumn, though Scott accompanied them to his sheriffdom on their way back to Westmoreland. He had not yet wholly given up practice, and though its rewards were not munificent, they reached about this time, it would seem, their maximum sum of £218, which, in the days of his fairy-money, he must often have earned by a single morning's work.

Lord Napier, by no means improperly (for it was a legal requirement, though often evaded, that four months' residence per annum should be observed), persisted; and Scott, after a pleasing but impracticable dream of taking up his summer residence in the Tower of Harden itself, which was offered to him, took a lease of Ashestiel, a pleasant country house, — 'a decent farmhouse,' he calls it, in his usual way, — the owner of which was his relation, and absent in India. The place was not far from Selkirk, on the banks of the Tweed and in the centre of the Buccleuch country. He seems to have settled there by the end of July 1804. The family, after leaving it for the late autumn session in Edinburgh, returned at Christmas, by which time *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, though not actually published, was printed and ready. It was issued in the first week of the new year 1805, being, except Wordsworth's and Coleridge's, the first book published, which was distinctly and originally characteristic of the new poetry of the nineteenth century.

Chapter III

THE VERSE ROMANCES

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Although Scott was hard upon his thirty-fifth year when the *Lay* appeared, and although he had already a considerable literary reputation in Edinburgh, and some in London, the amount of his original publications was then but small. Indeed, on the austere principles of those who deny 'originality' to such things as reviews, or as the essays in the *Minstrelsy*, it must be limited to a mere handful, though of very pleasant delights, the half-dozen of ballads made up by 'Glenfinlas,' 'The Eve of St. John,' the rather inferior 'Fire King,' the beautiful 'Cadzow Castle' (not yet mentioned, but containing some of its author's most charming *topic* lines), the fragment of 'The Grey Brother,' and a few minor pieces.

With the *Lay* he took an entirely different position. The mere bulk of the poem was considerable; and, putting for the instant entirely out of question its peculiarities of subject, metre, and general treatment, it was a daring innovation in point of class. The eighteenth century had, even under its own laws and conditions, distinctly eschewed long narrative poems, the unreadable epics of Glover, for instance, belonging to that class of exception which really does prove the rule. Pope's *Rape* had been burlesque, and his *Dunciad*, satire; hardly the ghost of a narrative had appeared in Thomson and Young; Shenstone, Collins, Gray, had nothing *de longue haleine*; the entire poetical works of Goldsmith probably do not exceed in length a canto of the Lay; Cowper had never attempted narrative; Crabbe was resting on the early laurels of his brief *Village*, etc., and had not begun his tales. *Thalaba*, indeed, had been published, and no doubt was not without effect on Scott himself; but it was not popular, and the author was still under the sway of the craze against rhyme. To all intents and purposes the poet was addressing the public, in a work combining the attractions of fiction with the attractions of verse at considerable length, for the first time since Dryden had done so in his *Fables*, a hundred and five years before. And though the mastery of the method might be less, the stories were original, they were continuous, and they displayed an entirely new gust and seasoning both of subject and of style.

There can be no doubt at all, for those who put metre in its proper place, that a very large, perhaps the much larger, part of the appeal of the *Lay* was metrical. The public was sick of the couplet — had indeed been sickened twice over, if the abortive revolt of Gray and Collins be counted. It did not take, and was quite right in not taking, to the rhymeless, shortened Pindaric of Sayers and Southey, as to anything but an eccentric 'sport' of poetry. What Scott had to offer was practically new, or at least novel. It is universally known — and Scott, who was only too careless of his own claims, and the very last of men to steal or conceal those of others, made no secret of it — that the suggestion of the *Lay* in metre came from a private recitation or reading of Coleridge's *Christabel*, written in the year of Scott's marriage, but not published till twenty years later, and more than ten after the appearance of the *Lay*. Coleridge seems to have regarded Scott's priority with an irritability less suitable to his philosophic than to his poetical character. But he had, in the first place, only himself, if anybody, to blame; in the second, Scott more than made the loan his own property by the variations executed on its motive; and in the third, Coleridge's original right was far less than he seems to have honestly thought, and than most people have guilelessly assumed since.

For the iambic dimeter, freely altered by the licences of equivalence, anacrusis, and catalexis, though not recently practised in English when *Christabel* and the *Lay* set the example, is an inevitable result of the clash between accented, alliterative, asyllabic rhythm and quantitative, exactly syllabic metre, which accompanied the transformation of Anglo-Saxon into English. We have distinct approaches to it in the thirteenth century *Genesis*; it attains considerable development in Spenser's *The Oak and the Brere*; anybody can see that the latter part of Milton's *Comus* was written under the breath of its spirit. But it had not hitherto been applied on any great scale, and the delusions under which the eighteenth century laboured as to the syllabic restrictions of English poetry had made it almost impossible that it should be. At the same time, that century, by its lighter practice on the one hand in the octosyllable, on the other in the fourfooted anapæstic, was making the way easier for those who dared a little: and Coleridge first, then Scott, did the rest.

We have seen that in some of his early ballad work Scott had a little overdone the licence of equivalence, but this had probably been one of the formal points on which, as we know, the advice of Lewis, no poet but a

remarkably good metrist, had been of use to him. And he acquitted himself now in a manner which, if it never quite attains the weird charm of *Christabel* itself at its best, is more varied, better sustained, and, above all, better suited to the story-telling which was, of course, Scott's supremest gift. It is very curious to compare Coleridge's remarks on Scott's verse with those of Wordsworth, in reference to the *White Doe of Rylstone*. Neither in *Christabel*, nor in the *White Doe*, is there a real *story* really told. Coleridge, but for his fatal weaknesses, undoubtedly could have told such a story; it is pretty certain that Wordsworth could not. But Scott could tell a story as few other men who have ever drawn breath on the earth could tell it. He had been distinguished in the conversational branch of the art from his youth up, and though it was to be long before he could write a story in prose, he showed now, at the first attempt, how he could write one in verse.

Construction, of course, was not his forte; it never was. The plot of the *Lay*, if not exactly nonexistent, is of the simplest and loosest description; the whole being in effect a series of episodes strung together by the loves of Margaret and Cranstoun and the misdeeds of the Goblin Page. Even the Book supplies no real or necessary *nexus*. But the romance proper has never required elaborate construction, and has very rarely, if ever, received it. A succession of engaging or exciting episodes, each plausibly joined to each, contents its easy wants; and such a succession is liberally provided here. So, too, it does not require strict character-drawing — a gift with which Scott was indeed amply provided, but which he did not exhibit, and had no call to exhibit, here. If the personages will play their parts, that is enough. And they all play them very well here, though the hero and heroine do certainly exhibit something of that curious nullity which has been objected to the heroes nearly always, the heroines too frequently, of the later prose novels.

But even those critics who, as too many critics are wont to do, forgot and forget that 'the prettiest girl in the world' not only cannot give, but ought not to be asked to give, more than she has, must have been, and must be, very unreasonable if they find fault with the subject and stuff of the *Lay*. Jeffrey's remark about 'the present age not enduring' the Border and mosstrooping details was contradicted by the fact, and was, as a matter of taste, one of those strange blunders which diversified his often admirably acute critical utterances. When he feared their effects on '*English* readers,' he showed himself, as was not common with him, actually ignorant of one of the simplest general principles of the poetic appeal, that is to say, the

element of *strangeness*. But we must not criticise criticism here, and must only add that another great appeal, that of variety, is amply given, as well as that of unfamiliarity. The graceful and touching, if a little conventional, overture of the Minstrel introduces with the truest art the vigorous sketch of Branksome Tower. The spirits of flood and fell are allowed to impress and not allowed to bore us; for the quickest of changes is made to Deloraine's ride — a kind of thing in which Scott never failed, even in his latest and saddest days. The splendid Melrose opening of the Second Canto supports itself through the discovery of the Book, and finds due contrast in the description (or no-description) of the lovers' meeting; the fight and the Goblin Page's misbehaviour and punishment (to all, at least, but those, surely few now, who are troubled by the Jeffreyan sense of 'dignity'), the decoying and capture of young Buccleuch, and the warning of the clans are certainly no ungenerous provision for the Third; nor the clan anecdotes (especially the capital episode of the Beattisons), the parley, the quarrel of Howard and Dacre, and the challenge, for the Fourth. There is perhaps less in the Fifth, for Scott seems to have been afraid of another fight in detail; but the description of the night before, and the famous couplet —

'I'd give the lands of Deloraine Dark Musgrave were alive again' —

would save it if there were nothing else, as there is much. And if the actual conclusion has no great interest (Scott was never good at conclusions, as we shall find Lady Louisa Stuart telling him frankly later), the Sixth Canto is full, and more than full, of brilliant things — the feast, the Goblin's tricks, his carrying-off, the pilgrimage, and, above all, the songs, especially 'Rosabelle' and the version of the 'Dies Iræ.'

The mention of these last may fairly introduce a few words on the formal and metrical characteristics of the poem, remarks which perhaps some readers resent, but which must nevertheless be made, inasmuch as they are to my mind by far the most important part of poetical criticism. Scott evidently arranged his scheme of metre with extreme care here, though it is possible that after this severe exercise he let it take care of itself to some extent later. His introduction is in the strict octosyllable, with only such licences of slur or elision —

'The pi | *tying Duch* | ess praised its chime,' '*He had played* | it to King Charles the Good' —

as the greatest precisians might have allowed themselves. But the First Canto breaks at once into the full licence, not merely of equivalence, — that

is to say, of substituting an anapæst or a trochee for an iamb, — but of shifting the base and rhythm of any particular verse, or of set batches of verses, between the three ground-feet, and, further, of occasionally introducing sixes, as in the ballad metre, and even fours —

'Bards long | shall tell How Lord Wal | ter fell,'

instead of the usual eights.

In similar fashion he varies the rhymes, passing as the subject or the accompaniment of the word-music may require, from the couplet to the quatrain, and from the quatrain to the irregularly rhymed 'Pindaric'; always, however, taking care that, except in the set lyric, the quatrain shall not fall too much into definite stanza, but be interlaced in sense or sound sufficiently to carry on the narrative. The result, to some tastes, is a medium quite unsurpassed for the particular purpose. The only objection to it at all capable of being maintained, that I can think of, is that the total effect is rather lyrical than epic. And so much of this must be perhaps allowed as comes to granting that Scott's verse-romance is rather a long and cunningly sustained and varied ballad than an epic proper.

The *Lay*, though not received with quite that eager appetite for poetry which Scott was 'born to introduce,' and of which he lived long enough to see the glutting, had a large and immediate sale. The author, not yet aware what a gold mine his copyrights were, parted with this after the first edition, and received in all rather less than £770, a sum trifling in comparison with his after gains; but probably the largest that had as yet been received by any English poet for a single volume not published by subscription. It is curious that, at the estimated rate of three for one in comparing the value of money at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the sum almost exactly equals that paid by Tonson for Dryden's *Fables*, the last book, before the *Lay* itself, which had united popularity, merit, and bulk in English verse. But Dryden was the acknowledged head of English literature at the time, and Scott was a mere beginner. He was probably even better pleased with the quality of the praise than with the quantity of the pudding. For though professional criticism, then in no very vigorous state, said some silly things, it was generally favourable; and a saying of Pitt (most indifferent, as a rule, of all Prime Ministers to English literature) is memorable not merely as summing up the general impression, but as defining what that impression was in a fashion quite invaluable to the student of literary history. The Pilot that Weathered the Storm, it seems, said

of the description of the Minstrel's hesitation before playing, 'This is a sort of thing I might have expected in painting, but could never have fancied capable of being given by poetry.' To the present generation and the last, the reverse expression would probably seem more natural. We say, of Mr. Watts or of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, that they have put, in 'Love and Death' or in 'Love among the Ruins,' what we might have expected from poetry, but could hardly have thought possible in painting. But a hundred years of studious convention and generality, of deliberate avoidance of the poignant, and the vivid, and the detailed, and the coloured in poetry had made Pitt's confession as natural as another hundred years of contrary practice from Coleridge to Rossetti have made ours.

The publication of the *Lay* immediately preceded, and perhaps its success had no small share in deciding, the most momentous and unfortunate step of Scott's life, his entry into partnership with James Ballantyne. The discussion of the whole of this business will best be postponed till the date of its catastrophe is reached, but a few words may be said on the probable reasons for it. Much, no doubt, was the result of that combination of incalculable things which foolish persons of one kind call mere chance, of which foolish persons of another kind deny the existence, and which wise men term, from different but not irreconcilable points of view, Providence, or Luck, or Fate. But a little can be cleared up. Scott had evidently made up his mind that he should not succeed at the Bar, and had also persuaded himself that the very success of the *Lay* had made failure certain. The ill success of his brother Thomas, with the writer's business inherited from their father, perhaps inconvenienced and no doubt frightened him. In fact, though his harsher judges are wrong in attributing to him any undue haste to be rich, he certainly does seem to have been under a dread of being poor; a dread no doubt not wholly intelligible and partly morbid in a young man still under thirtyfive, with brilliant literary and some legal prospects, who had, independently of fees, literary or legal, a secured income of about a thousand a year. He probably thought, and was right in thinking, that the book trade was going to 'look up' to a degree previously unknown; he seems throughout to have been under one of those inexplicable attractions towards the Ballantynes which now and then exist, as Hobbes says, 'in the greater towards the meaner, but not contrary'; and perhaps there was another cause which has not been usually allowed for enough. Good Christian and goodnatured man as he was, Scott was

exceedingly proud; and though joining himself with persons of dubious social position in mercantile operations seems an odd way of pride, it had its temptations. I do not doubt but that from the first Scott intended, more or less vaguely and dimly, to extend the printing business into a publishing one, and so to free himself from any necessity of going cap-in-hand to publishers.

However, for good or for ill, — I think it was mainly for ill, — for this reason or for that, the partnership was formed, at first indirectly by way of loan, then directly by further advance on security of a share in the business, and finally so that Scott became, though he did not appear, the leading partner. And the very first letter that we have of his about business shows the fatal flaw which he, the soul of honour, seems never to have detected till too late, if even then. The scheme for an edition of Dryden was already afloat, and the first editor proposed was a certain Mr. Foster, who 'howled about the expense of printing.' 'I still,' says Scott to Ballantyne, 'stick to my answer that *I know nothing of the matter*, but that, settle it how he and you will, *it must be printed by you or be no concern of mine. This gives you an advantage in driving the bargain.*' Perhaps; but how about the advantage to Mr. Foster of being advised by Ballantyne's partner to employ Ballantyne, while he was innocent of the knowledge of the identity of partner and adviser, and was even told that Scott 'knew nothing of the matter'?

Even before the quarrel which soon occurred with Constable established the Ballantynes — nominally the other brother John — as publishers, Scott had begun, and was constantly pressing upon the different publishing houses with which he was connected, a variety of literary schemes of the most ambitious and costly character. All these books were to be printed by Ballantyne, and many of them edited by himself; while, when the direct publishing business was added, there was no longer any check on this dangerous proceeding. It is most curious how Scott, the shrewdest and sanest of men in the vast majority of affairs, seems to have lost his head wherever books or lands were concerned. Himself both an antiquary and an antiquarian, as well as a lover of literature, he seems to have taken it for granted that the same combination of tastes existed in the public to an extent which would pay all expenses, however lavishly incurred. To us, nowadays, who know how cold a face publishers turn on what we call really interesting schemes, and how often these schemes, even when fostered, miscarry or barely pay expenses, — who are aware that even the

editors of literary societies, where expenses are assured beforehand, have to work for love or for merely nominal fees, simply because the public will not buy the books, — it is not so wonderful that some of Scott's schemes never got into being at all, and that others were dead losses, as that any 'got home.' His *Dryden*, an altogether admirable book, on which he lavished labour, and great part of which appealed to a still dominant prestige, may just have carried the editor's certainly not excessive fee of forty guineas a volume, or about £750 for the whole. But when one reads of twice that sum paid for the *Swift*, of £1300 for the thirteen quartos of the *Somers Papers*, and so forth, the feeling is not that the sums paid were at all too much for the work done, but that the publishers must have been very lucky men if they ever saw their money again. The two first of these schemes certainly, the third perhaps, deserved success; and still more so did a great scheme for the publication of the entire *British Poets*, to be edited by Scott and Campbell, which indeed fell through in itself, but resulted indirectly in Campbell's excellent *Specimens* and Chalmers's invaluable if not very comely *Poets*. Even another project, a *Corpus Historicorum*, would have been magnificent, though it could hardly have been bookselling war. But the *Somers Tracts* themselves, the *Memoirs* and papers of Sadler, Slingsby, Carleton, Cary, etc., were of the class of book which requires subvention of some kind to prevent it from being a dead loss; and when the preventive check of the unwillingness of publishers was removed by the fatal establishment of '*John* Ballantyne & Co.,' things became worse still. There are few better instances of the eternal irony of fate than that the author of the admirable description of the bookseller's horror at Mr. Pembroke's Sermons should have permitted, should have positively caused, the publishing at what was in effect his own risk, or rather his own certainty of loss, not merely of Weber's ambitious *Beaumont and Fletcher*, but of collections of *Tixall Poetry*, *Histories of the Culdees*, Wilson's *History of James the First*, and the rest.

As the beginning of 1805 saw the first birth of his real books, so the end of it saw that of the last of his children according to the flesh. His firstborn, as has been said, did not live. But Walter (born November 1799), Sophia (born October 1801), Anne (born February 1803), and Charles (born December 1805) survived infancy; and it is quite probable that these regular increases to his family, by suggesting that he might have a large one, stimulated Scott's desire to enlarge his income. As a matter of fact,

however, the quartette of two boys and two girls was not exceeded. The domestic life at Castle Street and Ashestiel, from the publication of the *Lay* to that of *Marmion* in 1808, — indeed to that of *The Lady of the Lake* in May 1810, — ran smoothly enough; and there can be little doubt that these five years were the happiest, and in reality the most prosperous, of Scott's life. He had at once attained great fame, and was increasing it by each successive poem; his immense intellectual activity found vent besides in almost innumerable projects, some of which were in a way successful, and some of which, if they did himself no very great good pecuniarily, did good to more or less deserving friends and *protégés*. His health had, as yet, shown no signs whatever of breaking down; he was physically in perfect condition for, and at Ashestiel he had every opportunity of indulging in, the field sports in which his soul delighted at least as much as in reading and writing; he had pleasant intervals of wandering; and, to crown it all, he was, during this period, established in reversionary prospect, if not yet in actual possession, of an income which should have put even his anxieties at rest, and which certainly might have made him dissociate himself from the dangerous and doubtful commercial enterprises in which he had engaged. This reversion was that of a Clerkship of Session, one of an honourable, well-paid, and by no means laborious group of offices which seems to have been accepted as a comely and comfortable set of shelves for advocates of ability, position, and influence, who, for this reason or that, were not making absolutely firstrate mark at the Bar. The post to which Scott was appointed was in the possession of a certain Mr. Hope, and as no retiring pension was attached to these places, it was customary to hold them on the rather uncomfortable terms of doing the work till the former holder died, without getting any money. But before many years a pension scheme was put in operation; Mr. Hope took his share of it, and Scott entered upon thirteen hundred a year in addition to his Sheriffship and to his private property, without taking any account at all of literary gains. The appointment had not actually been completed, though the patent had been signed, when the Fox and Grenville Government came in, and it so happened that the document had been so made out as to have enabled Scott, if he chose, to draw the whole salary and leave his predecessor in the cold. But this was soon set right.

In the visit to London which he paid (apparently for the purpose of getting the error corrected), he made the acquaintance of the unlucky

Princess of Wales, who was at this time rather a favourite with the Tories. And when he came back to Scotland, the trial of Lord Melville gave him an opportunity of distinguishing himself by a natural and very pardonable partisanship, which made his Whig friends rather sore. Politics in Edinburgh ran very high during this short break in the long Tory domination, and from it dates a story, to some minds, perhaps, one of the most interesting of all those about Scott, and connected indelibly with the scene of its occurrence. It tells how, as he was coming down the Mound with Jeffrey and another Whig, after a discussion in the Faculty of Advocates on some proposals of innovation, Jeffrey tried to laugh the difference off, and how Scott, usually stoical enough, save in point of humour, broke out with actual tears in his eyes, 'No, no! it is no laughing matter. Little by little, whatever your wishes may be, you will destroy and undermine until nothing of what makes Scotland Scotland shall remain!' He would probably have found no great reason at the other end of the century to account himself a false prophet; and he might have thought his prophecies in fair way of fulfilment not in Scotland only.

During 1806 and 1807 the main occupations of Scott's leisure (if he can ever be said to have had such a thing) were the *Dryden* and *Marmion*. The latter of these appeared in February and the former in April 1808, a perhaps unique example of an original work, and one of criticism and compilation, both of unusual bulk and excellence, appearing, with so short an interval, from the same pen.

As for *Marmion*, it is surely by far the greatest, taking all constituents of poetical greatness together, of Scott's poems. It was not helped at the time, and probably never has been helped, by the author's plan of prefixing to each canto introductions of very considerable length, each addressed to one or other of his chief literary friends, and having little or nothing at all to do with the subject of the tale. Contemporaries complained that the main poem was thereby intolerably interrupted; posterity, I believe, has taken the line of ignoring the introductions altogether. This is a very great pity, for not only do they contain some of Scott's best and oftenest quoted lines, but each is a really charming piece of occasional verse, and something more, in itself. The beautiful description of Tweedside in late autumn, the dirge on Nelson, Pitt, and Fox (which last, of course, infuriated Jeffrey), and, above all, the splendid passage on the *Morte d'Arthur* (which Scott had at this time thought of editing, but gave up to Southey) adorn the epistle to Rose; the

picture of Ettrick Forest in that to Marriott is one of the best sustained things the poet ever did; the personal interest of the Erskine piece is of the highest, though it has fewer 'purple' passages, and it is well-matched with that to Skene; while the fifth to Ellis and the sixth and last to Heber nobly complete the batch. Only, though the things in this case *are* both rich and rare,

'We wonder what the devil they do there';

and Lockhart unearthed, what Scott seems to have forgotten, the fact that they were originally intended to appear by themselves. It is a pity they did not; for, excellent as they are, they are quite out of place as interludes to a story, the serried range of which not only does not require but positively rejects them.

For here, while Scott had lost little, if anything, of the formal graces of the *Lay*, he had improved immensely in grip and force. Clare may be a bread-and-butter heroine, and Wilton a milk-and-water lover, but the designs of Marmion against both give a real story-interest, which is quite absent from the *Lay*. The figure of Constance is really tragic, not melodramatic merely, and makes one regret that Scott, in his prose novels, did not repeat and vary her. All the accessories, both in incident and figure, are good, and it is almost superfluous to praise the last canto. It extorted admiration from the partisan rancour and the literary prudishness of Jeffrey; it made the disturbed dowagers of the *Critical Review*, who thought, with Rymer, that 'a hero ought to be virtuous,' mingle applause with their fiefies; it has been the delight of every reader, not a milksop, or a faddist, or a poetical man-of-one-idea, ever since. The last canto of *Marmion* and the last few 'Aventiuren' of the *Nibelungen Lied* are perhaps the only things in all poetry where a set continuous battle (not a series of duels as in Homer) is related with unerring success; and the steady *crescendo* of the whole, considering its length and intensity, is really miraculous. Nay, even without this astonishing finale, the poem that contained the opening sketch of Norham, the voyage from Whitby to Holy Island, the final speech of Constance, and the famous passage of her knell, the Host's Tale, the pictures of Crichton and the Blackford Hill view, the 'air and fire' of the 'Lochinvar' song, the phantom summons from the Cross of Edinburgh, and the parting of Douglas and Marmion, could spare half of these and still remain one of the best of its kind, while every passage so spared would be enough to distinguish any poem in which it occurred.

The considerable change in the metre of *Marmion* as compared with the *Lay* is worth noticing. Here, as there, the 'introductions' are, for the most part, if not throughout, in continuous octosyllabic couplets. But, in the text, the couplet plays also a much larger part than it does in the *Lay*, and where it is dropped the substitute is not usually the light and extremely varied medley of the earlier poem, so much as a sort of irregular (and sometimes almost regular) stanza arrangement, sets of (usually three) octosyllables being interspersed with sixes, rhyming independently. The batches of monorhymed octosyllables sometimes extend to even four in number, with remarkably good effect, as, for instance, in the infernal proclamation from the Cross. Altogether the metrical scheme is of a graver cast than that of the *Lay*, and suits the more serious and tragical colour of the story.

It has been mentioned above in passing that Jeffrey reviewed *Marmion* on the whole unfavourably. The story of this review is well known: how the editor-reviewer (with the best intentions doubtless) sent the proof with a kind of apology to Scott on the morning of a dinner-party in Castle Street; how Scott showed at least outward indifference, and Mrs. Scott a not unamiable petulance; and how, though the affair caused no open breach of private friendship, it doubtless gave help to the increasing Whiggery of the *Review* and its pusillanimous policy in regard to the Spanish War in severing Scott's connection with it, and determining him to promote, heart and soul, the opposition venture of the *Quarterly*. Of this latter it was naturally enough proposed by Canning that Scott should be editor; but, as naturally, he does not seem to have even considered the proposal. He would have hated living in London; no salary that could have been offered him could have done more than equal, if so much, the stipends of his Sheriffship and the coming Clerkship, which he would have had to give up; and the work would have interfered much more seriously than his actual vocations with his literary avocations. Besides, it is quite certain that he would not have made a good editor. In the first place, he was fitted neither by education nor by temperament for the troublesome and 'meticulous' business of knocking contributions into shape. And, in the second, he would most assuredly have fallen into the most fatal of all editorial errors — that of inserting articles, not because they were actually good or likely to be popular, but because the subjects were interesting, or the writers agreeable, to himself. But he backed the venture manfully with advice, by recruiting for it, and afterwards by contributing to it.

It so happened, too, that about the same time he had dissensions with the publisher as well as with the editor of the *Edinburgh*. Constable, though he had not entered into the intimate relations with Scott and the Ballantynes that were afterwards so fatal, had made the spirited bid of a thousand pounds for *Marmion*, and the much more spirited and (it is to be feared) much less profitable one of fifteen hundred for the *Swift*. He had, however, recently taken into partnership a certain Mr. Hunter of Blackness. This Hunter must have had some merits — he had at any rate sufficient wit to throw the blame of the fact that sojourn in Scotland did not always agree with Englishmen on their disgusting habit of 'eating too much *and not drinking enough*.' But he was a laird of some family, and he seems to have thought that he might bring into business the slightly hectoring ways which were then tolerated in Scotland from persons of quality to persons of none or less. He was a very bitter Whig, and, therefore, ill disposed towards Scott. And, lastly, he had, or thought he had, a grievance against his distinguished 'hand' in respect of the *Swift*, to wit, that the editor of that well-paid compilation did not devote himself to it by any means exclusively enough. Now Scott, though the most goodnatured of men and only too easy to lead, was absolutely impossible to drive; and his blood was as ready as the 'bluid of M'Foy' itself to be set on fire at the notion of a cock-laird from Fife not merely treating a Scott with discourtesy, but imputing doubtful conduct to him. He offered to throw up the *Swift*, and though this was not accepted, broke for a time all other connection with Constable — an unfortunate breach, as it helped to bring about the establishment of the Ballantyne publishing business, and so unquestionably began Scott's own ruin. It is remarkable that a similar impatience of interference afterwards broke Scott's just-begun connection with Blackwood, which, could it have lasted, would probably have saved him. For that sagacious person would certainly never have plunged, or, if he could have helped it, let anyone else plunge, into Charybdis.

Between the publication of *Marmion* and that of *The Lady of the Lake* Scott was very busy in bookmaking and bookselling projects. It was characteristic of the mixture of bad luck and bad management which hung on the Ballantynes from the first that even their *Edinburgh Annual Register*, published as it was in the most stirring times, and written by Scott, by Southey, and others of the very best hands, was a failure. He made some visits to London, and (for the scenery of the new poem) to the Trossachs

and Loch Lomond; and had other matters of concern, the chief of which were the death of his famous bull-terrier Camp, and two troublesome affairs connected with his brothers. One of these, the youngest, Daniel, after misconduct of various kinds, had, as mentioned above, shown the white feather during a negro insurrection in Jamaica, and so disgusted his brother that when he came home to die, Scott would neither see him, nor, when he died, go to his funeral. The other concerned his brother Thomas, who, after his failure as a writer, had gone from prudential motives to the Isle of Man, where he for a time was an officer in the local Fencibles. But before leaving Edinburgh, and while he was still a practising lawyer, his brother had appointed him to a small post in his own gift as Clerk. Not only was there nothing discreditable in this according to the idea of any time, — for Thomas Scott's education and profession qualified him fully for the office, — but there were circumstances which, at that time, showed rather heroic and uncommon virtue. For the actual vacancy had occurred in a higher and more valuable post, also in Scott's gift, and he, instead of appointing his brother to this, promoted a deserving subordinate veteran, and gave the lower and less valuable place to Thomas. The latter's circumstances, however, obliged him to perform his duties by deputy, and a Commission then sitting ultimately abolished the office altogether, with a retiring allowance of about half the salary. Certain Whig peers took this up as a job, and Lord Lauderdale, supported by Lord Holland, made in the House of Lords very offensive charges against Scott personally for having appointed his brother to a place which he knew would be abolished, and against Thomas for claiming compensation in respect of duties which he had never performed. The Bill was, however, carried; but Scott was indignant at the loss threatened to his brother and the imputation made on himself, and 'cut' Lord Holland at a semi-public dinner not long afterwards. For this he was and has since been severely blamed, and his behaviour was perhaps a little 'perfervid.' But everybody knows, or should know, that there are few things more trying to humanity than to be accused of improper conduct when a man is hugging himself on having behaved with unusual and saintlike propriety.

The Lady of the Lake appeared in May 1810, being published by Ballantyne and Miller, and at once attained enormous popularity. Twenty thousand copies were sold within the year, two thousand of which were costly quartos; and while there can be no doubt that this was the highest

point of Scott's poetical vogue, there is, I believe, not much doubt that the poem has always continued to be a greater favourite with the general than any other of his. It actually, more than any other, created the *furore* for Scottish scenery and touring, which has never ceased since; it supplied in the descriptions of that scenery, in the fight between Roderick and FitzJames, and in other things, his most popular passages; and it has remained probably the type of his poetry to the main body of readers.

Yet there are some who like it less than any other of the major divisions of that poetry, and this is by no means necessarily due either to a desire to be eccentric or to the subtler but almost equally illegitimate operation of the want of novelty — of the fact that its best effects are but repetitions of those of *Marmion* and the *Lay*. For, fine as it is, it seems to me to display the drawbacks of Scott's scheme and method more than any of the longer poems. Douglas, Ellen, Malcolm, are null; Roderick and the king have a touch of theatricality which I look for in vain elsewhere in Scott; there is nothing fantastic in the piece like the Goblin Page, and nothing tragical like Constance. There is something teasing in what has been profanely called the 'guide-book' character — the cicerone-like fidelity which contrasts so strongly with the skilfully subordinated description in the two earlier and even in the later poems. Moreover, though Ellis ought not to have called the octosyllable 'the Hudibrastic measure' (which is only a very special variety of it), he was certainly right in objecting to its great predominance in unmixed form here.

The critics, however, sang the praises of the poem lustily. Even Jeffrey — perhaps because it was purely Scottish (he had thought *Marmion* not Scottish enough), perhaps because its greater conventionality appealed to him, perhaps because he wished to make atonement — was extremely complimentary. And certainly no one need be at a loss for things to commend positively, whatever may be his comparative estimate. The fine Spenserian openings (which Byron copied almost slavishly in the form of the stanza he took for *Harold*), the famous beginning of the stag, the description of the pass (till FitzJames begins to soliloquise), some of the songs (especially the masterly 'Coronach'), the passage of the Fiery Cross, the apparition of the clan (not perhaps so great as some have thought it, but still great), the struggle, the guardroom (which shocked Jeffrey dreadfully) — these are only some of the best things. But I own that I turn from the best

of them to the last stand of the spearmen at Flodden, and the unburying of the Book in the *Lay*.

It may, perhaps, not be undesirable to anticipate somewhat, in order to complete the sketch of the verse romances in this chapter; for not very long after the publication of the *Lady of the Lake*, Scott resumed the writing of *Waverley*, which effected an entire change in the direction of his literature; and it was not a twelvemonth later that he planned the establishment at Abbotsford, which was thenceforward the headquarters of his life.

The first poem to follow was one which lay out of the series in subject, scheme, and dress, and which perhaps should rather be counted with his minor and miscellaneous pieces — *The Vision of Don Roderick*. It was written with rapidity, even for him, and with a special purpose; the profits being promised beforehand to the Committee of the Portuguese Relief Fund, formed to assist the sufferers from Massena's devastations. It consists of rather less than a hundred Spenserian stanzas, the story of Roderick merely ushering in a magical revelation, to that too-amorous monarch, of the fortunes of the Peninsular War and its heroes up to the date of writing. The *Edinburgh Review*, which hated the war, was very angry because Scott did not celebrate Sir John Moore (whether as a good Whig or a bad general it did not explain); but even Jeffrey was not entirely unfavourable, and the piece was otherwise well received. The description of the subterranean hall beneath the Cathedral of Toledo is as good as we should expect, and the verses on Saragossa and on the forces of the three kingdoms are very fine. But the whole was something of a *torso*, and it is improbable that Scott could ever have used the Spenserian stanza to good effect for continuous narrative. Even in its individual shape, that great form requires the artistic patience as well as the natural gift of men like its inventor, or like Thomson, Shelley, and Tennyson, in other times and of other schools, to get the full effect out of it; while to connect it satisfactorily with its kind and adjust it to narrative is harder still.

The true succession, however, after this parenthesis, was taken up by *Rokeby*, which was dated on the very last day of 1812. Its reception was not exceedingly enthusiastic; for Byron, borrowing most of his technique and general scheme from Scott, and joining with these greater apparent passion and a more novel and unfamiliar local colour, had appeared on the scene as a 'second lion.' The public, a 'great-sized monster of ingratitudes,' had got accustomed to Scott, if not weary of him. The title was not very happy; and

perhaps some harm was really done by one of the best of Moore's many good jokes in the *Twopenny Postbag*, where he represented Scott as coming from Edinburgh to London

'To do all the gentlemen's seats by the way'

in romances of half a dozen cantos.

The poem, however, is a very delightful one, and to some tastes at least very far above the *Lady of the Lake*. Scott, indeed, clung to the uninterrupted octosyllable more than ever; but that verse, if a poet knows how to manage it, is by no means so unsuited for story-telling as Ellis thought; and Scott had here more story to tell than in any of his preceding pieces, except *Marmion*. The only character, indeed, in which one takes much interest is Bertram Risingham; but he is a really excellent person, the cream of Scott's ruffians, whether in prose or verse; appearing well, conducting himself better, and ending best of all. Nor is Oswald, the contrasted villain, by any means to be despised; while the passages — on which the romance, in contradistinction to the classical epic, stands or falls — are equal to all but the very best in *Marmion* or the *Lay*. Bertram's account of the first and happier events at Marston Moor, as well as of his feelings as to his comradeship with Mortham; the singularly beautiful opening of the second canto —

'Far in the chambers of the west';

with the description of Upper Teesdale; Bertram's clamber on the cliff, with its reminiscences of the 'Kittle Nine Steps,' — these lead on to many other things as good, ending with that altogether admirable bit of workmanship, Bertram's revenge on Oswald and his own death. Matilda is one of the best of Scott's verse-heroines, except Constance — that is to say, the best of his good girls — and she has the interest of being avowedly modelled on 'Green Mantle.' Nor in any of the poems do the lyrics give more satisfactory setting-off to the main text. Indeed, it may be questioned whether any contains such a garland as — to mention only the best — is formed by

'O, Brignall banks are wild and fair';

the exquisite

'A weary lot is thine, fair maid,'

adapted from older matter with a skill worthy of Burns himself; the capital bravura of Allen-a-Dale; and that noble Cavalier lyric —

'When the dawn on the mountain was misty and grey.'

The Bridal of Triermain was published in 1813, not long after *Rokeby*, and, like that poem, drew its scenery from the North of England; but in circumstances, scale, and other ways it forms a pair with *Harold the Dauntless*, and they had best be noticed together.

The Lord of the Isles, the last of the great quintet, appeared in December 1814. Scott had obtained part of the scenery for it in an earlier visit to the Hebrides, and the rest in his yachting voyage (see below) with the Commissioners of Northern Lights, which also gave the *décor* for *The Pirate*. The poem was not more popular than *Rokeby* in England, and it was even less so in Scotland, chiefly for the reason, only to be mentioned with all but silent amazement, that it was 'not bitter enough against England.' Its faults are, of course, obvious enough. Central story there is simply none; the inconvenience that arises to the hero from his being addressed by two young ladies cannot awake any very sympathetic tear, nor does either Edith of Lorn or Isabel Bruce awaken any violent desire to offer to relieve him of one of them. The versification, however, is less uniform than that of *Rokeby* or *The Lady of the Lake*, and there are excellent passages — the best being, no doubt, the Abbot's extorted blessing on the Bruce; the great picture of Loch Coruisk, which, let people say what they will, is marvellously faithful; part of the voyage (though one certainly could spare some of the 'merrilys'); the landing in Carrick; the rescue of the supposed page; and, finally, Bannockburn, which even Jeffrey admired, though its want of 'animosity' shocked him.

The two last of the great poems — there was indeed a third, *The Field of Waterloo*, written hastily for a subscription, and not worthy either of Scott or of the subject — have not by any means the least interest, either intrinsic or that of curiosity. Indeed, as a matter of liking, not quite disjoined from criticism, I should put them very high indeed. Both were issued anonymously, and with indications intended to mislead readers into the idea that they were by Erskine; the intention being, it would seem, partly to ascertain how far the author's mere name counted in his popularity, partly also to 'fly kites' as to the veering of the public taste in reference to the verse romance in general. By the time of the publication of *Harold the Dauntless* in 1817, Scott could hardly have had any intention of deserting the new way — his own exclusive right — in which he was already walking firmly. But the *Bridal of Triermain* appeared very shortly after *Rokeby*, and was, no doubt, seriously intended as a test.

In both pieces the author fell back upon his earlier scheme of metre, the *Christabel* blend of iambic with anapæstic passages, instead of the nearly pure iambs of his middle poems. The *Bridal*, partly to encourage the Erskine notion, it would seem, is hampered by an intermixed outline-story, told in the introductions, of the wooing and winning of a certain Lucy by a certain Arthur, both of whom may be very heartily wished away. But the actual poem is more thoroughly a Romance of Adventure than even the *Lay*, has much more central interest than that poem, and is adorned by passages of hardly less beauty than the best of the earlier piece. It is astonishing how anyone of the slightest penetration could have entertained the slightest doubt about the authorship of

'Come hither, come hither, Henry my page, Whom I saved from the sack of Hermitage';

still more of that of the wellknown opening of the Third Canto, one of the triumphs of that 'science of names' in which Scott was such a proficient —

'Bewcastle now must keep the Hold, Speir-Adam's steeds must bide in stall, Of Hartley-burn the bowmen bold Must only shoot from battled wall; And Liddesdale may buckle spur, And Teviot now may belt the brand, Tarras and Ewes keep nightly stir, And Eskdale foray Cumberland!'

But these are only the most unmistakable, not the best. The opening specification of the Bride; the admirable 'Lyulph's Tale,' with the first appearance of the castle, and the stanza (suggested no doubt by a famous picture) of the damsels dragging Arthur's war-gear; the courtship, and Guendolen's wiles to retain Arthur, and the parting; the picture of the King's court; the tournament; all these are good enough. But I am not sure that the description of Sir Roland's tantalised vigil in the Vale of St. John, with the moonlit valley (itself a worthy pendant even to the Melrose), and the sudden and successful revelation of the magic hold when the knight flings his battleaxe, does not even surpass the Tale. Nor do I think that the actual adventures of this Childe Roland in the dark towers are inferior. The trials and temptations are of stock material, but all the best matter is stock, and this is handled with a rush and dash which more than saves it. I hope the tiger was only a magic tiger, and went home comfortably with the damsels of Zaharak. It seems unfair that he should be actually killed. But this is the only thing that disquiets me; and it is impossible to praise too

much De Vaux's ingenious compromise between tasteless asceticism and dangerous indulgence in the matter of 'Asia's willing maids.'

Harold the Dauntless is much slighter, as indeed might be expected, considering that it was finished in a hurry, long after the author had given up poetry as a main occupation. But the half burlesque Spenserians of the overture are very good; the contrasted songs, 'Dweller of the Cairn' and 'A Danish Maid for Me,' are happy. Harold's interview with the Chapter is a famous bit of bravura; and all concerning the Castle of the Seven Shields, from the ballad introducing it, through the description of its actual appearance (in which, by the way, Scott shows almost a better grasp of the serious Spenserian stanza than anywhere else) to the final battle of Odin and Harold, is of the very best Romantic quality. Perhaps, indeed, it is because (as the *Critical Review*, the Abdiel of 'classical' orthodoxy among the reviews of the time, scornfully said), 'both poems are romantic enough to satisfy all the parlour-boarders of all the ladies' schools in England,' that they are so pleasant. It is something, in one's grey and critical age, to feel genuine sympathy with the parlour-boarder.

The chapter has already stretched to nearly the utmost proportions compatible with the scale of this little book, and we must not indulge in very many critical remarks on the general character of the compositions discussed in it. But I have never carried out the plan (which I think indispensable) of reading over again whatever work, however well known, one has to write about, with more satisfaction. The main defects lie on the surface. Despite great felicities of a certain kind, these poems have no claim to formal perfection, and occasionally sin by very great carelessness, if not by something worse. The poet frankly shows himself as one whose appeal is not that of 'jewels five words long,' set and arranged in phrases of that magical and unending beauty which the very greatest poets of the world command. His effect, even in description, is rather of mass than of detail. He does not attempt analysis in character, and only skirts passion. Although prodigal enough of incident, he is very careless of connected plot. But his great and abiding glory is that he revived the art, lost for centuries in England, of telling an interesting story in verse, of riveting the attention through thousands of lines of poetry neither didactic nor argumentative. And of his separate passages, his patches of description and incident, when the worst has been said of them, it will remain true that, in their own way and for their own purpose, they cannot be surpassed. The already noticed

comparison of any of Scott's best verse-tales with *Christabel*, which they formally imitated to some extent, and with the *White Doe of Rylstone*, which followed them, will no doubt show that Coleridge and Wordsworth had access to mansions in the house of poetry where Scott is never seen. But in some respects even their best passages are not superior to his; and as tales, as romances, his are altogether superior to theirs.

Chapter IV

THE NOVELS, FROM WAVERLEY TO REDGAUNTLET

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In the opening introduction to the collected edition of the novels, Scott has given a very full account of the genesis of *Waverley*. These introductions, written before the final inroad had been made on his powers by the united strength of physical and moral misfortune, animated at once by the last glow of those powers, and by the indefinable charm of a fond retrospection, displaying every faculty in autumn luxuriance, are so delightful that they sometimes seem to be the very cream and essence of his literary work in prose. Indeed, I have always wondered why they have not been published separately as a History of the Waverley Novels by their author. Yet the public, I believe, with what I fear must be called its usual lack of judgment in some such matters, seems never to have read them very widely. An exception, however, may possibly have been made in the case of this first one, opening as it has long done every new issue of the whole set of novels. At anyrate, in one way or another, it is probably known, at least to those who take an interest in Scott, that he had begun *Waverley* and thrown it aside some ten years before its actual appearance, at a time when he was yet a novice in literature. He had also attempted one or two other things, — a completion of Strutt's *Queenhoo Hall*, the beginning of a tale about Thomas the Rhymer, etc., which are now appended to the introduction itself, — and he had once, in 1810, resumed *Waverley*, and again thrown it aside. At last, when his supremacy as a popular poet was threatened by Byron, and when, perhaps, he himself was a little wearying of the verse tale, he discovered the fragment while searching for fishing-tackle in the old desk where he had put it, and after a time resolved to make a new and anonymous attempt on public favour.

By the time — 1814 — when the book actually appeared, considerable changes, both for good and for bad, had occurred in Scott's circumstances; and the total of his literary work, independently of the poems mentioned in the last chapter, had been a good deal increased. Ashestiel had been

exchanged for Abbotsford; the new house was being planned and carried out so as to become, if not exactly a palace, something much more than the cottage which had been first talked of; and the owner's passion for buying, at extravagant prices, every neighbouring patch of mostly thankless soil that he could get hold of was growing by indulgence. He himself, in 1811 and the following years, was extremely happy and extremely busy, planting trees, planning rooms, working away at *Rokeby* and *Triermain* in the general sitting-room of the makeshift house, with hammering all about him (now, the hammer and the pen are perhaps of all manual implements the most deadly and irreconcilable foes!), corresponding with all sorts and conditions of men; furnishing introductions and contributions (in some cases never yet collected) to all sorts and conditions of books, and struggling, as best he saw his way, though the way was unfortunately not the right one, with the ever-increasing difficulties of Ballantyne & Company. I forget whether there is any evidence that Dickens consciously took his humorous incarnation of the duties of a 'Co.' from Scott's own experience. But Scott as certainly had to provide the money, the sense, the good-humour, and the rest of the working capital as Mark Tapley himself. The merely pecuniary part of these matters may be left to the next chapter; it is sufficient to say that, aggravated by misjudgment in the selection and carrying out of the literary part, it brought the firm in 1814 exceedingly near the complete smash which actually happened ten years later. One is tempted to wish that the crash had come, for it was only averted by the alliance with Constable which was the cause of the final downfall. Also, it would have come at a time when Scott was physically better able to bear it; it could hardly in any degree have interfered with the appearance of *Waverley* and its followers; and it would have had at least a chance of awakening their author to a sense of the double mistake of engaging his credit in directly commercial concerns, and of sinking his money in land and building. However, things were to be as they were, and not otherwise.

How anxious Constable must have been to recover Scott (Hunter, the stone of stumbling, was now removed by death) is evident from the mere list of the titles of the books which he took over in whole or part from the Ballantynes. Even his Napoleonic audacity quailed before the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, with its handsome annual loss of a thousand a year, at Brewster's *Persian Astronomy*, in 4to and 8vo, and at *General Views of the County of Dumfries*. But he saddled himself with a good deal of the 'stock'

(which in this case most certainly had not its old sense of ‘assets’), and in May 1813, Scott seems to have thought that if John Ballantyne would curb his taste for long-dated bills, things might go well. Unluckily, John did not choose to do so, and Scott, despite the warning, was equally unable to curb his own for peatbogs, marl-pits, the Cauldshiels Loch, and splendid lots of ancient armour. By July there was again trouble, and in August things were so bad that they were only cleared by Scott’s obtaining from the Duke of Buccleuch a guarantee for £4000. It was in consenting to this that the Duke expressed his approval of Scott’s determination to refuse the Laureateship, which had been offered to him, and which, in consequence of his refusal and at his suggestion, was conferred upon Southey. Even the guarantee, though it did save the firm, saved it with great difficulty.

In the following winter Scott had an adventure with his eccentric German amanuensis, Henry Weber, who had for some time been going mad, and who proposed a duel with pistols (which he produced) to his employer in the study at Castle Street. *Swift* appeared at last in the summer, and it was in June 1814 that the first of a series of wonderful *tours de force* was achieved by the completion, in about three weeks, of the last half of *Waverley*. One of the most striking things in Lockhart is the story of the idle apprentice who became industrious by seeing Scott’s hand traversing the paper hour after hour at his study window. The novel actually appeared on July 7, and, being anonymous, made no immediate ‘move,’ as booksellers say, before Scott set off a fortnight later for his long-planned tour with the Commissioners of Northern Lights — the Scottish Trinity House — in their yacht, round the northern half of the island and to Orkney and Shetland. To abstract his own admirable account of the tour would be a task grateful neither to writer nor to reader, the latter of whom, if he does not know it already, had better lose no time in making its acquaintance. On the return in September, Scott was met by two pieces of bad and good tidings respectively — the death of the Duchess of Buccleuch, and the distinct, though not as yet ‘furious,’ success of his novel.

There is no doubt that the early fragments in tale-telling which have been noticed above do not display any particular skill in the art; nor is there much need to quarrel with those who declare that the opening of *Waverley* itself ranks little, if at all, above them. I always read it myself; but I believe most people plunge almost at once into the Tullyveolan visit. By doing so, however, they miss not merely the critical pleasure of comparing a man’s

work (as can rarely be done) during his period of groping for the way, with his actual stumble into it for the first time, but also such justification as there is for the hero's figure. Nobody ever judged the unlucky captain of Gardiner's better than his creator, who at the time frankly called him 'a sneaking piece of imbecility,' and avowed, with as much probability as right, that 'if he had married Flora, she would have set him up on the chimneypiece, as Count Borowlaski's wife used to do.' But his weaknesses have at least an excuse from his education and antecedents, which does not appear if these antecedents are neglected.

Still, the story-interest only begins when Waverley rides into the bearwarded avenue; it certainly never ceases till the golden image of the same totem is replaced in the Baron of Bradwardine's hand. And it is very particularly to be observed that this interest is of a kind absolutely novel in combination and idiosyncrasy. The elements of literary interest are nowhere new, except in what is, for aught we know, accidentally the earliest literature *to us*. They are all to be found in Homer, in the Book of Job, in the *Agamemnon*, in the *Lancelot*, in the *Poem of the Cid*. But from time to time, in the hands of the men of greater genius, they are shaken up afresh, they receive new adjustments, and a touch of something personal which transforms them. This new adjustment and touch produced in Scott's case what we call the Historical Novel. It is quite a mistake to think that he was limited to this. *Guy Mannering* and *The Antiquary* among the earlier novels, *St. Ronan's Well* and the exquisite introductory sketch to the *Chronicles of the Canongate* among the later, would disprove that. But the historical novel was the new kind that he was 'born to introduce,' after many failures in many generations. It is difficult to say whether it was accident or property which made his success in it coexistent with his success in depicting national character, scenery, and manners. Attempts at this, not always unsuccessful attempts, had indeed been made before. It had been tried frequently, though usually in the sense of caricature, on the stage; it had been done quite recently in the novel by Miss Edgeworth (whom Scott at least professed to regard as his governess here), and much earlier in this very department of Scotch matters by Smollett. But it had never been done with really commanding ability on the great scale.

In *Waverley* Scott supplied these two aspects, the historical-romantic and the national-characteristic, with a felicity perhaps all the more unerring in that it seems to have been only partly conscious. The subject of 'the

Fortyfive' was now fully out of taboo, and yet retained an interest more than antiquarian. The author had the amplest stores of knowledge, and that sympathy which is so invaluable to the artist when he keeps it within the limits of art. He seems to have possessed by instinct (for there was nobody to teach him) the paramount secret of the historical novelist, the secret of making his central and prominent characters fictitious, and the real ones mostly subsidiary. On the other hand, the knowledge of his native country, which he had been accumulating for almost the whole of his nearly four-and-forty years of life, was joined in him with that universal knowledge of humanity which only men of the greatest genius have. I am, indeed, aware that both these positions have been attacked. I was much pleased, some time after I had begun to write this little book, to find in a review of the present year of grace these words: 'Scott only knew a small portion of human nature, and he was unable to portray the physiognomy of the past.' I feared at first that this might be only one of the numerous flings of our young barbarians, a pleasant, or pleasantly intended, flirt of the heels of the New Humour. But the context showed that the writer was in deadly earnest. I shall not attempt here to explain to him, in a popular or any other style, that he is, perhaps, not quite right. Life itself is not long enough — 'little books' are decidedly too short — for a demonstration that the Pacific Ocean is not really a small portion of the terrestrial water-space, or that Alexander was able to overrun foreign countries. We may find a little room in the Conclusion to say something more about Scott's range and his faculty. Here it will be enough to wear our friend's rue with a slight difference, and to say that *Waverley* and its successors showed in their author knowledge, complete in all but certain small parts, of human nature, and an almost unlimited faculty of portraying the physiognomy of the past.

It was scarcely to be expected that a book which was anonymous, and of which only a very few persons knew the real authorship, while even those who guessed it at all early were not so very many, should attain immediate popularity. Lockhart says that the slowness of the success was exaggerated, but his own figures prove that it was somewhat leisurely. Five editions, one (the second) of two thousand, the others of one thousand each, supplied the demand of the first six months, and a thousand copies more that of the next eighteen months — a difference from the almost instantaneous myriads of the poems, quite sufficient to show very eloquently how low the prose novel then stood in popular favour. It is the

greatest triumph of Scott, from this low point of view, that his repeated blows heated the public as they did, till at the fourth publication, within but a year or two, Constable actually dared to start with ten thousand copies at once, and they were all absorbed in no time.

Scott had always been a rapid worker, but it was only now, under the combined stimulus of the new-found gift, the desire for more land and a statelier Abbotsford, and the pressure of the affairs of Ballantyne & Co., that he began to work at the portentous rate which, though I do not believe that it at all injured the quality of his production, pretty certainly endangered his health. During 1814 he had written nearly all his *Life of Swift*, nearly all *Waverley*, the *Lord of the Isles*, and an abundance of 'small wares,' essays, introductions, and what not. The major part of *Guy Mannering* — perhaps the very best of the novels, for merit of construction and interest of detail — seems to have been written in less than a month, at the extreme end of this year and the beginning of 1815. The whole appears to have been done in six weeks, to 'shake himself free of *Waverley*' — probably the most gigantic exhibition of the 'hair of the dog' recorded in literature.

The *donnée* of this novel was furnished by a Dumfries surveyor of taxes, Mr. Train, the scenery by that early visit to Galloway, in the interest of the reverend toyer with sweetie-wives, which has been recorded. Other indebtedness, such as that of Hatteraick to the historical or legendary freetrader, Yawkins, and the like, has been traced. But the charm of the whole lies in none of these things, nor in all together, but in Scott's own fashion of working them up. Nothing at first could seem to be a greater contrast with *Waverley* than this tale. No big wars, no political hazards; but a double and tenfold portion of human nature and local colour. This last element had in the earlier book been almost entirely supplied by Tullyveolan and its master; for Fergus and the Highland scenes, good as they are, are not much more than a furbishing up of the poem-matter of this kind, especially in the *Lady of the Lake*. But here the supply of character was liberal and the variety of scenery extraordinary. We cannot judge the innovation fully now, but let anyone turn to the theatrical properties of Godwin and Holcroft, of Mrs. Radcliffe and 'Monk' Lewis, and he will begin to have a better idea of what *Guy Mannering* must have been to its first readers. As usual, the personages who head the *dramatis personæ* are not the best. Bertram, though less of a nincompoop than Waverley, is not

very much; Lucy is a less lively *ange de candeur* than Rose, and nothing else; and Julia's genteel-comedy missishness does not do much more than pair off with Flora's tragedy-queen air. 'Mannering, Guy, a Colonel returned from the Indies,' is, perhaps, also too fair a description of the player of the title-part. But we trouble ourselves very little about these persons. As for characters, the author opens fire on us almost at the very first with Dominie Sampson and Meg Merrilees, and the hardly less excellent figure of Bertram's well-meaning booby of a father; gives us barely time to make their acquaintance before we meet Dandie Dinmont; brings up almost superfluous reinforcements with Mr. Pleydell, and throughout throws in Hatteraick and Glossin, Jock Jabos and his mistress, and Sir Robert Haslewood, the company at Kippletringan, and at the funeral, and elsewhere, in the most reckless spirit of literary lavishness. Nor is he less prodigal of incident and scene. The opening passage of Mannering's night-ride could not have been bettered if the painter had taken infinitely more pains. Bertram's walk and the skirmish with the prowlers are simply firstrate; the Edinburgh scenes have always excited admiration as the very best of their kind; and the various passages which lead to the working out of justice on Glossin and Hatteraick are not merely told with a gusto, but arranged with a craftsmanship, of which the latter is unfortunately less often present than the former in the author's later work. There is hardly any book of Scott's on which it is more tempting to dwell than this. Although the demand had not yet reached anything like its height, two thousand copies were sold in forty-eight hours, and five thousand in three months.

In March 1815 Scott went to London, and met two persons of distinction, the Regent and Lord Byron. There seems to be a little doubt whether George did or did not adapt the joke of the hanging judge, about 'checkmating this time,' to the authorship of the *Waverley* novels; but there is no doubt that he was very civil. With Byron Scott was at once on very good terms, for Scott was not the man to bear any grudge for the early fling in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*; and Byron, whatever his faults, 'had more of lion' in him than to be jealous of such a rival. The difference of their characters was such as to prevent them from being in the strict sense friends; and Scott's comparison of Byron, after the separation, to a peacock parted from the hen and lifting up his voice to tell the world about it, has a rather terribly far-reaching justice, both of moral and literary

criticism, on that noble bard's whole life and conversation. But there were no little jealousies between them, and apparently some real liking.

This visit to London was extended to Brussels and Paris, with the result in verse of the already mentioned and not particularly happy *Field of Waterloo*, in prose of the interesting *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, an account of the tour. Both were published (the poem almost immediately, *Paul* not till the new year) after Scott's return to Abbotsford at the end of September; and he set to work during the later autumn on his third novel, *The Antiquary*. The book appeared in May 1816, at about the time of the death of Major John Scott, the last but one of the poet's surviving brothers. It was not at first so popular as *Guy Mannering*, which, however, it very rapidly caught up even in that respect: nor is this bad start surprising. To good judges nowadays the book appeals as strongly at least as any other of its author's — in fact, Monkbarns and the Mucklebackits, the rescue of Sir Arthur and Isabel, the scenes in the ruins of St. Ruth's, and especially Edie Ochiltree, were never surpassed by him. But the story was a daring innovation, or return, among the novels of its own day. It boldly rejected most of the ordinary sources of romance interest. It had very little plot; its humorous characters, though touched with the rarest art, were not caricatured; and (for which it certainly cannot be praised) that greatest fault of Scott's, — perhaps his only great fault as a novelist, — the 'huddling up' of the end, appears in it for the first, though unluckily by no means for the last, time. But it would have been a very sad thing for the public taste if it had definitely refused *The Antiquary*. A book which contains within the compass of the opening chapters such masterpieces as the journey to the Hawes, the description of the Antiquary's study, and the storm and rescue, must have had a generation of idiots for an audience if it had not been successful. Moreover, it had, as Scott's unwearied biographer has already noted, a new and special source of interest in the admirable fragmentary mottoes, invented to save the greater labour of discovery, which adorn its chapter-headings. Lockhart himself thought that Scott never quite equalled these first three novels. I cannot agree with him there; but what is certain is that he in them discovered, with extraordinary felicity, skill in three different kinds of novel — the historical, the romantic-adventurous, and that of ordinary or almost wholly ordinary life; and that even he never exactly added a fourth kind to his inventions, though he varied them wonderfully within themselves. The romance partly historical, the romance mainly or

wholly fictitious, and the novel of manners; these were his three classes, and hardly any others.

It is not entirely explained what were the reasons which determined Scott to make his next venture, the *Tales of my Landlord*, under a fresh pseudonym, and also to publish it not with Constable, but with Murray and Blackwood. Lockhart's blame of John Ballantyne may not be unfair; but it is rather less supported by documentary evidence than most of his strictures on the Ballantynes. And the thing is perhaps to be sufficiently accounted for by Scott's double dislike, both as an independent person and a man of business, of giving a monopoly of his work to one publisher, and by his constant fancy for trying experiments on the public — a fancy itself not wholly, though partially, comprehensible. As a matter of fact, *Old Mortality* and the *Black Dwarf* were offered to and pretty eagerly accepted by Murray and Blackwood, on the terms of half profits and the inevitable batch of 'old stock.' The story of the unlucky quarrel with Blackwood in consequence of some critical remarks of his on the end of the *Black Dwarf*, — remarks certainly not inexcusable, — and of Scott's famous letter in reply, will doubtless receive further elucidation in the forthcoming chronicle of the House of 'Ebony'; but it is told with fair detail, in the second edition of Lockhart, from the actual archives.

Scott doubled his work during the summer and autumn by undertaking the historical department, relinquished by Southey, of the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, yet the two *Tales* were ready in November, and appeared on the 1st of December 1816. Murray wrote effusively to Scott (who, it must be remembered, was not even to his publishers the known author), and received a very amusing reply, from which one sentence may be quoted as an example of those which have brought upon Sir Walter the reproach of falsehood, or at least disingenuousness, from Goodman Dull. 'I assure you,' he writes, 'I have never read a volume of them till they were printed,' a delightful selection of words, for it looks decisive, and means absolutely nothing. Nobody but a magician, and no ordinary magician, could read a *volume* (which in the usual parlance means a printed volume) before it was printed. To back his disclaimer, Scott offered to review himself in the *Quarterly*, which he did. I certainly do not approve of authors being their own reviewers; though when (as sometimes happens) they have any brains, they probably know the faults and merits of their books better than anyone else, and can at anyrate state, with a precision which is too rare in the

ordinary critic, what the book is meant to be and tries to do. But this case was clearly one out of the common way, and rather part of an elaborate practical joke than anything else.

Dulness, however, had in many ways found stumblingblocks in the first foster-children of the excellent Jedediah. The very pious and learned, if not exactly humorous or shrewd, Dr. M'Crie, fell foul of the picture of the Covenanters given in *Old Mortality*. No one who knows the documents is likely to agree with him now, and from hardly any point of view but his could the greatness of the book be denied. Although Scott's humour is by no means absent from it, that quality does not perhaps find quite such an opportunity, even in Mause and Cuddie, as in the Baron, and the Dominie, and the inhabitants of Monkbarns. But as a historical novel, it is a far greater one than *Waverley*. Drumclog, the siege of Tillietudlem, above all, the matchless scene where Morton is just saved from murder by his own party, surpass anything in the earlier book. But greater than any of these single things is one of the first and the greatest of Scott's splendid gallery of romantic-historic portraits, the stately figure of Claverhouse. All the features which he himself was to sum up in that undying sentence of Wandering Willie's Tale later are here put in detail and justified.

As for the companion to this masterly book, I have always thought the earlier part of the *Black Dwarf* as happy as all but the best of Scott's work. But the character of the *Dwarf* himself was not one that he could manage. The nullity of Earnscliff and Isabel is complete. Isabel's father is a stagy villain, or rather rascal (for Victor Hugo's antithesis between *scélérat* and *maroufle* comes in here), and even Scott has never hustled off a conclusion with such complete *insouciance* as to anything like completeness. Willie of Westburnflat here, like Christie of the Clinthill later, is one of our old friends of the poems back again, and welcome back again. But he and Hobbie can hardly save a book which Scott seems to have thrown in with its admirable companion, not as a makeweight, but rather as a foil.

Between the first and the second sets of *Tales*, the 'Author of *Waverley*,' true to his odd design of throwing the public off the scent, reappeared, and the result was *Rob Roy*. Perhaps because it was written under the first attacks of that 'cramp of the stomach' which, though obscurely connected with his later and more fatal ailments, no doubt ushered them in something more than an accidental manner, Scott did not at first much like *Rob*. But he was reconciled later; and hardly anybody else (except those exceedingly

unhappy persons who cannot taste him at all) can ever have had any doubt about it. That the end is even more than usually huddled, that the beginning may perhaps have dawdled a little over commercial details (I do not think so myself, but Lady Louisa Stuart did), and that the distribution of time, which lingers over weeks and months before and after it devotes almost the major part of the book to the events of forty-eight hours, is irregular, even in the eyes of those who are not serfs to the unities, cannot be denied. But almost from the introduction of Frank to Diana, certainly from his setting off in the grey of the morning with Andrew Fairservice, to the point at least where the heroine stoops from her pony in a manner equally obliging and graceful, there is no dropped stitch, no false note. Nor in any book are there so many of Scott's own characters, and others not quite so much his own. Helen Macgregor, perhaps, does not 'thrill our blood and overpower our reason,' as she did Lady Louisa's, simply because we were born some hundred years later than that acute and accomplished granddaughter of Lady Mary; and Rashleigh pretty frequently, Rob himself now and then, may also savour to us a little of the boards and the sawdust. But, as a rule, Rob does not; and for nobody else, not even for the fortunate Frank, — who has nothing to do but to walk through his part creditably, and does it, — need any allowance be made. The Bailie is, with Shallow, his brother justice (upon whom he justly looks down, but to whom he is, I think, kind) in Arthur's bosom; Andrew Fairservice and the Dougal creature, Justice Inglewood and Sir Hildebrand, are there too. As for Die Vernon, she is the one of Scott's heroines with whom one *has to* fall in love, just as, according to a beautiful story, a thoughtless and reluctant world *had to* believe the Athanasian Creed. It is painful to say that persons on whom it is impossible to retort the charge, have sometimes insinuated a touch of vulgarity in Di. For these one can but pray; and, after all, they are usually of her sex, which in such judgments of itself counts not. All men, who are men and gentlemen, must delight in her. And here, as always, to all but the very last, even in the twilight of *Anne of Geierstein*, the succession of scenes hurries the reader along without breath or time to stop and criticise, with nothing to do, if he is a reasonable person, but to read and enjoy and admire.

Lockhart has taken the opportunity of this point of time (1817-1818), which may be said to mark the zenith of Scott's prosperity, if not of his fame, to halt and to give a sort of survey of his fatherin-law's private life at Castle Street and at Abbotsford. It forms one of the pleasantest portions of

his book, containing nothing more tragic than the advent of the famous American tragedy of *The Cherokee Lovers*, which its careful author sent, that Scott might approve and publish it, in duplicate, so that the unfortunate recipient had to pay five pounds twice over for the postage of the rubbish. Of course things were not entirely as they seemed. The cramps with which, as mentioned, Scott had been already seized, during the progress of *Rob Roy*, were, though probably not caused, yet all too much helped and hastened, by the ferocious manner in which he worked his brains. For it must be doubted whether social intercourse, or even bodily exercise in company with others, is really the best refreshment after very severe mental labour. Both distract and amuse; but they do not refresh, relax, relieve, like a bath of pure solitude.

Divers events of importance happened to Scott, in the later course of the year 1818 (besides a much worse recurrence of his disorder), after the *Heart of Midlothian* (the second series of the *Tales*) had been published in June, and the *Bride of Lammermoor* (the third series) had been begun. The Duke of Buccleuch, his chief, his (as he would himself have cheerfully allowed) patron, his helper in time of need, and his most intimate friend, died. So did his brother-in-law, Charles Carpenter, this latter death adding considerably, though to an extent exaggerated at first and only reversionary, to the prospects of Scott's children. He gave up an idea, which he had for some time held, of obtaining a judgeship of the Scotch Exchequer; but he received his baronetcy in April 1820. Abbotsford went on gradually and expensively completing itself; the correspondence which tells us so much and is such delightful reading continued, as if the writer had nothing else to write and nothing else to do. But for us the chief matters of interest are the two novels mentioned, and that admirable supplement to the second of them, the *Legend of Montrose*.

There can be little doubt, I think, that in at least passages, and those very large ones, of the *Heart of Midlothian*, Scott went as high as he ever had done, or ever did thereafter. I have never agreed with Lady Louisa Stuart that 'Mr. Saddletree is not amusing,' nor that there is too much Scots law for English readers. It must be remembered that until Scott opened people's eyes, there were some very singular conventions and prejudices, even in celestial minds, about novels. Technical details were voted tedious and out of place — as, Heaven knows! M. Zola and others have shown us since, that they may very easily be made. Professional matters, the lower

middle classes, etc., were thought ‘low,’ as Goldsmith’s audience had had it, ‘vulgar,’ as Madame de Staël said of Miss Austen. That the farrago of the novelist’s book is absolutely universal and indiscriminate, provided only that he knows what to do with it, had not dawned on the general mind. On the other hand, Lady Louisa was right in objecting to the finale, — it has been admitted that Scott was never good at a conclusion, — and personally I have always thought George Staunton uninteresting throughout. But how much does this leave! The description of the lynching of Porteous and the matchless interview with Queen Caroline are only the very best of such a series of good things that, except just at the end, it may be said to be uninterrupted. Jeanie it is unnecessary to praise; the same Lady Louisa’s admiration of the wonderful art which could attract so much interest to a plain, good, not clever, almost middle-aged woman sums up all. But almost everyone plays up to Jeanie in perfection — her father and, to no small extent, her sister, her husband and Dumbiedykes, Madge Wildfire (a most difficult and most successful character) and her old fiend of a mother, the Duke and the tobacco-shop keeper. Abundant as are the good things afterwards, I do not know that Scott ever showed his actual original genius, his faculty of creation and combination, to such an extent and in such proportion again.

He certainly did not, so far as my taste goes, in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, a book which, putting the mere fragment of the *Black Dwarf* aside, seems to me his first approach to failure in prose. Lockhart, whose general critical opinions deserve the profoundest respect, thought differently — thought it, indeed, ‘the most pure and perfect of all the tragedies that Scott ever penned.’ Perhaps there is something in this of the same ingenuity which Scott himself showed in his disclaimer to Murray quoted above, for tragedy *per se* was certainly not Scott’s forte to the same extent as were comedy and history. But I know that there are many who agree with Lockhart. On the other hand, I should say that while we do not know enough of the House of Ravenswood to feel much sympathy with its fortunes as a house, the ‘conditions,’ in the old sense, of its last representative are not such as to attract us much to him personally. He is already far too much of that hero of opera which he was destined to become, a sulky, stagy creature, in theatrical poses and a black-plumed hat, who cannot even play the easy and perennially attractive part of *desdichado* so as to keep our compassion. Lucy is a simpleton so utter and complete

that it is difficult even to be sorry for her, especially as Ravenswood would have made a detestable husband. The mother is meant to be and is a repulsive virago, and the father a time-serving and almost vulgar intriguer. Moreover — and all this is not in the least surprising, since he was in agonies during most of the composition, and nearly died before its close — the author has, contrary to his wont, provided very few subsidiary characters to support or carry off the principals. Caleb Balderstone has been perhaps unduly objected to by the very persons who praise the whole book; but he is certainly somewhat of what the French call a *charge*. Bucklaw, though agreeable, is very slight; Craigengelt a mere 'super'; the Marquis shadowy. Even such fine things as the hags at the laying-out, and the visit of Lucy and her father to Wolf's Crag, and such amusing ones as Balderstone's *fabliau*-like expedients to raise the wind in the matter of food, hardly save the situation; and though the tragedy of the end is complete, it leaves me, I own, rather cold. One is sorry for Lucy, but it was really her own fault — a Scottish maiden is not usually unaware of the possibilities and advantages of 'kilting her coats of green satin' and flying from the lad she does not love to the lad she does. The total disappearance of Edgar is the best thing that could happen to him, and the only really satisfactory point is Bucklaw's very gentlemanlike sentence of arrest on all impertinent questioners.

But if the companion of the first set of *Tales* was a dead-weight rather than a makeweight, the makeweight of the third would have atoned for anything. Sometimes I think, allowing for scale and conditions, that Scott never did anything much better than *A Legend of Montrose*. First, it is pervaded by the magnificent figure of Dugald Dalgetty. Secondly, the story, though with something of the usual huddle at the end, is interesting throughout, with the minor figures capitally sketched in. Menteith, though merely outlined, is a good fellow, a gentleman, and not a stick; Allan escapes the merely melodramatic; 'Gillespie Grumach' is masterly in his brief appearances; and Montrose himself seems to me to be brought in with a skill which has too often escaped notice. For it would mar the story to deal with the tragedy of his end, and his earlier history is a little awkward to manage. Moreover, that faculty of hurrying on the successive *tableaux* which is so conspicuous in most of Scott's work, and so conspicuously absent in the *Bride* (where there are long passages with no action at all) is eminently present here. The meeting with Dalgetty; the night at

Darnlinvarach, from the bravado of the candlesticks to Menteith's tale; the gathering and council of the clans; the journey of Dalgetty, with its central point in the Inverary dungeon; the escape; and the battle of Inverlochy, — these form an exemplary specimen of the kind of interest which Scott's best novels possess as nothing of the kind had before possessed it, and as few things out of Dumas have possessed it since. Nor can the most fervent admirer of Chicot and of Porthos — I know none more fervent than myself — say in cool blood that their creator could have created Dalgetty, who is at once an admirable human being, a wonderful national type of the more eccentric kind, and the embodiment of an astonishing amount of judiciously adjusted erudition.

Many incidents of interest and some of importance occurred in Scott's private life between the date of 1818 and that of 1820, besides those mentioned already. One of these was the acquisition by Constable of the whole of his back-copyrights for the very large sum of twelve thousand pounds, a contract supplemented twice later in 1821 and 1823 by fresh purchases of rights as they accrued for nominal sums of eleven thousand pounds in addition. Unfortunately, this transaction, like almost all his later ones, was more fictitious than real. And though it was lucky that the publisher never discharged the full debt, so that when his bankruptcy occurred something was saved out of the wreck which would otherwise have been pure loss, the proceeding is characteristic of the mischievously unreal system of money transactions which brought Scott to ruin. Except for small things like review articles, etc., and for his official salaries, he hardly ever touched real money for the fifteen most prosperous years of his life, between 1810 and 1825. Promises to receive were interchanged with promises to pay in such a bewildering fashion that unless he had kept a chartered accountant of rather unusual skill and industry perpetually at work, it must have been utterly impossible for him to know at any given time what he had, what he owed, what was due to him, and what his actual income and expenditure were. The commonly accepted estimate is that during the most flourishing time, 1820-1825, he made about fifteen thousand a year, and on paper he probably did. Nor can he ever have spent, in the proper sense of the term, anything like that sum, for the Castle Street house cannot have cost, even with lavish hospitality, much to keep up, and the Abbotsford establishment, though liberal, was never ostentatious. But when large lump sums are constantly expended in purchases of land,

building, furnishing, and the like; when every penny of income except official salaries goes through a complicated process of abatement in the way of discounts for six and twelve months' bills, fines for renewal, payments to banks for advances and the like — the 'clean' sums available at any given moment bear quite fantastic and untrustworthy relations to their nominal representatives. It may be strongly suspected, from the admitted decrease of a very valuable practice under Walter Scott *père*, and from its practical disappearance under Thomas, that the genius of the Scott family did not precisely lie in the management of money.

The marriage of Sophia Scott to Lockhart, and the purchase of a commission for her eldest brother Walter in the 18th Hussars, made gaps in Scott's family circle, and also, beyond all doubt, in his finances. The first was altogether happy for him. It did not, for at anyrate some years, absolutely sever him from the dearest of his children, a lady who, to judge from her portraits, must have been of singular charm, and who seems to have been the only one of the four with much of his mental characteristics; it provided him with an agreeable companion, a loyal friend, and an incomparable biographer. Of Sir Walter Scott the second and last, not much personal idea is obtainable. The few anecdotes handed down, and his father's letters to him (we have no replies), suggest a good sort of person, slightly 'chuckle-headed' and perfervid in the wrong places, with next to no intellectual gifts, and perhaps more his mother's son than his father's. He had some difficulties in his first regiment, which seems to have been a wild one, and not in the best form; he married an heiress of the unpoetical name of Jobson, to whom and of whom his father writes with a pretty old-fashioned affection and courtesy, which perhaps gave Thackeray some traits for Colonel Newcome. Of the younger brother Charles, an Oxford man, who went into the Foreign Office, even less is recorded than of Walter. Anne Scott, the third of the family, and the faithful attendant of her father in his last evil days, died in her sister's house shortly after Sir Walter, and Mrs. Lockhart herself followed before the *Life* was finished. Scott can hardly be said to have bequeathed good luck to any of these his descendants.

It was at the end of 1819, after Walter the younger left home, and before Sophia's marriage, that the next in order of the *Waverley Novels* (now again such by title, and not *Tales of my Landlord*) appeared. This was *Ivanhoe*, which was published in a rather costlier shape than its forerunners, and yet sold to the extent of twelve thousand copies in its three-volume form.

Lockhart, perhaps with one of the few but graceful escapes of national predilection (it ought not to be called prejudice) to be noticed in him, pronounces this a greater work of art, but a less in genius than its purely Scottish predecessors. As there is nothing specially English in *Ivanhoe*, but only an attempt to delineate Normans and Saxons before the final blend was formed, an Englishman may, perhaps, claim at least impartiality if he accepts the positive part of Lockhart's judgment and demurs to the negative. Although the worst of Scott's cramps were past, he was still in anything but good health when he composed the novel, most of which was dictated, not written; and his avocations and bodily troubles together may have had something to do with those certainly pretty flagrant anachronisms which have brought on *Ivanhoe* the wrath of Dryasdust. But Dryasdust is *adeo negligibile ut negligibilius nihil esse possit*, and the book is a great one from beginning to end. The mere historians who quarrel with it have probably never read the romances which justify it, even from the point of view of literary 'document.' The picturesque opening; the Shakespearean character of Wamba; the splendid Passage of Arms; the more splendid siege of Torquilstone; the gathering up of a dozen popular stories of the 'King-and-the-Tanner' kind into the episodes of the Black Knight and the Friar; the admirable, if a little conventional, sketch of Bois-Guilbert, the pendant in prose to Marmion; the more admirable contrast of Rebecca and Rowena; and the final Judgment of God, which for once vindicates Scott from the charge of never being able to wind up a novel, — with such subsidiary sketches as Gurth, Prior Aymer, Isaac, Front-de-Bœuf (Urfried, I fear, will not quite do, except in the final interview with her tempter-victim), Athelstane, and others — give such a plethora of creative and descriptive wealth as nobody but Scott has ever put together in prose. Even the nominal hero, it is to be observed, escapes the curse of most of Scott's young men (the young men to several of whom Thackeray would have liked to be motherin-law), and if he is not worthy of Rebecca, he does not get her. As for Richard, no doubt, he is not the Richard of history, but what does that matter? He is a most admirable recreation, softened and refined, of the Richard of a romance which, be it remembered, is itself in all probability as old as the thirteenth century.

After speaking frankly of the *Bride of Lammermoor* and of some others of Scott's works, it may perhaps be permissible to rate the successor to *Ivanhoe* rather higher than it was rated at the time, or than it has generally

been rated since. *The Monastery* was at its appearance (March 1820) regarded as a failure; and quite recently a sincere admirer of Scott confided to a fellow in that worship the opinion that ‘a good deal of it really is rot, you know.’ I venture to differ. Undoubtedly it does not rank with the very best, or even next to them. In returning to Scottish ground, Scott may have strengthened himself on one side, but from the distance of the times and the obscure and comparatively uninteresting period which he selected (just after the strange and rapid panorama of the five Jameses and before the advent of Queen Mary), he lost as much as he gained. An intention, afterwards abandoned, to make yet a fresh start, and try a new double on the public by appearing neither as ‘Author of *Waverley*‘ nor as Jedediah Cleishbotham, may have hampered him a little, though it gave a pleasant introduction. The supernatural part, though much better, as it seems to me, than is generally admitted, is no doubt not entirely satisfactory, being uncertainly handled, and subject to the warning of *Nec deus intersit*. There is some return of that superabundance of interval and inaction which has been noted in the *Bride*. And, above all, there appears here a fault which had not been noticeable before, but which was to increase upon Scott, — the fault of introducing a character as if he were to be of great pith and moment, and then letting his interest, as the vernacular says, ‘tail off.’ The trouble taken about Halbert by personages natural and supernatural promises the case of some extraordinary figure, and he is but very ordinary. Still, at the works of how many novelists except Scott should we grumble, if we had the admirable descriptions of Glendearg, the scenes in the Abbey, the night-ride of poor Father Philip, the escape from the Castle of Avenel, the passage of the interview of Halbert with Murray and Morton? Even the episode of Sir Piercie Shafton, though it is most indisputably true that Scott has not by any means truly represented Euphuism, is good and amusing in itself; while there are those who boldly like the White Lady personally. She is more futile than a sprite beseems; but she is distinctly ‘nice.’

At any rate, nobody could (or indeed did) deny that the author, six months later, made up for any shortcoming in *The Abbot*, where, except the end (eminently of the huddled order), everything is as it should be. The heroine is, except Die Vernon, Scott’s masterpiece in that kind, while all the Queen Mary scenes are unsurpassed in him, and rarely equalled out of him. Nor was there any falling off in *Kenilworth* (Jan. 1821), where he again shifted his scene to England. He has not indeed interested us very much

personally in Amy Robsart, but as a hapless heroine she is altogether the superior of Lucy Ashton. The book is, among his, the 'novel without a hero,' and, considering his defects in that direction, this was hardly a drawback. It cannot be indeed said to have any one minor character which is a success of the first class. But the whole is interesting throughout. The journeys of Tressilian to Devonshire and of Amy and Wayland to Kenilworth have the curious attraction which Scott, a great traveller, and a lover of it, knew how to give to journeys, and the pageantry and Court scenes, at Greenwich and elsewhere, command admiration. Indeed, *Kenilworth* equals any of the novels in sustained variety of interest, and, unlike too many of them, it comes to a real end.

It was in 1821 that a book now necessarily much forgotten and even rare (it is comparatively seldom that one sees it in catalogues), Adolphus's *Letters on the Author of Waverley*, at once showed the interest taken in the identity of the 'Great Unknown,' and fixed it as being that of the author of the *Lay*, with a great deal of ingenuity and with a most industrious abundance of arguments, bad and good. After such a proof of public interest, neither Scott nor Constable could be much blamed for working what has been opprobriously called the 'novel manufactory' at the highest pressure; and *The Pirate*, *The Fortunes of Nigel*, *Peveril of the Peak*, *Quentin Durward*, *St. Ronan's Well*, and *Redgauntlet* were written and published in the closest succession. These books, almost all of wonderful individual excellence (*Peveril*, I think, is the only exception), and of still more wonderful variety, were succeeded, before the crash of 1825-26, by the *Tales of the Crusaders*, admirable in part, if not wholly. When we think that all these were, with some other work, accomplished in less than five years, it scarcely seems presumption in the author to have executed, or rashness in the bookseller to have suggested, a contract for four of them in a batch — a batch unnamed, unplanned, not even yet in embryo, but simply existing *in potentia* in the brain of Walter Scott himself.

In surveying together this batch, written when the first novelty of the novels was long over, and before there was any decadence, one obtains, as well perhaps as from any other division of his works, an idea of their author's miraculous power. Many novelists since have written as much or more in the same time. But their books for the most part, even when well above the average, popular, and deservedly popular too, leave next to no trace on the mind. You do not want to read them again; you remember, even

with a strong memory, nothing special about their plots; above all, their characters take little or no hold on the mind in the sense of becoming part of its intellectual circle and range.

How different is it with these six or eight novels, 'written with as much care as the others, that is to say, with none at all,' as the author wickedly remarked! *The Pirate* (December 1821) leads off, its scenery rendered with the faithfulness of recent memory, and yet adjusted and toned by the seven years' interval since Scott yachted round Orkney and Shetland. Here are the admirable characters of Brenda (slight yet thoroughly pleasing), and her father, the not too melodramatic ones of Minna, Cleveland, and Norna, the triumph of Claud Halcro (to whom few do justice), and again, the excellent keeping of story and scenery to character and incident. *The Fortunes of Nigel* (May 1822) originated in a proposed series of 'Letters of the Seventeenth Century,' in which others were to take part, and perhaps marks a certain decline, though only in senses to be distinctly defined and limited. Nothing that Scott ever did is better than the portrait of King James, which, in the absence of one from the hand of His Majesty's actual subject for some dozen years, Mr. William Shakespeare of New Place, Stratford, is probably the most perfect thing of the kind that ever could have been or can be done. And the picture of Whitefriars, though it is borrowed to a great extent, and rather anticipated in point of time, from Shadwell's *Squire of Alsatia*, sixty or seventy years after date, is of the finest, whilst Sir Mungo Malagrowther all but deserves the same description. But this most cantankerous knight is not touched off with the completeness of Dalgetty, or even of Claud Halcro. Lord Glenvarloch adds, to the insipidity which is the bane of Scott's good heroes, some rather disagreeable traits which none of them had hitherto shown. Dalgarno in the same way falls short of his best bad heroes. Dame Suddlechop suggests, for the first time *un*favourably, a Shakespearean ancestress, Mistress Quickly, and the story halts and fails to carry the reader rapidly over the stony path. Even Richie Moniplies, even Gentle Geordie, good as both are, fall short of their predecessors. Ten years earlier *The Fortunes of Nigel* would have been a miracle, and one might have said, 'If a man begins like this, what will he do later?' Now, thankless and often uncritical as is the chatter about 'writing out,' we can hardly compare *Nigel* with *Guy Mannering*, or *Rob Roy*, or even *The Abbot*, and not be conscious of something that (to use a favourite quotation of Scott's own), 'doth appropinque an end,' though an end as yet afar off. The 'bottom

of the sack,' as the French say, is a long way from us; but it is within measurable distance.

Even a friendly critic must admit that this distance seemed to be alarmingly shortened by *Peveril of the Peak* (January 1823), which among the full-sized novels seems to me quite his least good book, worse even than 'dotages,' as they are sometimes thought, like *Anne of Geierstein* and *Count Robert*. No one has defended the story, which, languid as it is, is made worse by the long gaps between the passages that ought to be interesting, and by a (for Scott) quite abnormal and portentous absence of really characteristic characters. Lockhart pleads for some of these, but I fear the plea can hardly be admitted. I imagine that those who read Scott pretty regularly are always sorely tempted to skip *Peveril* altogether, and that when they do read it, they find the chariot wheels drive with a heaviness of which elsewhere they are entirely unconscious.

But in the same year (1823), *Quentin Durward* not only made up for *Peveril*, but showed Scott's powers to be at least as great as when he wrote *The Abbot*, if not as great as ever. He has taken some liberties with history, but no more than he was perfectly entitled to take; he has paid the historic muse with ample interest for anything she lent him, by the magnificent sketch of Louis and the fine one of Charles; he has given a more than passable hero in Quentin, and a very agreeable if not ravishing heroine in Isabelle. Above all, he has victoriously shown his old faculty of conducting the story with such a series of enthralling, even if sometimes episodic passages, that nobody but a pedant of 'construction' would care to inquire too narrowly whether they actually make a whole. Quentin's meeting with the King and his rescue from Tristan by the archers; the interviews between Louis and Crevecœur, and Louis and the Astrologer; the journey (another of Scott's admirable journeys); the sack of Schonwaldt, and the feast of the Boar of Ardennes; Louis in the lion's den at Peronne, — these are things that are simply of the first order. Nor need the conclusion, which has shocked some, shock any who do not hold, with critics of the Rymer school, that 'the hero ought always to be successful.' For as Quentin wins Isabelle at last, what more success need we want? and why should not Le Balafré, that loyal Leslie, be the instrument of his nephew's good fortune?

The recovery was perfectly well maintained in *St. Ronan's Well* (still 1823) and *Redgauntlet* (1824), the last novels of full length before the downfall. They were also, be it noticed, the first planned (while *Quentin*

itself was completed) after some early symptoms of apoplectic seizure, which might, even if they had not been helped by one of the severest turns of fortune that any man ever experienced, have punished Scott's daring contempt of ordinary laws in the working of his brains. The harm done to *St. Ronan's Well* by the author's submission to James Ballantyne's Philistine prudery in protesting against the original story (in which Clara did not discover the cheat put on her till a later period than the ceremony) is generally acknowledged. As it is, not merely is the whole thing made a much ado about nothing, — for no law and no Church in Christendom would have hesitated to declare the nullity of a marriage which had never been consummated, and which was celebrated while one of the parties took the other for some one else, — but Clara's shattered reason, Tyrrel's despair, and Etherington's certainty that he has the cards in his hand, are all incredible and unaccountable — mere mid-winter madness. Nevertheless, this, Scott's only attempt at actual contemporary fiction, has extraordinary interest and great merit as such, while Meg Dods would save half a dozen novels, and the society at the Well is hardly inferior.

And then came *Redgauntlet*. A great lover of Scott once nearly invoked the assistance of Captain M'Turk to settle matters with a friend of his who would not pronounce *Redgauntlet* the best of all the novels, and would only go so far as to admit that it contains some, and many, of the best things. The best as a novel it cannot be called, because the action is desultory in the extreme. There are wide gaps even in the chain of story interest that does exist, and the conclusion, admirable in itself, has even for Scott a too audacious disconnection with any but the very faintest concern of the nominally first personages. But even putting 'Wandering Willie's Tale' aside, and taking for granted the merits of that incomparable piece (of which, it may yet be gently hinted, it was not so very long ago still a singularity and mark of daring to perceive the absolute supremacy), the good things in this fascinating book defy exaggeration. The unique autobiographic interest — so fresh and keen and personal, and yet so free from the odious intrusion of actual personality — of the earlier epistolary presentment of Saunders and Alan Fairford, of Darsie and Green Mantle; Peter Peebles, peer of Scott's best; Alan's journey and Darsie's own wanderings; the scenes at the Provost's dinner-table and in Tam Turnpenny's den; that unique figure, the skipper of the *Jumping Jenny*; the extraordinarily effective presentment of Prince Charles, already in his

decadence, if not yet in his dotage; the profusion of smaller sketches and vignettes everywhere grouped round the mighty central triumph of the adventures of Piper Steenie, — who but Scott has done such things? He never put so much again in a single book. There is something in it which it is hardly fanciful to take as a ‘note of finishing,’ as the last piece of the work, that, gigantic as it was, was not exactly collar work, not sheer hewing of wood and drawing of water for the taskmasters. And it was fitting that the book, so varied, so fresh, so gracious and kindly, so magnificent in part, with a magnificence dominating Scott’s usual range, should begin with the beginnings of his own career, and should end with the practical finish, not merely of the good days, but of the days that dawned with any faint promise of goodness, in the career of the last hope of the Jacobite cause.

Chapter V

THE DOWNFALL OF BALLANTYNE & COMPANY

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Redgauntlet, it has been said, was the last novel on the full scale before the downfall of Scott's prosperity. But before this he had begun *The Life of Napoleon* and *Woodstock*, and, in June 1825, had published the *Tales of the Crusaders*, which contain some work almost, if not quite, equal to his best, and which obtained at first a greater popularity than their immediate predecessors. It was, and generally is, held that *The Betrothed*, the earlier of the two, was saved by *The Talisman*; and there can be no doubt that this latter is the better. Contrary to the wont of novelists, Scott was at least as happy with Richard here as he had been in *Ivanhoe*, and though he owed a good deal in both to the presentation of his hero in the very interesting romance published by his old secretary Weber, — one of the best of all the English verse romances and the first English poem to show a really English patriotism, — he owed nothing but suggestion. The duel at the Diamond in the Desert is admittedly one of the happiest things of the kind by a master in that kind, and if the adventures in the chapel of Engedi are both a little farcical and a little 'apropos of nothing in particular,' the story nowhere else halts or fails till it reaches its real 'curtain' with the second *Accipe hoc!* If it had been longer, it might not have been so strong, but as it is, it is nearly perfect.

But there is also more good in *The Betrothed* than it is usual to allow. The beginning, the siege of the Garde Doloureuse, and the ghostly adventure of Eveline at the Saxon manor are excellent; while, even later, Scott has entangled the evidence against Damian and the heroine with not a little of the skill which he had shown in compromising Waverley. Had not James Ballantyne dashed the author's spirits with some of his cavillings, the whole might have been as much of a piece as *The Talisman* is. Indeed, it must be confessed that, though Lockhart is generous enough on this point to the man to whom he has been accused of being unjust, we have very little evidence of any improvement in Scott's work due to James, while we know

that he did harm not once only. But, as it stands, the book no doubt exhibits the usual faults, that languishing of the middle action, for instance, which injures *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *The Monastery*, together with the much more common huddling and improbability of the conclusion. But we know that this last was put on hurriedly, against the grain, and after the author, disgusted by the grumblings of others, had relinquished his work; so that we cannot greatly wonder.

It is impossible here to depict in detail Scott's domestic life during the years which passed since we last noticed it, and which represent the most flourishing time of his worldly circumstances. The estate of Abbotsford gradually grew, always at fancy prices, till the catastrophe itself finally prevented an expenditure of £40,000 in a lump on more land. The house grew likewise to its hundred and fifty feet of front, its slightly confused but not disagreeable external muddle of styles, and reproductions, and incorporated fragments, and its internal blend of museum and seignorial hall. It was practically completed and splendidly 'house-warmed' to celebrate the marriage (3rd February 1825) of the heir, on whom both house and estate were settled, with no very fortunate result. Between it and Castle Street the family oscillated as usual, when summer and winter, term and vacation, called them. At Abbotsford open house was always kept to a Noah's ark-full of visitors, invited and uninvited, high and low, and Castle Street saw more modest but equally cordial and constant hospitalities, in which the Lockharts were pretty frequent participators; while their country home at Chiefswood was a sort of escaping place for Sir Walter when visitors made Abbotsford unbearable. The 'Abbotsford Hunt' yearly rejoiced the neighbours; and though, as his health grew weaker, Scott's athletic and sporting exercises were necessarily and with insidious encroachment curtailed, he still did all he could in this way. In 1822 there was the great visit of George IV. to Scotland, wherein Sir Walter took a part which was only short, if short at all, of principal; and of this Lockhart has left one of his liveliest and most pleasantly subacid accounts. Visits to England were not unfrequent; and at last, in the summer of 1825, Scott made a journey, which was a kind of triumphal progress, to Ireland, with his daughter Anne and Lockhart as companions. The party returned by way of the Lakes, and the triumph was, as it were, formally wound up at Windermere in a regatta, with Wilson for admiral of the lake and Canning for joint-occupant of the triumphal boat. 'It was roses, roses all the way,' till

in the autumn of the year the rue began, according to its custom, to take their place.

The immediate cause of the disaster was Scott's secret partnership in the house of Ballantyne & Co., which, dragged down by the greater concerns of Constable & Co. in Edinburgh and Hurst, Robinson, & Co. in London, failed for the nominal amount of £117,000 at the end of January 1826. Their assets were, in the first place, claims on the two other firms, which realised a mere trifle; and, in the second place, the property, the genius, the life, and the honour of Sir Walter Scott.

When one has to deal briefly with very complicated and much-debated matters, there is nothing more important than to confine the dealing to as few points as possible. We may, I think, limit the number here to two, — the nature and amount of the indebtedness itself, and the manner in which it was met. The former, except so far as the total figures on the debtor side are concerned, is the question most in dispute. That the printing business of Ballantyne & Co. (the publishing business had lost heavily, but it had long ceased to be a drain), in the ordinary literal sense owed £117,000 — that is to say, that it had lost that sum in business, or that the partners had overdrawn to that amount — nobody contends. Lockhart's account, based on presumably accurate information, not merely from his fatherin-law's papers, but from Cadell, Constable's partner, is that the losses were due partly to the absolutely unbusinesslike conduct of the concern, and the neglect for many years to come to a clear understanding what its profits were and what they were not; partly to the ruinous system of eternally interchanged and renewed bills, so that, for instance, sums which Constable nominally paid years before were not actually liquidated at the time of the smash; but most of all to a proceeding which seems to pass the bounds of recklessness on one side, and to enter pretty deeply into those of fraud on the other. This is the celebrated affair of the counter-bills, things, according to Lockhart, representing no consideration or value received of any kind, but executed as a sort of collateral security to Constable when he discounted any of John Ballantyne's innumerable acceptances, and intended for use only if the real and original bills were not met. Still, according to Lockhart, this system was continued long after there was any special need for it, and a mass of counter-bills, for which the Ballantynes had never had the slightest value, and the amount of which they had either discharged or stood accountable for already on other documents, was in whole or part

flung upon the market by Constable in the months of struggle which preceded his fall, and ranked against Ballantyne & Co., that is to say, Scott, when that fall came.

This account, when published in the first edition of Lockhart's *Life*, provoked strong protests from the representatives of the Ballantynes, and a rather acrimonious pamphlet war followed, in which Lockhart is accused by some not merely of acrimony, but of a supercilious and contemptuous fashion of dealing with his opponents. He made, however, no important retractations later, and it is fair to say that not one of his allegations has ever been disproved by documentary evidence, as certainly ought to have been possible while all the documents were at hand. Nor did the *Memoirs* of Constable, published many years later, supply what was and is missing; nor does Mr. Lang, with all his pains, seem to have found anything decisive. The assertions opposed to Lockhart's are that the 'counter-bill' story is not true, and that the distresses of Ballantyne & Co., and the dangerous extent to which they were involved in complicated bill transactions with Constable, were at least partly due to reckless drawings by the senior partner for his land purchases and other private expenses. Between the two it is impossible to decide with absolute certainty. All that can be said is this. First, considering that the whole original capital of the firm was Scott's, that he had repeatedly saved it from ruin by his own exertions and credit, and that a very large part of the legitimate grist that came to its mill was supplied by his introduction of work to be printed, he was certainly entitled to the lion's share of any profit that was actually earned. Secondly, the neglect to balance accounts, and the reckless fashion of interweaving acceptance with drawing and drawing with acceptance, had, as we know, been repeatedly protested against by him. Thirdly, his private expenditure, very moderate at Castle Street, and not recklessly lavish even at Abbotsford, must have been amply covered by his official and private income *plus* no great proportion of the always large and latterly immense supplies which for nearly twenty years he derived from his pen. It is impossible to see that, except by his carelessness in neglecting to ascertain from time to time the exact liabilities of the firm, he had added to the original fault of joining it, or had in any other way deserved the blow that fell upon him. No one can believe, certainly no one has ever proved, that his earnings, and his salaries, and the value of his property, if capitalised, would not have covered, and far more than covered, the cost of Abbotsford, land and house, the settlements

on his children, and the household expenses of the whole fifteen years and more since he became a housekeeper there. While, as for the printing business itself, it admittedly ought to have made a handsome profit from first to last, and certainly did make a handsome profit as soon as it fell under reasonably businesslike management afterwards.

There remains the said ‘original fault’ of engaging in the business at all, and that, I think, can never be denied. The very introduction of joint-stock companies, to which, in part, Scott owed his ruin, has made a confusion between professional and commercial occupations which did not then exist; but even now I think it would hardly be considered decent for a public servant, discharging judicial functions, to carry on actual business in a private trading concern. Moreover, the secrecy which Scott observed — to such an extent that his family and his most intimate friends did not know the facts — could come from nothing but a sense of something amiss, and certainly led to the commission of not a little that was so. Scott had to conceal the actual and very material truth when he applied to the Duke of Buccleuch for the guarantee that saved him a dozen years earlier. He had to conceal it from the various persons who employed Ballantyne & Co., and were induced to do so by him. He had to conceal it when he executed those settlements on his son’s marriage, which certainly would have been affected had it been known that the whole of his fortune was subject to an unlimited liability. The mystery of his unconsciousness of all this may be left pretty much where Lockhart, with full acknowledgment, left it. I have said that his action seems to have originated partly in a blind and causeless fear of poverty, which, as blind and causeless fear so often does, made him run into the very danger he tried to avoid, partly in an incomprehensible partiality for the Ballantynes. We have no evidence, in any degree trustworthy, that during the entire term of his connection with the firm he derived any positive profit from it at all commensurate with his actual sinkings of money and his sacrifices and exertions of various kinds. The whole thing is, once more, a mystery, and the best comment is perhaps the simple one that the means which a man takes to ruin or seriously damage himself generally do seem a mystery to others, and probably are so to himself. Nor is there anything more unusual in the colossal irony of the situation, when we find Scott, just before his own ruin, and in the act of giving his friend Terry the actor a guarantee (which, as it happened, he had to pay), writing words of the most excellent sense on the rashness of engaging in commercial

undertakings without sufficient capital, the madness of dealing in bills, and his own resolve to have nothing to do with any business carried on 'by discounts and renewals.' The irony, let it be repeated, is colossal; yet we meet it, we commit it, every day.

It is painful to read that during the months of uncertainty which preceded the actual crash, Scott threw the helve after the hatchet by charging himself personally, first, with an advance, or, at least, bond for £5000, and then for another of double that amount, to help two firms, Constable and Hurst & Robinson, whose combined indebtedness was over half a million. But the fact of his doing so was sufficient indication of the spirit in which he would meet the crash of Ballantyne & Co. itself. The whole of the *Diary* (*v. infra*) of the period is one long illustration (without the slightest pretentiousness or self-consciousness) of the famous line of perhaps his own greatest poetical passage —

'No thought was there of dastard flight.'

He had made up his mind, before it was certainly imminent, that bankruptcy was not to be accepted; evasion of any more thorough kind, if it occurred, he dismissed at once as not even to be thought of. Yet it is perhaps to be regretted that the mode in which the disaster was actually met, heroic as it was, was substituted for that of which he had at first thought — the simple throwing up of every scrap of his property, including all but a bare subsistence out of his official incomes, which could not have been touched without difficulty. Had he done, or been able to do this, had he shaken off the vampire in stone and lime and hungry soil which had so long sucked his blood, had he sold the library, and the 'Gabions of Jonathan Oldbuck,' and the Japanese papers, and the Byron vase, and the armour, had he mortgaged his incomes by help of insurance, sold his copyrights outright, and, in short, realised everything, it does not seem absolutely certain that he might not have paid off his creditors in full, or, at least, left but a small balance to be discharged by less superhuman and fatal exertions than those actually made. The time was not a good time for selling, no doubt; but, on the other hand, the interest in Abbotsford and its master was still at its height, and the enthusiasm, which actually inspired one anonymous offer of thirty thousand pounds on loan in a lump, would probably have made good bargains for him on sales. He would then have been a free, or nearly a free man, with his own exertions untrammelled, or nearly so; and, serious as were the warnings that his health had given or received, the actual history of the next

six or seven years seems to show that, had the machine been driven with less unsparing ferocity, and at a more moderate rate, it might have lasted for years, and even restored its master to competence, if not to wealth.

Unfortunately, if nothing else — family affection and perhaps also family pride did still, it may be feared, supply something else — the unlucky settlement of Abbotsford stood in the way. Legally, it is true or at least probable, this settlement might have been upset; but the trustees of Mrs. Walter Scott would probably also have felt bound to resist this, and leave to unsettle could only have been obtained on the humiliating and even slightly disgraceful plea that the granter, being practically insolvent at the time, was acting beyond his rights. It seems to have been proposed by the Bank of Scotland, during the negotiations for the arrangement which followed, that this should be done; and the reasons which dictated Scott's refusal would have equally, no doubt, prevented him from doing it in the other case.

Accordingly, it was resolved, as he declined to go into bankruptcy, that his whole property should, under a procedure half legal, half amicable, be vested in trustees for the benefit of his creditors; nothing except the Castle Street house and some minor chattels being actually sold. He, on the other hand, undertook to devote to the liquidation of the balance of his debts all the proceeds of his future work, except a bare maintenance for himself and (on a reduced scale) for Abbotsford. How 'this fatal venture of mistaken chivalry' (to borrow a most applicable phrase of Kingsley's about another matter) was carried out we shall see, but how grossly unfair it was to Scott himself must appear at once. In return for his sacrifices he had no real legal protection; any creditor could, as a Jew named Abud actually did, threaten at any time to force bankruptcy unless he were paid at once and in full. Instead of retaining (as he would have done had the whole of his property been actually surrendered, and had he allowed the debts which came with the law to go with it) complete control of his future earnings and exertions, and making, as he might have made, restitution by instalments as a free gift, he was in such a plight that any creditor was entitled to regard him as a kind of thrall, paying debt by service as a matter of course, and deserving neither rest, nor gratitude, nor commendation. One really sometimes feels inclined to regret that Abud or somebody else was not more relentless — to pray for a Sir Giles Overreach or a Shylock among the creditors. For such a one, by his apparently malevolent but really beneficent grasping, would have in

effect liberated the bondsman, who, as it was, was compelled to toil at a hopeless task to his dying day, and to hasten that dying day by the attempt.

Mention has been made above of a certain *Diary* which is our main authority, and, indeed, makes other authorities merely illustrative for a great part of the few and evil last years of Sir Walter's life. It was begun before the calamities, and just after the return from Ireland, being pleasantly christened 'Gurnal,' after a slight early phonetic indulgence of his daughter Sophia's. It was suggested — and Lockhart seems to think that it was effective — as a relief from the labour of *Napoleon*, which went slightly against the grain, even before it became bond-work. It may have been a doubtful prescription, for 'the cud of sweet and bitter fancy' is dangerous food. But it has certainly done *us* good. When Mr. Douglas obtained leave to publish it as a whole, there were, I believe, wiseacres who dreaded the effect of the publication, thinking that the passages which Lockhart himself had left out might in some way diminish and belittle our respect for Scott. They had no need to trouble themselves. It was already, as published in part in the Life, one of the most pathetically interesting things in biographical literature. This quality was increased by the complete publication, while it also became a new proof that 'good blood cannot lie,' that the hero is a hero even in utterances kept secret from the very valet. If, as has happened before and might conceivably happen again, some cataclysm destroyed all Scott's other work, we should still have in this not merely an admirable monument of literature, but the picture of a character not inhumanly flawless, yet almost superhumanly noble; of the good man struggling against adversity, not, indeed, with a sham pretence of stoicism, but with that real fortitude of which stoicism is too often merely a caricature and a simulation. It is impossible not to recur to the *Marmion* passage already quoted as one reads the account of the successive misfortunes, the successive expedients resorted to, the absolute determination never to cry craven.

It is from the *Diary* that we learn his own complete knowledge of the fact urged above, that it would have been better for him if his creditors had been in appearance less kind. 'If they drag me into court,' he says, 'instead of going into this scheme of arrangement, they would do themselves a great injury, and *perhaps eventually do the good, though it would give me great pain*.' The *Diary*, illustrated as it is by the excellent selections from Skene's *Reminiscences* and other scattered or unpublished matter which Mr.

Douglas has appended, exhibits the whole history of this period with a precision that could not otherwise have been hoped for, especially as pecuniary misfortunes were soon, according to the fashion of this world, to be complicated by others. For some two years before the catastrophe Lady Scott had been in weak health; and though the misfortune itself does not seem to have affected her much after the first shock, she grew rapidly worse in the spring of 1826, and, her asthma changing into dropsy, died at Abbotsford during Scott's absence in Edinburgh, when his work began in May. His successive references to her illness, and the final and justly-famous passage on her death, are excellent examples of the spirit which pervades this part of the *Diary*. This spirit is never unmanly, but displays throughout, and occasionally, as we see, to his own consciousness, that strange yet not uncommon phenomenon which is well expressed in a French phrase, *il y a quelque chose de cassé*, and which frequently comes upon men after or during the greater misfortunes of life. Neither in his references to this, nor in those to another threatened, though as yet deferred blow, expected from the ever-declining health of the Lockharts' eldest child, the 'Hugh Littlejohn' of the *Tales of a Grandfather*, is there any tone of whining on the one hand, or any mark of insensibility on the other. But there is throughout something like a confession, stoutly avoided in words, but hinted in tone and current of quotation and sentiment, that the strength, though not the courage, is hardly equal to the day. The *Diary*, both here and elsewhere, is full of good things, pleasant wit still, shrewd criticism of life, quaint citation of wise old Scots saws and good modern instances, happy judgment of men and books, — above all, that ever-present touch of literature, without mere bookishness, which is as delightful to those who can taste it as any of Scott's gifts. And perhaps, too, we may trace, even behind this, a secret sense that, as his own Habakkuk Mucklewrath has it in the dying curse on Claverhouse, the wish of his heart had indeed been granted to his loss, and that the hope of his own pride had gone too near to destroy him.

Chapter VI

LAST WORKS AND DAYS

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It has been mentioned that when Scott returned from Ireland, and before his misfortunes came upon him, he had already engaged in two works of magnitude, a new novel, *Woodstock*, and a *Life of Napoleon*, planned upon a very large scale, for which Constable made great preparations, and from which he expected enormous profits. After the catastrophe it became a question whether Constable's estate could claim the fulfilment of these contracts, or whether the profits of them could be devoted wholly to the liquidation of Scott's, or rather Ballantyne & Co.'s, own debts. The completion of *Woodstock* was naturally delayed until this point was settled. But from the very moment when Sir Walter had resolved to devote himself to the heroic but apparently hopeless task of paying off his nominal liabilities in full, he arranged a system of work upon these two books, and especially upon the *Napoleon*, which exceeded in dogged determination anything that even he had hitherto done. The novel was, of course, to him comparative child's play: he had written novels before in six weeks or thereabouts all told, though his impaired vigour, the depression of his spirits, and the sense of labouring for the mere purpose of pouring the results into a sieve, made things harder now. But the *Napoleon*, though he had made some preparation for this kind of writing by his elaborate and multifarious editorial work, especially by that on Dryden and Swift, was to a great extent new; and it required, what was always irksome to him, elaborate reading up of books and documents for the special purpose. No man has ever utilised the results of previous reading for his own pleasure better than Scott, and few men, not mere professed book-grubbers, have ever had vaster stores of it. But he frequently confesses — a confession which in many ways makes his plight in these years still more to be pitied — an ingrained dislike to task-work of any kind; and there is no more laborious task-work than getting up and piecing together the materials for history.

The book, one, at a rough guess, of at least a million words, was completed from end to end in less than eighteen months, during which he

also wrote *Woodstock*, *Malachi Malagrowther* (*vide infra*), with several reviews and minor things, besides serving his usual number of days at the Clerk's table, devoting necessarily much time to the not more painful than troublesome business of his pecuniary affairs, his removal from Castle Street, etc., and taking one journey of some length in the summer of 1826 to London and Paris for materials. The feat was accomplished by a rigid system of 'so much per day' — by dint of which, no doubt, an amount of work, surprising to the inexperienced, can be turned out with no necessarily disastrous consequences. But Scott, disgusted with society, and avoiding it from motives of economy as well as of want of heart, disturbed hardly at all by strangers at Abbotsford, and not at all in the lodgings and furnished houses which he took while in Edinburgh, let 'his own thought drive him like a goad' to work in the interest of his taskmasters, and perhaps, also, for the sake of drowning care, pushed the system to the most extravagant lengths. We know that he sometimes worked from six in the morning to six at even, with breakfast and luncheon brought into his study and consumed there; and though his court duties made this fortunately impossible for a part of the year, at least during a part of the week, they were not a complete preservative. In the eighteen months he cleared for his bloodsuckers nearly twenty thousand pounds, eight thousand for *Woodstock* and eleven or twelve for *Napoleon*. The trifling profits of *Malachi* and the reviews seem to have been permitted to go into his own pocket. He was naturally proud of the exploit, but it may be feared that it made the end certain.

Of the merits of the *Napoleon* (the second edition of which, by the way, carried its profits to eighteen thousand pounds) it is perhaps not necessary to say very much. I should imagine that few living persons have read it word for word through, and I confess very frankly that I have not done so myself, though I think I have read enough to qualify me for judging it. It is only unworthy of its author in the sense that one feels it to have been not in the least the work that he was born to do. It is nearly as good, save for the technical inferiority of Scott's prose style, as the historical work of Southey, and very much better than the historical work of Campbell and Moore. The information is sufficient, the narrative clear, and the author can at need rise to very fair eloquence, or at least rhetoric. But it is too long to be read, as one reads Southey's *Nelson*, for its merits as biography, and not technically authoritative enough to be an exhaustive work of reference from the military, diplomatic, and political side. Above all, one cannot read a page

without remembering that there were living then in England at least a dozen men who could have done it better, — Grote, Thirlwall, Mitford, Arnold, Hallam, Milman, Lingard, Palgrave, Turner, Roscoe, Carlyle, Macaulay, to mention only the most prominent, and mention them at random, were all alive and of man's estate, — and probably scores who could have done it nearly or quite as well; while there was not one single man living, in England or in the world, who was capable of doing the work which Scott, if not as capable as ever, was still capable of doing like no one before and scarcely any one after him.

Take, for instance, *Woodstock* itself. In a very quaint, characteristic, agreeable, and, as criticism, worthless passage of *Wild Wales*, Borrow has stigmatised it as 'trash.' I only wish we had more such trash outside the forty-eight volumes of the *Waverley Novels*, or were likely to have more. The book, of course, has certain obvious critical faults — which are not in the least what made Borrow object to it. Although Scott, and apparently Ballantyne, liked the catastrophe, it has always seemed to me one of his worst examples of 'huddling up.' For it is historically and dramatically impossible that Cromwell should change his mind, or that Pearson and Robbins should wish to thwart severity which, considering the death of Humgudgeon, had a good deal more excuse than Oliver often thought necessary. Nor may the usual, and perhaps a little more than the usual, shortcomings in construction be denied. But as of old, and even more than on some occasions of old, the excellences of character, description, dialogue, and incident are so great as to atone over and over again for defects of the expected kind. If Everard has something of that unlucky quality which the author recognised in Malcolm Graeme when he said, 'I ducked him in the lake to give him something to do; but wet or dry I could make nothing of him,' Alice is quite of the better class of his heroines; and from her we ascend to personages in whose case there is very little need of apology and proviso. Sir Henry Lee, Wildrake, Cromwell himself, Charles, may not satisfy others, but I am quite content with them; and the famous scene where Wildrake is a witness to Oliver's half-confession seems to me one of its author's greatest serious efforts. Trusty Tomkins, perhaps, might have been a little better; he comes somewhat under the ban of some unfavourable remarks which Reginald Heber makes in his diary on this class of Scott's figures, though the good bishop seems to me to have been rather too severe. But the pictures of Woodstock Palace and Park have that

indescribable and vivid charm which Scott, without using any of the 'realist' minuteness or 'impressionist' contortions of later days, has the faculty of communicating to such things. For myself, I can say — and I am sure I may speak for hundreds — that Tullyveolan, Ellangowan, the Bewcastle moor where Bertram rescued Dandie, Clerihugh's, Monkbarns (I do not see Knockwinnock so clearly), the home of the Osbaldistones, and the district from Aberfoyle to Loch Ard, the moors round Drumclog, Torquilstone, and, not to make the list tedious, a hundred other places, including Woodstock itself, are as real as if I had walked over every inch of the ground and sat in every room of the houses. In some cases I have never seen the supposed originals, in others, I have recognised them as respectable, though usually inferior, representatives of Scott's conceptions. But in any case *these* are all real, all possessions, all part of the geographical and architectural furniture of the mind. They are like the wood in the 'Dream of Fair Women': one knows the flowers, one knows the leaves, one knows the battlements and the windows, the platters and the wine-cups, the cabinets and the arras. They are, like all the great places of literature, like Arden and Elsinore, like the court before Agamemnon's palace, and that where the damsel said to Sir Launcelot, 'Fair knight, thou art unhappy,' our own — our own to 'pass freely through until the end of time.'

It must not be forgotten in this record of his work that Scott wrote 'Bonnie Dundee' in the very middle of his disaster, and that he had not emerged from the first shock of that disaster, when the astonishingly clever *Letters of Malachi Malagrowther* appeared. Of the reasonableness of their main purpose — a strenuous opposition to the purpose of doing away, in Scotland as in England, with notes of a less denomination than five pounds — I cannot pretend to judge. It is possible that suppressed rage at his own misfortunes found vent, and, for him, very healthy vent, while it did harm to no one, in a somewhat too aggressive patriotism, of a kind more particularist than was usual with him. But the fire and force of the writing are so great, the alternations from seriousness to humour, from denunciation to ridicule, so excellently managed, that there are few better specimens of this particular kind of pamphlet. As for 'Bonnie Dundee,' there are hardly two opinions about that. As a whole, it may not be quite equal to 'Lochinvar,' to which it forms such an excellent pendant, and which it so nearly resembles in rhythm. But the best of it is equal as poetry, and

perhaps superior as meaning. And it admirably completes in verse the tribute long before paid by *Old Mortality* in prose, to the 'last and best of Scots,' as Dryden called him in the noble epitaph, which not improbably inspired Scott himself to do what he could to remove the vulgar aspersions on the fame of the hero of Killiecrankie.

Moreover, according to his wont, Scott had barely finished, indeed he had not finished, the *Napoleon* before he had arranged for new work of two different kinds; and he was soon, without a break, actually engaged upon both tasks, one of them among the happiest things he ever undertook, and the other containing, at least, one piece of his most interesting work. These were the *Tales of a Grandfather* and the *Chronicles of the Canongate*. Both supplied him with his tasks, his daily allowance of 'leaves,' for great part of 1827, and both were finished and the *Chronicles* actually published, before the end of it.

For the actual stories comprising these *Chronicles* I have never cared much. The chief in point of size, the *Surgeon's Daughter*, deals with Indian scenes, of which Scott had no direct knowledge, and in connection with which there was no interesting literature to inspire him. It appears to me almost totally uninteresting, more so than *Castle Dangerous* itself. *The Two Drovers* and *The Highland Widow* have more merit; but they are little more than anecdotes. On the other hand, the 'Introduction' to these *Chronicles*, with the history of their supposed compiler, Mr. Chrystal Croftangry, is a thing which I should be disposed to put on a level with his very greatest work. Much is admittedly personal reminiscence of himself and his friends, handled not with the clumsy and tactless directness of reporting, which has ruined so many novels, but in the great transforming way of Fielding and Thackeray. Chrystal's early thoughtless life, the sketch of his ancestry (said to represent the Scotts of Raeburn), the agony of Mr. Somerville, suggested partly by the last illness of Scott's father, the sketches of Janet M'Evoy and Mrs. Bethune Baliol (Mrs. Murray Keith of Ravelston), the visit to the lost home, — all these things are treated not merely with consummate literary effect, but with a sort of *sourdine* accompaniment of heart-throbs which only the dullest ear can miss. Nor, as we see from the *Diary*, were the author's recent misfortunes, and his sojourn in a moral counterpart of the Deserted Garden of his friend Campbell, the only disposing causes of this. He had in several ways revived the memory of his early love, Lady Forbes, long since dead. Her husband had been among the most active of his

business friends in arranging the compromise with creditors, and was shortly (though Scott did not know it) to discharge privately the claim of the recalcitrant Jew bill-broker Abud, who threatened Sir Walter's personal liberty. Her mother, Lady Jane Stuart, had renewed acquaintance with him, and very soon after the actual publication sent him some MS. memorials of the days that were long enough ago — memorials causing one of those paroxysms of memory which are the best of all things for a fairly hale and happy man, but dangerous for one whom time and ill-luck have shaken. He had, while the *Chronicles* were actually a-writing, revisited St. Andrews, and, while his companions were climbing St. Rule's Tower, had sat on a tombstone and thought how he carved her name in Runic letters thirtyfour years before. In short, all the elements, sentimental and circumstantial, of the moment of literary projection were present, and the Introduction was no vulgar piece of 'chemic gold.'

The delightful and universally known *Tales of a Grandfather* present no such contrasts of literary merit, and were connected with no such powerful but exhausting emotions of the mind. They originated in actual stories told to 'Hugh Littlejohn,' they were encouraged by the fact that there was no popular and readable compendium of Scottish history, they came as easily from his pen as the *Napoleon* had run with difficulty, and are as far removed from hack-work as that vast and, to his creditors, profitable compilation must be pronounced to be on the whole near to it. The book, of course, is not in the modern sense strictly critical, though it must be remembered that the authorities for at least the earlier history of Scotland are so exceedingly few and meagre, that criticism of the saner kind has very little to fasten upon. But in this book eminently, in the somewhat later compilation for *Lardner's Cyclopædia* to a rather less degree, this absence of technical criticism is more than made up by Scott's knowledge of humanity, by the divining power, so to say, which his combined affection for the subject and general literary skill gave him, and by that singularly shrewd and pervading common sense which in him was so miraculously united with the poetical and romantic gift. I was pleased, but not at all surprised, when, some year or so ago, I asked a professed historian, and one of the best living authorities on the particular subject, what he thought of the general historic effect of Scott's work, to find him answer without the slightest hesitation that it was about the soundest thing, putting mere details aside, that exists on the matter. It may be observed, in passing, that the later

compilation referred to was a marked example of the way in which Scott could at this time ‘coin money.’ He was offered a thousand pounds for one of the Lardner volumes; and as his sketch swelled beyond the limit, he received fifteen hundred. The entire work, much of which was simple paraphrase of the *Tales*, occupied him, it would seem, about six working weeks, or not quite so much. Can it be wondered that both before and after the crash this power of coining money should have put him slightly out of focus with pecuniary matters generally? Mediæval and other theorisers on usury have been laughed at for their arguments as to the ‘unnatural’ nature of usurious gain, and its consequent evil. One need not be superstitious more than reason, to scent a certain unnaturalness in the gift of turning paper into gold in this other way also. Every *peau de chagrin* has a faculty of revenging itself on the possessor.

For the time, however, matters went with Scott as swimmingly as they could with a man who, by his own act, was, as he said, ‘eating with spoons and reading books that were not his own,’ and yet earning by means absolutely within his control, and at his pleasure to exercise or not, some twenty thousand a year. *The Fair Maid of Perth*, a title which has prevailed over what was its first, *St. Valentine’s Eve*, and has entirely obscured the fact that it was issued as a second series of the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, provided money for a new scheme. This scheme, outlined by Constable himself, and now carried out by Cadell and accepted by Scott’s trustees, was for buying in the outstanding copyrights belonging to the bankrupt firm, and issuing the entire series of novels, with new introductions and notes by Scott himself, with attractive illustrations and in a cheap and handy form. Scott himself usually designates the plan as the *Magnum Opus*, or more shortly (and perhaps not without remembrance of more convivial days) ‘the *Magnum*‘. *The Fair Maid* itself was very well received, and seems to have kept its popularity as well as any of the later books. Indeed, the figures of the Smith, of Oliver Proudfute (the last of Scott’s humorous-pathetic characters), of the luckless Rothsay, and of Ramornie (who very powerfully affected a generation steeped in Byronism), are all quite up to the author’s ‘best seconds.’ The opening and the close are quite excellent, especially the fight on the North Inch and ‘Another for Hector!’ and the middle part is full of attractive bits of the old kind. But Conachar-Eachin is rather a thing of shreds and patches, and the entire episode of Father

Clement and the heresy business is dragged in with singularly little initial excuse, valid connection, or final result.

We have unluckily no diary for the last half of 1828, after Scott returned from a long stay with the Lockharts in London, and we thus hear little of the beginnings of the next novel, *Anne of Geierstein*. When the *Journal* begins again, complaints are heard from Ballantyne. Alterations (which Scott always loathed, and which certainly are detestable things) became or were thought necessary, and when the poor *Maid of the Mist* at length appeared in May 1829, she was dismissed by her begetter very unkindly, as 'not a good girl like the other Annes' — his daughter and her cousin, *fille de Thomas*, who were living with him. The book was not at all ill received, but Lockhart is apologetic about it, and it has been the habit of criticism since to share the opinions of 'Aldiborontiphoscophormio.' I cannot agree with this, and should put *Anne of Geierstein* — as a mere romance and not counting the personal touches which exalt *Redgauntlet* and the Introduction to the *Chronicles* — on a level with anything, and above most things, later than *The Pirate*. Its chief real fault is not so much bad construction — it is actually more, not less, well knit than *The Fair Maid of Perth*, — as the too great predominance of merely episodic and unnecessary things and persons, like the *Vehmgericht* and King's René's court. Its merits are manifold. The opening storm and Arthur's rescue by Anne, as well as the quarrel with Rudolf, are excellent; the journey (though too much delayed by the said Rudolf's tattlings), with the sojourn at Grafslust and the adventures at La Ferette, ranks with Scott's many admirable journeys, and high among them; Queen Margaret is nobly presented (I wish Shakespeare, Lancastrian that he was, had had the chance of versifying the scene where she flings the feather and the rose to the winds, as a pendant to 'I called thee then vain shadow of my fortune'); and not only Philipson's rattling peal of thunder to wake Charles the Bold from his stupor, but the Duke's final scenes, come well up to the occasion. Earlier, Scott would not have made René quite such a mere old fool, and could have taken the slight touch of pasteboard and sawdust out of the Black Priest of St. Paul's. But these are small matters, and the whole merits of the book are not small. Even Arthur and Anne are above, not below, the usual hero and heroine.

The gap in the *Journal* for the last half of 1828 is matched by another and more serious one for nearly a twelvemonth, from July 1829 to May 1830, a period during which Sir Walter's health went from bad to worse,

and in which he lost his Abbotsford factotum, Tom Purdie. But the first six months of 1829, and perhaps a little more, are among its pleasantest parts. The shock of the failure and of his wife's death were, as far as might be, over; he had resumed the habit of seeing a fair amount of society; his work, though still busily pursued, was less killing than during the composition of the *Napoleon*; and his affairs were looking almost rosily. A first distribution, of thirty-two thousand pounds at once, had been made among the creditors. Cadell's scheme of the *Magnum* — wisely acquiesced in by the trustees, and facilitated by a bold purchase at auction of Constable's copyrights for some eight thousand pounds, and later, of those of the poems from Longmans for about the same or a little less — was turning out a great success. They had counted on a sale of eight thousand copies; they had to begin with twelve thousand, and increase it to twenty, while the number ultimately averaged thirtyfive thousand. The work of annotation and introduction was not hard, and was decidedly interesting.

Unluckily, irreparable mischief had already been done, and when the *Diary* begins again, we soon see signs of it. The actual beginning of the end had occurred before the resumption, on February 15, 1830, when Sir Walter had, in the presence of his daughter and of Miss Violet Lockhart, experienced an attack of an apoplectic-paralytic character, from which he only recovered by much bloodletting and starvation. There can be little doubt that this helped to determine him to do what he had for some time meditated, and resign his place at the Clerk's table: nor perhaps could he have well done otherwise. But the results were partly unfortunate. The work had been very trifling, and had saved him from continual drudgery indoors at home, while it incidentally provided him with society and change of scene. He was now to live at Abbotsford, — for neither his means nor his health invited an Edinburgh residence when it was not necessary, — with surroundings only too likely to encourage 'thick-coming fancies,' out of reach of immediate skilled medical attendance, and with very dangerous temptations to carry on the use of his brain, which was now becoming almost deadly. Yet he would never give in. The pleasant and not exhausting task of arranging the *Magnum* (which was now bringing in from eight to ten thousand a year for the discharge of his debts) was supplemented by other things, especially *Count Robert of Paris*, and a book on Demonology for Murray's *Family Library*.

This last occupied him about the time of his seizure, and after the *Diary* was resumed, it was published in the summer of 1830. Scott was himself by this time conscious of a sort of aphasia of the pen (the direct result of the now declared affection of his brain), which prevented him from saying exactly what he wished in a connected manner; and the results of this are in part evident in the book. But it must always remain a blot, quite unforgivable and nearly inexplicable, on the memory of Wilson, that 'Christopher North' permitted himself to comment on some lapses in logic and style in a way which would have been rather that side of good manners and reasonable criticism in the case of a mere beginner in letters. It is true that he and Scott were at no time very intimate friends, and that there were even some vague antipathies between them. But Wilson had been deeply obliged to Scott in the matter of his professorship; he at least ought to have been nearly as well aware as we are of the condition of his benefactor's health; and even if he had known nothing of this, the rest of Sir Walter's circumstances were known to all the world, and should surely have secured silence. But it seems that Wilson was for the moment in a pet with Lockhart, to whom the *Letters on Demonology* were addressed, and so he showed, as he seldom, but sometimes did, the 'black drop,' which in his case, though not in Lockhart's, marred at times a generally healthy and noble nature. As a matter of fact, it needs either distinct malevolence or silly hypercriticism to find any serious fault with the *Demonology*. If not a masterpiece of scientific treatment in reference to a subject which hardly admits of any such thing, it is an exceedingly pleasant and amusing and a by no means uninstructive medley of learning, traditional anecdote, reminiscence, and what not, on a matter which, as we know, had interested the writer from very early days, and which he regarded from his usual and invaluable combined standpoint of shrewd sense and poetical appreciation.

The decay, now not to be arrested, though its progress was comparatively slow, was more evident in the last two works of fiction which Scott completed, *Count Robert of Paris* and *Castle Dangerous*. Against the first ending of the former (we do not possess it, so we cannot criticise their criticism) Ballantyne and Cadell formally protested, and Scott rewrote a great deal of it by dictation to Laidlaw. The loss of command both of character and of story-interest is indeed very noticeable. But the opening incident at the Golden Gate, the interview of the Varangian with the Imperial family, the intrusion of Count Robert, and, above all, his battle

with the tiger and liberation from the dungeon of the Blachernal, with some other things, show that astonishing power of handling single incidents which was Scott's inseparable gift, and which seems to have accompanied him throughout to the very eve of his death. The much briefer *Castle Dangerous* (which is connected with an affecting visit of Scott and Lockhart to the tombs of the Douglases) is too slight to give room for very much shortcoming. Its chief artistic fault is the happy ending — for though a romancer is in no respect bound to follow his text exactly, and happy endings are quite good things, yet it is rather too much to turn upside down the historic catastrophe of the Good Lord James's fashion of warfare. Otherwise the book is more noticeable for a deficiency of spirit, life, and light — for the evidence of shadow and stagnation falling over the once restless and brilliant scene — than for anything positively bad.

These two books were mainly dictated, the paralytic affection having injured the author's power of handwriting, to William Laidlaw between the summer of 1830 and the early autumn of 1831, increasing weakness, and the demands of the *Magnum*, preventing more speed. The last pages of *Castle Dangerous* contain Scott's farewell, and the announcement to the public of that voyage to Italy which had actually begun when the novels appeared in the month of November.

The period between the fatal seizure and the voyage to the Mediterranean has not much diary concerning it, but has been related with inimitable judgment and sympathy by Lockhart. It was, even putting failing health and obscured mental powers aside, not free from 'browner shades'; for the Reform agitation naturally grieved Sir Walter deeply, while on two occasions he was the object of popular insult and on one of popular violence. Both were at Jedburgh; but the blame is put upon intrusive weavers from Hawick. The first, a meeting of Roxburghshire freeholders, saw nothing worse than unmannerly interruption of a speech made partially unintelligible by the speaker's failing articulation. He felt it bitterly, and when hissing was repeated as he bowed farewell, is said to have replied, low, but now quite distinctly, '*Moriturus vos saluto!*' On the second, the election after the throwing out of the first Bill, he was stoned, spat upon, and greeted with cries of 'Burke Sir Walter.' Natural indignation has often been expressed at this behaviour towards the best neighbour and the greatest man in Scotland — behaviour which, as we know, haunted him on

his deathbed; but it is to be presumed that the persons who thus proclaimed their cause knew the line of conduct most worthy of it.

It does not appear with absolute certainty who first suggested the Italian journey. It could not have been expected to produce any radical cure; but it seems to have been hoped that change of scene would prevent the patient from indulging in that attempt to write from which at Abbotsford it was impossible to keep him, though it was simply slow, and not so very slow, suicide. The wishes of his family were most kindly and generously met by the Government of the day, among whose members he had many personal friends, though political opponents; and the frigate *Barham*, a cut-down seventy-four, which had the credit of being one of the smartest vessels in the navy, was assigned to take him to Malta. He had, before he left Abbotsford itself, an affecting interview with Wordsworth, which occasioned *Yarrow Revisited* and the beautiful sonnet, 'A trouble, not of clouds or weeping rain,' and had no doubt part in the initiation of the last really great thing that Wordsworth ever wrote — the *Effusion* on the deaths of Hogg, Coleridge, Crabbe, Lamb, and Scott himself, in 1835. Some stay was made with the Lockharts in London, and a little at Portsmouth, waiting for a wind; but the final departure took place on October 29, 1831.

Scott was abroad for the best part of a year, the time being chiefly made out in visits of some length to Malta, Naples, and Rome. We have a good deal of diary for this period, and it, even more than the subsidiary documents and Lockhart's summary of no doubt much that is unpublished, betrays the state of the case. Every now and then — indeed, for long passages — there is nothing very different from the matter to which, since the first warning in 1818, we have been accustomed. Scott is, if not the infinitely various but never mutable Scott of the earlier years, still constant in fun and kindness, in quaint erudition and hearty friendship, though he is all this in a slightly deadened and sicklied degree. But there are strange breaks-down and unfamiliar touches, now of almost querulous self-concern (the thing most foreign to his earlier nature), as where he complains that his companions, his son and daughter, 'are neither desirous to follow his amusements nor anxious that he should adopt theirs'; now of still more foreign callousness, as where he dismisses the news of the death of Hugh Littlejohn, whose illnesses earlier had been almost his chief anxiety, and records in the same entry that he 'went to the opera.' The passage in the Introduction to the *Chronicles*, written not so very long before, traces with

an almost horrible exactness the changes which were now taking place in himself. Moreover, he would resume the pen; and, first in Malta, then at Naples, began and went far to complete two new novels, *The Siege of Malta* and *Il Bizarro*, which, I suppose, are still at Abbotsford, with Lockhart's solemn curse on the person who shall publish them. He had now (it does not seem clear on what grounds, or by what stages) confirmed himself in the belief that he had paid off all his debts, instead of nearly half of them. And he founded divers schemes on the profits of these works, added to the (as he thought) liberated returns of the *Magnum*; and even revived his notions of buying Faldonside with its thousand acres, and 'holding all Tweed-bank, from Ettrick-foot to Calla weel.' Fêted, too, as he was, and in this condition of mind, it seems to have been difficult for his companions to make him observe the absolute temperance in food and drink which was as necessary to the staving off of the end as abstinence from brain-work; and it must be regarded as a signal proof of the extraordinary strength of his constitution that it resisted as long as it did.

At last, and of course suddenly, came the final warning of all: the occurrence, without notice, of an almost agonising home-sickness. The party travelled by land, as speedily as they could, to the Channel, a last attack of apoplectic paralysis taking place at Nimeguen; and after crossing it and reaching London, Sir Walter was taken by sea to the Forth, and thence home. The actual end was delayed but very little longer, and it has been told by Lockhart in one of those capital passages of English literature on which it is folly to attempt to improve or even to comment, and which, a hundred times quoted, can never be stale. Sir Walter Scott died at Abbotsford on September 21, 1832, and was buried four days later at Dryburgh, a post-mortem examination having disclosed considerable softening of the brain.

There remained unpaid at his death about fifty-five thousand pounds of the Ballantyne debts, besides private encumbrances on Abbotsford, etc., including the ten thousand which Constable had extracted, he knowing, from Scott unknowing, the extent of the ruin, in the hours just before it. The falling in of assurances cleared off two-fifths of this balance, and Cadell discharged the rest on the security of the *Magnum*, which was equal, though not much more than equal, to the burden in the longrun. Thus, if Scott's exertions during the last seven years of his life had benefited his own pocket, his ambition — whether wise or foolish, persons more confident in

their judgment of human wishes than the present writer must decide — would have been amply fulfilled, and his son, supposing the money to have been invested with ordinary care and luck, would have been left a baronet and squire, with at least six or seven thousand a year. As it was, he did not succeed to much more than the title, a costly house, and a not very profitable estate, burdened, though not heavily, with mortgages. This burden was reduced by the good sense of the managers of the English memorial subscription to Scott, who devoted the six or seven thousand pounds, remaining after some embezzlement, to clearing off the encumbrances as far as possible. The chief result of many Scottish tributes of the same kind was the wellknown Scott Monument on the edge of Princes Street Gardens, which has the great good luck to be one of the very few not unsatisfactory things of the kind in the British Islands. By mishap rather than neglect, no monument in Westminster Abbey was erected for the greater part of the century; but one has been at last set up in May of the present year.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

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It is natural — indeed the feeling is not merely easy of excuse, but entitled to respect — that ‘the pity of it,’ the sombre close of so brilliant a career as Scott’s, should attract somewhat disproportionate attention. Thus readers of his life are drawn more especially either to sorrow for his calamities, or to admiration of this stoutest of all hearts set to nearly the stiffest of all hills, or to casuistical debate on the ‘dram of eale’ that brought about his own share in causing his misfortunes. Undoubtedly, none of these things ought to escape our attention. But, in the strict court of literary and critical audit, they must not have more than their share. As a matter of fact, Scott’s work was almost finished — nothing distinctly novel in kind and firstrate in quality, except the *Tales of a Grandfather* and the Introduction to the *Chronicles*, remained to be added to it — when that fatal bill of Constable’s was suffered by Hurst & Robinson to be returned. And the trials which followed, though they showed the strength, the nobleness, the rare balance and solidity of his character, did not create these virtues, which had been formed and established by habit long before. *Respice finem* is not here a wise, at least a sufficient, maxim: we must look along the whole line to discern satisfactorily and thoroughly what manner of man this was in life and in letters.

What manner of man he was physically is pretty wellknown from his originally numerous and almost innumerably reproduced and varied portraits; not extremely tall, but of a goodly height, somewhat shortened by his lameness and massive make, the head being distinguished by a peculiar domed, or coned, cranium. This made ‘Lord Peter’ Robertson give him the nickname of ‘Peveril of the Peak,’ which he himself after a little adopted, and which, shortened to ‘Peveril,’ was commonly used by his family. His expression, according to the intelligence of those who saw him and the mood in which he found himself, has been variously described as ‘heavy,’ ‘homely,’ and in more complimentary terms. But the more appreciative describers recognise the curiously combined humour, shrewdness, and kindliness which animated features naturally irregular and quite devoid of

what his own generation would have called ‘chiselled elegance.’ He himself asserts — and it seems to be the fact — that from the time of the disappearance of his childish maladies to the attack of cramp, or gallstones, or whatever the evil was which came on in 1818, and from which he never really recovered, his health was singularly robust; and he appears as quite a young man to have put it to considerable, though not excessive, tests.

His conversation, like his countenance, has been variously characterised, and it is probable that the complexion of both depended, even more than it does with most men, on his company. He is acknowledged never to have ‘talked for victory,’ an evil and barbarous practice, which the Edinburgh wits seem to have caught from their great enemy and guest, Dr. Johnson; to have (like all good men) simply abominated talking about his own works, or indeed bookishly at all, full as his conversation was of literature; and, though a great tale-teller, to have been no monopoliser of the conversation in any way. He admits having been in youth and early middle age not disinclined to solitude, — and he does not appear to have at any time liked miscellaneous society much, though he prided himself, and very justly, on having, from all but his earliest youth, frequented many kinds of it, including the best. The perfect ease of his correspondence with all sorts and conditions of men and women may have owed something to this; but, no doubt, it owed as much to the happy peculiarities and composition of his nature and temperament.

The only fault or faults of which he has been accused with any plausibility are those which attend or proceed from a somewhat too high estimate of rank and of riches; — that is to say, a too great eagerness to obtain these things, and at the same time a too great deference for those who possessed them. From avarice, in any of the ordinary senses of the word, he was, indeed, entirely free. His generosity, if not absolutely and foolishly indiscriminate, was extraordinary, and as unostentatious as it was lavish. He certainly had no delight in hoarding money, and his personal tastes, except in so far as books, ‘curios,’ and so forth were concerned, were of the simplest possible. Yet, as we have seen, he was never quite content with an income which, after very early years, was always competent, and when he launched into commercial ventures, already, in prospect at least, considerable; while in the one article of spending money on house and lands he was admittedly excessive. So, too, he seems to have been really indifferent about his title, except as an adjunct to these possessions, and as

something transmissible to, and serving to distinguish, the family he longed to found. Yet no instance of the slightest servility on his part to rank — much less to riches — has been produced. His address, no doubt, both in writing and conversation, was more ceremonious than would now be customary. But it must be remembered that this was then a point of good manners, and that 'your Lordship' and 'my noble friend,' even between persons intimate with each other and on the common footing of gentlemen, were then phrases as proper and usual in private as they still are in public life. Attempts have been made to excuse his attitude, on the plea that it was inherited from his father (*vide* the scene between Saunders Fairford and Herries), that it was national, that it was this, that, and the other. For my own part, I have never read or heard of any instance of it which seemed to me to exceed the due application to etiquette of the rule of distributive justice, to give every man his own. Scott, I think, would have accepted the principle, though not the application, of the sentence of Timoléon de Cossé, Duke of Brissac — 'God has made thee a gentleman, and the king has made thee a duke.' And he honoured God and the king by behaving accordingly.

Of his infinite merits as a host and a guest, as a friend and as a relation, there is a superabundance of evidence. It does not appear that he ever lost an old friend; and though, like most men who have more talent for friendship than for acquaintance, he did not latterly make many new ones, the relations existing between himself and Lockhart are sufficient proof of his faculty of playing the most difficult of all parts, that of elder friend to younger. I have said above that, though in no sense touchy, he was a very dangerous person to take a liberty with; he adopted to the full the morality of his time about duelling, though he disapproved of it; he was in all respects a man of the world, yet without guile.

It is, moreover, quite certain that Scott, though never talking much about religion (as, indeed, he never talked much about any of the deeper feelings of the heart), was a man very sincerely religious. He was not a metaphysician in any way, and therefore had no special inclination towards that face or summit of metaphysics which is called theology. And it is pretty clear that he had towards disputed points of doctrine, ceremony, and discipline, a not sharply or decidedly formulated attitude. But there is no doubt whatever that he was a thoroughly and sincerely orthodox Christian, and there are some slight escapes of confession unawares in his private writings, which show in what thorough conformity with his death his life

had been. Few men have ever so well observed the onehalf of the apostle's doctrine as to pure religion; and if he did not keep himself (in the matter of the secret partnership and others) altogether unspotted from the world, the sufferings of his last seven years may surely be taken as a more than sufficient purification. More blameless morally, I think, few men have been; fewer still better equipped with the positive virtues. And, above all, we must recognise in Scott (if we have any power of such recognition) what has been already called a certain nobleness, a certain natural inclination towards all things high, and great, and pure, and of good report, which is rarer still than negative blamelessness or even than positive virtue.

To speak of Scott's politics is a little difficult and perhaps a little dangerous; yet they played so large a part in his life and work that the subject can hardly be omitted, especially as it comes just between those aspects of him which we have already discussed, and those to which we are coming. It has sometimes been disputed whether his Toryism was much more than mere sentiment; and of course there were not wanting in his own day fellows of the baser sort who endeavoured to represent it as mere self-interest. But no impartial person nowadays, I suppose, doubts, however meanly he may think of Scott's political creed, that that creed was part, not of his interests, not even of his mere crotchets and crazes, literary and other, but of his inmost heart and soul. That reverence for the past, that distaste for the vulgar, that sense of continuity, of mystery, of something beyond interest and calculation, which the worst foes of Toryism would, I suppose, allow to be its nobler parts, were the blood of Scott's veins, the breath of his nostrils, the marrow of his bones. My friend Mr. Lang thinks that Scott's Toryism is dead, that no successor has arisen on its ruins, that it was, in fact, almost a private structure, of which he was the architect, a tree fated to fall with its planter. Perhaps; but perhaps also

'The Little Tower with no such ease Is won';

and there are enough still to keep watch and ward of it.

But we have of course here to look even more to his mental character than to his moral, to do with him rather as a man of genius than as a 'man of good,' though it is impossible to overlook, and difficult to overestimate, his singular eminence as both combined. Of his actual literary accomplishment, something like a detailed view has been given in this little book, and of some of its separate departments estimates have been attempted. But we may, or rather must, gather all these up here. Nor can we proceed better

than by the old way of inquiry — first, What were the peculiar characteristics of his thought? and, secondly, What distinguished his expression of this thought?

As to the first point, it has been pretty generally admitted — though the admissions have in some cases been carried almost too far — that we are not to look for certain things in Scott. We are not to look for any elaborately or at least scholastically minute faculty or practice of analysis or of argument. But to proceed from this to a general denial of 'philosophy' to him — that is to say, to allow him a merely superficial knowledge of human nature — is an utter mistake. I have quoted elsewhere, but the book from which the quotation is made is so rare that I may well quote here again, some remarkable words on this subject from M. Milsand, Mr. Browning's friend, and the recipient of the Dedication of the reprint of *Sordello*. It is certain that this praise might be supported with a large anthology of passages in the novels and even the poems — passages indicating an anthropological science as intimate as it is unpretentiously expressed. To some good folk in our days, who think that nothing can be profound which is naturally and simply spoken, and who demand that a human philosopher shall speak gibberish and wear his boots on his brows, the fact may be strange, but it is a fact. And it may be added that even if chapter and verse could not thus be produced, a sufficient proof, the most sufficient possible, could be otherwise provided. Scott, by the confession of all competent judges, save a very few, has created almost more men and women, undoubtedly real and lifelike, than any other prose novelist. Now you cannot create a man or a woman without knowing whereof a man and a woman are made, though the converse proposition is unfortunately by no means so universally predicable. He was content, as a rule, to put this great science of his into practice rather than to expound it in theory, to demonstrate it rather than to lecture on it, but that is all.

In the second place, we are not to look to him for any great intensity of delineation of passion, especially in the sense to which that word is more commonly confined. He has nowhere left us (as some other men of letters have) any hint that he abstained from doing this because the passion would have been so tremendous that it was on the whole best for mankind that they should not be exposed to it. The qualities of humour and of taste which were always present with Scott would have prevented this. But I should doubt whether he felt any temptation to unbosom himself, or any need to do

so. The slight hints given at the time of the combined action of his misfortunes and the agitation arising from his renewed communications with Lady Jane Stuart, are almost all the indications that we have on the subject, and they are too slight to found any theory upon. It is evident that this was not his vein, or that, if the vein was there, he did not choose to work it.

To pass from negations to positives, the region in which Scott's power of conception and expression did lie, and which he ruled with wondrous range and rarely equalled power, was a strangely united kingdom of common-sense fact and fanciful or traditional romance. No writer who has had such a sense of the past, of tradition, of romantic literature, has had such a grasp of the actual working motives and conduct of mankind; none who has had the latter has even come near to his command of the former. We may take Spenser and Fielding as the princes of these separate principalities in English literature, and though each had gifts that Scott had not, — though Scott had gifts possessed by neither, — yet if we could conceive Spenser and Fielding blended, the blend would, I think, come nearer to Scott's idiosyncrasy than anything else that can be imagined. He had advanced (or rather returned) from that onesided eighteenth-century conception of nature which was content to know *human* nature pretty thoroughly up to a certain point, and to dismiss 'prospects,' in Johnson's scornful language to Thrale, as one just like the other. But he had retained the eighteenth-century grasp of man himself, while recovering the path to the Idle Lake and the Cave of Despair, to the many-treed wood through which Una and her knight journeyed, and the Rich Strand where all the treasures of antiquity lay. We may think — apparently some of us do think — that we have improved on him in the recovery, and even in the retaining grasp. The fact of the improvement on him will take a great deal of proving, I am inclined to think; of the fact of his achievement there is no doubt.

If I must select Scott's special literary characteristic, next to that really magical faculty of placing scenes and peopling them with characters in the memory of his readers which I have noticed before, I should certainly fix on his humour. It is a good old scholastic doctrine, that the greatest merit of anything is to be excellent in the special excellence of its kind. And in that quality which so gloriously differentiates English literature from all others, Scott is never wanting, and is almost always preeminent. If his patriotism, intense as it is, is never grotesque or offensive, as patriotism too often is to

readers who do not share it; if his pathos never touches the maudlin; if his romantic sentiment is always saved by the sense of solid fact, — and we may assert these things without hesitation or qualification, — it is due to his humour. For this humour, never merely local, never bases its appeal on small private sympathies and understandings and passwords which leave the world at large cold, or mystified, or even disgusted. Nor is it perhaps uncritical to set down that preeminently happy use, without abuse, of dialect, which has attracted the admiration of almost all good judges, to this same humour, warning him alike against the undisciplined profusion and the injudicious selection which have not been and are not unknown in some followers of his. And, further, his universal quality is free from some accompanying drawbacks which must be acknowledged in the humour of some of the other very great humorists. It is not coarse — a defect which has made prigs at all times, and especially at this time, affect horror at Aristophanes; it is not grim, like that of Swift; it is free from any very strong evidences of its owner having lived at a particular date, such as may be detected by the Devil's Advocate even in Fielding, even in Thackeray. No tricks or grimaces, no mere elaboration, no lingering to bespeak applause; but a moment of life and nature subjected to the humour-stamp and left recorded and transformed for ever — there is Scott.

That the necessary counterpart and companion of this breadth of humour should be depth of feeling can be no surprise to those who accept the only sound distinction between humour and wit. Scott himself never wore his heart on his sleeve; but to those who looked a little farther than the sleeve its beatings were sufficiently evident. The Scott who made that memorable exclamation on the Mound, and ejaculated 'No, by — — !' at the discovery of the Regalia, who wrote Jeanie's speech to Queen Caroline and Habakkuk Mucklewrath's to Claverhouse, had no need ever to affect emotion, because it was always present, though repressed when it had no business to exhibit itself. And his romantic imagination was as sincere as his pathos or his indignation. He never lost the clue to 'the shores of old romance'; and, at least, great part of the secret which made him such a magician to his readers was that the spell was on himself — that the regions of fancy were as open, as familiar as Princes Street or the Parliament Square to this solid practical Clerk of Session, who avowed that no food could to his taste equal Scotch broth, and in everything but the one fatal

delusion was as sound a man of business as ever partook of that nourishing concoction.

In his execution both in prose and verse, but especially, or at least more obviously, in the latter there are certain peculiarities, in the nature (at least partly) of defect, which strike every critical eye at once. At no time, and in no case, was Scott of the order of the careful, anxious miniaturists of work, who repaint every stroke a hundred times, adjust every detail of composition over and over again, and can never have done with rehandling and perfecting. Nor did he belong to that very rare class whose work seems to be, at any rate after a slight apprenticeship, faultless from the first, to whom inelegancies of style, incorrect rhymes, licences of metre — not deliberate and intended to produce the effect they achieve, but the effect of carelessness or of momentary inability to do what is wanted — are by nature or education impossible. His nature did not give him this endowment, and his education was of the very last sort to procure it for him. He himself, not out of pique or conceit, things utterly alien from his nature, still less out of laziness, but, I believe, as a genuine, and, what is more, a correct self-criticism, has left in his private writings repeated expressions of his belief that revision and correction in his case not only did not improve the work, but were in most cases likely to do it positive harm, that the spoon was made or the horn spoiled (to adapt his country proverb) at the first draft, and once for all. I think that this was a correct judgment, and I do not see that it implies any inferiority on his part. It is not as if he ever aimed at the methods of the precisians and failed, as if it was his desire to be a ‘correct’ writer, a careful observer of proportion and construction, a producer of artful felicities in metre, rhythm, rhyme, phrase. We may yield to no one in the delight of tracing the exact correspondence of strophe and antistrophe in a Greek chorus, the subtle vowel-music of a Latin hymn or a passage of Rossetti’s. But I cannot see why, because we rejoice in these things, we should demand them of all poetry, or why, because we rejoice in the faultless construction of Fielding or the exquisite finish of Jane Austen as novelists, we should despise the looser handling and more sweeping touch of Scott in prose fiction. It is extremely probable that, as Mr. Balfour suggested the other day in unveiling the Westminster Abbey monument, this breadth of touch obtained him his popularity abroad, nor need it impair his fame at home.

Unquestionably, though he had many minor gifts and graces, including that of incomparable lyric snatch, from the drums and fifes of 'Lochinvar' and 'Bonnie Dundee' to the elfin music of 'Proud Maisie,' his faculty of weaving a story in prose or in verse, with varied decorations of dialogue and description and character, rather than on a cunning canvas of plot, was Scott's main forte. If it is in verse — and admirable as it is here, I think we must allow it to be — less preeminent than in prose, it is, first, because minor formal defects are more felt in verse than in prose; secondly, because the scope of the medium is less; and thirdly, because the medium itself was in reality not what he wanted. The verse romance of Scott is a great achievement and a delightful possession: it has had extraordinary influence on English literature, from the work of Byron, which it directly produced, and which pretty certainly would never have been produced without it, to that of Mr. William Morris, which may not impossibly have been its last echo — transformed and refreshed, but still an echo — for some time to come. But there was a little of the falsetto in it, and the interludes, of which the introductions to *Marmion* and to the *Bridal* are the most considerable, show that it gave no outlets, or outlets only awkward, for much of what he wanted to say. He defines his own general literary object admirably in a letter to Morritt. 'I have tried to induce the public to relax some of the rules of criticism, and to be amused with that medley of tragic and comic with which life presents us, not only in the same course of action, but in the same character.' The detailed remarks which have been given in earlier chapters make it unnecessary to bring out the application of this to all his work, both verse and prose. And it need but be pointed out in passing how much more satisfactorily the form of prose fiction lent itself, than the form of verse romance, to the expression of a creed which, as it had been that of Shakespeare, so it was the creed of Scott.

But a few words must be added in reference to the complaint which is often openly made, and which, I understand, is still more often secretly entertained, or taken for proved, by the younger generation — to wit, the complaint that Scott is 'commonplace' and 'conventional,' not merely in thought, but in expression. As to the thought, that is best met by the reply churlish, if not even by the reproof valiant. Scott's thought is never commonplace, and never merely conventional: it can only seem so to those who have given their own judgments in bondage to a conventional and temporary cant of unconventionality. In respect of expression, the complaint

will admit of some argument which may best take the form of example. It is perfectly true that Scott's expression is not 'quintessenced' — that it has to a hasty eye an air of lacking what is called distinction; and, especially, that it has no very definite savour of any particular time. At present, as at other periods during the recorded story of literature, there is a marked preference for all these things which it is not; and so Scott is, with certain persons, in disfavour accordingly. But it so happens that the study of this now long record of literature is itself sufficient to convince anyone how treacherous the tests thus suggested are. There never, for instance, was an English writer fuller of all the marks which these, our younger critics, desiderate in Scott, and admire in some authors of our own day, than John Lyly, the author of *Euphues*, of a large handful of very charming and interesting court dramas, and of some delightful lyrics. Those who have to teach literature impress the importance, and try to impress the interest, of Lyly on students and readers, and they do right. For he was a man not merely of talent, but (with respect to my friend Mr. Courthope, who thinks differently), I think, of genius. He had a poetical fancy, a keen and biting wit, a fairly exact proficiency in the scholarship of his time. He eschewed the obvious, the commonplace in thought, and still more in style, as passionately as any man ever has eschewed it, and, having not merely will and delicacy, but power, he not only achieved an immense temporary popularity, but even influenced the English language permanently. Yet — and those who thus praise him know it — he, the apostle of ornate prose, the model of a whole generation of the greatest wits that England has seen, the master of Shakespeare in more things than one, including romantic comedy, the originator of the English analytic novel, the 'raiser' (as I think they call it) 'of his native language to a higher power,' is dead. We shall never get anybody outside the necessarily small number of those who have cultivated the historic as well as the æsthetic sense in literature, to read him except as a curiosity or a task, because he not merely cultivated art, but neglected nature for it; because he fooled the time to the top of its bent, and let the time fool him in return; because, instead of making the common as though it were not common, he aimed and strained at the uncommon *in* and *per se*.

Scott did just the contrary. He never tried to be unlike somebody else; if he hit, as he did hit, upon great new styles of literature, — absolutely new in the case of the historical novel, revived after long trance in the case of the verse tale, — it was from no desire to innovate, but because his genius

called him. Though in ordinary ways he was very much a man of his time, he did not contort himself in any fashion by way of expressing a (then) modern spirit, a Georgian idiosyncrasy, or anything of that sort; he was content with the language of the best writers and the thoughts of the best men. He was no amateur of the topsy-turvy, and had not the very slightest desire to show how a literary head could grow beneath the shoulders. He was satisfied that his genius should flow naturally. And the consequence is that it was never checked, that it flows still for us with all its spontaneous charm, and that it will flow *in omne volubilis ævum*. Among many instances of the strength which accompanied this absence of strain one already alluded to may be mentioned again. Scott is one of the most literary of all writers. He was saturated with reading; nothing could happen but it brought some felicitous quotation, some quaint parallel to his mind from the great wits, or the small, of old. Yet no writer is less *bookish* than he; none insults his readers less with any parade, with any apparent consciousness of erudition; and he wears his learning so lightly that pedants have even accused him of lacking it because he lacks pedantry. His stream, to resume the simile, carries in solution more reading as well as more wit, more knowledge of life and nature, more gifts of almost all kinds than would suffice for twenty men of letters, yet the very power of its solvent force, as well as the vigour of its current, makes these things comparatively invisible.

In dealing with an author so voluminous and so various in his kinds and subjects of composition, it is a hard matter to say what has to be said within prescribed limits such as these, just as it is still harder to select from so copious a store of biographical information details which may be sufficient, and not more than sufficient, to give a firm and distinct picture of his life. Yet it may perhaps be questioned whether very elaborate handling is necessary for Scott. No man probably, certainly no man of letters, is more of a piece than he. As he has been subjected to an almost unparalleled trial in the revelation of his private thoughts, so his literary powers and performances extend over a range which is unusual, if not absolutely singular, in men of letters of the first rank. Yet he is the same throughout, in romance as in review, in novel as in note-writing. Except his dramatic work, a department for which he seems to have been almost totally unfitted (despite the felicity of his ‘Old Play’ fragments), nothing of his can be neglected by those who wish to enjoy him to the full. Yet though there is no monotony, there is a uniformity which is all the more delightfully brought

out by the minor variations of subject and kind. The last as the first word about Scott should perhaps be, ‘Read him. And, as far as may be, read all of him.’

When, in comparatively early days of his acquaintance with Lockhart, Scott, thinking himself near death in the paroxysms of his cramps, bequeathed to his future son-in-law, in the words of the ballad, ‘the vanguard of the three,’ the duty of burying him and continuing his work, if possible, he had himself limited the heritage to the defence of ancient faith and loyalty — a great one enough. But his is, in fact, a greater. From generation to generation, whosoever determines, in so far as fate and the gods allow, to hold these things fast, and, moreover, to love all good literature, to temper erudition with common sense, to let humour wait always upon fancy, and duty upon romance; whosoever at least tries to be true to the past, to show a bold front to the present, and to let the future be as it may; whosoever ‘spurns the vulgar’ while endeavouring to be just to individuals, and faces ‘the Secret’ with neither bravado nor cringing, — he may take, if not the vanguard, yet a place according to his worth and merit, in the legion which this great captain led. Of the frequent parallels or contrasts drawn between him and Shakespeare it is not the least noteworthy that he is, of all men of letters, that one of whom we have the most intimate and the fullest revelation, while of Shakespeare we have the least. There need be very little doubt that if we knew everything about Shakespeare, he would come, as a man of mould might, scathless from the test. But we do know everything, or almost everything, about Scott, and he comes out nearly as well as anyone but a faultless monster could. For all the works of the Lord in literature, as in other things, let us give thanks — for Blake and for Beddoes as well as for Shelley and for Swift. But let everyone who by himself, or by his fathers, claims origin between Tol-Pedn-Penwith and Dunnet Head give thanks, with more energy and more confidence than in any other case save one, for the fact that his is the race and his the language of Sir Walter Scott.

SIR WALTER SCOTT by Richard H. Hutton

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Prefatory Note

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It will be observed that the greater part of this little book has been taken in one form or other from Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott*, in ten volumes. No introduction to Scott would be worth much in which that course was not followed. Indeed, excepting Sir Walter's own writings, there is hardly any other great source of information about him; and that is so full, that hardly anything needful to illustrate the subject of Scott's life remains untouched. As regards the only matters of controversy, — Scott's relations to the Ballantynes, I have taken care to check Mr. Lockhart's statements by reading those of the representatives of the Ballantyne brothers; but with this exception, Sir Walter's own works and Lockhart's life of him are the great authorities concerning his character and his story.

Just ten years ago Mr. Gladstone, in expressing to the late Mr. Hope Scott the great delight which the perusal of Lockhart's life of Sir Walter had given him, wrote, "I may be wrong, but I am vaguely under the impression that it has never had a really wide circulation. If so, it is the saddest pity, and I should greatly like (without any censure on its present length) to see published an abbreviation of it." Mr. Gladstone did not then know that as long ago as 1848 Mr. Lockhart did [vi] himself prepare such an abbreviation, in which the original eighty-four chapters were compressed into eighteen, — though the abbreviation contained additions as well as compressions. But even this abridgment is itself a bulky volume of 800 pages, containing, I should think, considerably more than a third of the reading in the original ten volumes, and is not, therefore, very likely to be preferred to the completer work. In some respects I hope that this introduction may supply, better than that bulky abbreviation, what Mr. Gladstone probably meant to suggest, — some slight miniature taken from the great picture with care enough to tempt on those who look on it to the study of the fuller life, as well as of that image of Sir Walter which is impressed by his own hand upon his works.

Chapter I

Ancestry, Parentage, and Childhood

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Sir Walter Scott was the first literary man of a great riding, sporting, and fighting clan. Indeed, his father — a Writer to the Signet, or Edinburgh solicitor — was the first of his race to adopt a town life and a sedentary profession. Sir Walter was the lineal descendant — six generations removed — of that Walter Scott commemorated in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, who is known in Border history and legend as Auld Wat of Harden. Auld Wat's son William, captured by Sir Gideon Murray, of Elibank, during a raid of the Scotts on Sir Gideon's lands, was, as tradition says, given his choice between being hanged on Sir Gideon's private gallows, and marrying the ugliest of Sir Gideon's three ugly daughters, Meikle-mouthed Meg, reputed as carrying off the prize of ugliness among the women of four counties. Sir William was a handsome man. He took three days to consider the alternative proposed to him, but chose life with the large-mouthed lady in the end; and found her, according to the tradition which the poet, her descendant, has transmitted, an excellent wife, with a fine talent for pickling the beef which her husband stole from the herds of his foes. Meikle-mouthed Meg transmitted a distinct trace of her large mouth to all her descendants, and not least to him who was to use his "meikle" mouth to best advantage as the spokesman of his race. Rather more than halfway between Auld Wat of Harden's times — i. e., the middle of the sixteenth century — and those of Sir Walter Scott, poet and novelist, lived Sir Walter's great-grandfather, Walter Scott generally known in Teviotdale by the surname of Beardie, because he would never cut his beard after the banishment of the Stuarts, and who took arms in their cause and lost by his intrigues on their behalf almost all that he had, besides running the greatest risk of being hanged as a traitor. This was the ancestor of whom Sir Walter speaks in the introduction to the last canto of *Marmion*: —

"And thus my Christmas still I hold, Where my great grandsire came of old, With amber beard and flaxen hair, And reverend apostolic air, — The feast and holy tide to share, And mix sobriety with wine, And honest mirth with thoughts divine; Small thought was his in after time E'er to be hitch'd

into a rhyme, The simple sire could only boast That he was loyal to his cost; The banish'd race of kings revered, And lost his land — but kept his beard."

Sir Walter inherited from Beardie that sentimental Stuart bias which his better judgment condemned, but which seemed to be rather part of his blood than of his mind. And most useful to him this sentiment undoubtedly was in helping him to restore the mould and fashion of the past. Beardie's second son was Sir Walter's grandfather, and to him he owed not only his first childish experience of the delights of country life, but also, — in his own estimation at least, — that risky, speculative, and sanguine spirit which had so much influence over his fortunes. The good man of Sandy-Knowe, wishing to breed sheep, and being destitute of capital, borrowed 30*l.* from a shepherd who was willing to invest that sum for him in sheep; and the two set off to purchase a flock near Wooler, in Northumberland; but when the shepherd had found what he thought would suit their purpose, he returned to find his master galloping about a fine hunter, on which he had spent the whole capital in hand. *This* speculation, however, prospered. A few days later Robert Scott displayed the qualities of the hunter to such admirable effect with John Scott of Harden's hounds, that he sold the horse for double the money he had given, and, unlike his grandson, abandoned speculative purchases there and then. In the latter days of his clouded fortunes, after Ballantyne's and Constable's failure, Sir Walter was accustomed to point to the picture of his grandfather and say, "Blood will out: my building and planting was but his buying the hunter before he stocked his sheepwalk, over again." But Sir Walter added, says Mr. Lockhart, as he glanced at the likeness of his own staid and prudent father, "Yet it was a wonder, too, for I have a thread of the attorney in me," which was doubtless the case; nor was that thread the least of his inheritances, for from his father certainly Sir Walter derived that disposition towards conscientious, plodding industry, legalism of mind, methodical habits of work, and a generous, equitable interpretation of the scope of all his obligations to others, which, prized and cultivated by him as they were, turned a great genius, which, especially considering the harebrained element in him, might easily have been frittered away or devoted to worthless ends, to such fruitful account, and stamped it with so grand an impress of personal magnanimity and fortitude. Sir Walter's father reminds one in not a few of the formal and rather martinetish traits which are related of him, of the father of Goethe, "a formal man, with strong ideas of strait-laced education, passionately orderly

(he thought a good book nothing without a good binding), and never so much excited as by a necessary deviation from the 'pre-established harmony' of household rules." That description would apply almost wholly to the sketch of old Mr. Scott which the novelist has given us under the thin disguise of Alexander Fairford, Writer to the Signet, in *Redgauntlet*, a figure confessedly meant, in its chief features, to represent his father. To this Sir Walter adds, in one of his later journals, the trait that his father was a man of fine presence, who conducted all conventional arrangements with a certain grandeur and dignity of air, and "absolutely loved a funeral." "He seemed to preserve the list of a whole bead-roll of cousins merely for the pleasure of being at their funerals, which he was often asked to superintend, and I suspect had sometimes to pay for. He carried me with him as often as he could to these mortuary ceremonies; but feeling I was not, like him, either useful or ornamental, I escaped as often as I could." This strong dash of the conventional in Scott's father, this satisfaction in seeing people fairly to the door of life, and taking his final leave of them there, with something of a ceremonious flourish of observance, was, however, combined with a much nobler and deeper kind of orderliness. Sir Walter used to say that his father had lost no small part of a very flourishing business, by insisting that his clients should do their duty to their own people better than they were themselves at all inclined to do it. And of this generous strictness in sacrificing his own interests to his sympathy for others, the son had as much as the father.

Sir Walter's mother, who was a Miss Rutherford, the daughter of a physician, had been better educated than most Scotchwomen of her day, in spite of having been sent "to be finished off" by "the honourable Mrs. Ogilvie," whose training was so effective, in one direction at least, that even in her eightieth year Mrs. Scott could not enjoy a comfortable rest in her chair, but "took as much care to avoid touching her chair with her back, as if she had still been under the stern eyes of Mrs. Ogilvie." None the less Mrs. Scott was a motherly, comfortable woman, with much tenderness of heart, and a well-stored, vivid memory. Sir Walter, writing of her, after his mother's death, to Lady Louisa Stewart, says, "She had a mind peculiarly well stored with much acquired information and natural talent, and as she was very old, and had an excellent memory, she could draw, without the least exaggeration or affectation, the most striking pictures of the past age. If I have been able to do anything in the way of painting the past times, it is

very much from the studies with which she presented me. She connected a long period of time with the present generation, for she remembered, and had often spoken with, a person who perfectly recollected the battle of Dunbar and Oliver Cromwell's subsequent entry into Edinburgh." On the day before the stroke of paralysis which carried her off, she had told Mr. and Mrs. Scott of Harden, "with great accuracy, the real story of the Bride of Lammermuir, and pointed out wherein it differed from the novel. She had all the names of the parties, and pointed out (for she was a great genealogist) their connexion with existing families." Sir Walter records many evidences of the tenderness of his mother's nature, and he returned warmly her affection for himself. His executors, in lifting up his desk, the evening after his burial, found "arranged in careful order a series of little objects, which had obviously been so placed there that his eye might rest on them every morning before he began his tasks. These were the old-fashioned boxes that had garnished his mother's toilette, when he, a sickly child, slept in her dressing-room, — the silver taper-stand, which the young advocate had bought for her with his first five-guinea fee, — a row of small packets inscribed with her hand, and containing the hair of those of her offspring that had died before her, — his father's snuffbox, and etui-case, — and more things of the like sort." A story, characteristic of both Sir Walter's parents, is told by Mr. Lockhart which will serve better than anything I can remember to bring the father and mother of Scott vividly before the imagination. His father, like Mr. Alexander Fairford, in *Redgauntlet*, though himself a strong Hanoverian, inherited enough feeling for the Stuarts from his grandfather Beardie, and sympathized enough with those who were, as he neutrally expressed it, "out in '45," to ignore as much as possible any phrases offensive to the Jacobites. For instance, he always called Charles Edward not *the Pretender* but *the Chevalier*, — and he did business for many Jacobites: —

"Mrs. Scott's curiosity was strongly excited one autumn by the regular appearance at a certain hour every evening of a sedan chair, to deposit a person carefully muffled up in a mantle, who was immediately ushered into her husband's private room, and commonly remained with him there until long after the usual bed-time of this orderly family. Mr. Scott answered her repeated inquiries with a vagueness that irritated the lady's feelings more and more; until at last she could bear the thing no longer; but one evening, just as she heard the bell ring as for the stranger's chair to carry him off, she

made her appearance within the forbidden parlour with a salver in her hand, observing that she thought the gentlemen had sat so long they would be better of a dish of tea, and had ventured accordingly to bring some for their acceptance. The stranger, a person of distinguished appearance, and richly dressed, bowed to the lady and accepted a cup; but her husband knit his brows, and refused very coldly to partake the refreshment. A moment afterwards the visitor withdrew, and Mr. Scott, lifting up the window-sash, took the cup, which he had left empty on the table, and tossed it out upon the pavement. The lady exclaimed for her china, but was put to silence by her husband's saying, 'I can forgive your little curiosity, madam, but you must pay the penalty. I may admit into my house, on a piece of business, persons wholly unworthy to be treated as guests by my wife. Neither lip of me nor of mine comes after Mr. Murray of Broughton's.'

"This was the unhappy man who, after attending Prince Charles Stuart as his secretary throughout the greater part of his expedition, condescended to redeem his own life and fortune by bearing evidence against the noblest of his late master's adherents, when —

"Pitied by gentle hearts, Kilmarnock died, The brave, Balmerino were on thy side."

"Broughton's saucer" — i. e. the saucer belonging to the cup thus sacrificed by Mr. Scott to his indignation against one who had redeemed his own life and fortune by turning king's evidence against one of Prince Charles Stuart's adherents, — was carefully preserved by his son, and hung up in his first study, or "den," under a little print of Prince Charlie. This anecdote brings before the mind very vividly the character of Sir Walter's parents. The eager curiosity of the active-minded woman, whom "the honourable Mrs. Ogilvie" had been able to keep upright in her chair for life, but not to cure of the desire to unravel the little mysteries of which she had a passing glimpse; the grave formality of the husband, fretting under his wife's personal attention to a dishonoured man, and making her pay the penalty by dashing to pieces the cup which the king's evidence had used, — again, the visitor himself, perfectly conscious no doubt that the Hanoverian lawyer held him in utter scorn for his faithlessness and cowardice, and reluctant, nevertheless, to reject the courtesy of the wife, though he could not get anything but cold legal advice from the husband: — all these are figures which must have acted on the youthful imagination of the poet with

singular vivacity, and shaped themselves in a hundred changing turns of the historical kaleidoscope which was always before his mind's eye, as he mused upon that past which he was to restore for us with almost more than its original freshness of life. With such scenes touching even his own home, Scott must have been constantly taught to balance in his own mind, the more romantic, against the more sober and rational considerations, which had so recently divided house against house, even in the same family and clan. That the stern Calvinistic lawyer should have retained so much of his grandfather Beardie's respect for the adherents of the exiled house of Stuart, must in itself have struck the boy as even more remarkable than the passionate loyalty of the Stuarts' professed partisans, and have lent a new sanction to the romantic drift of his mother's old traditions, and one to which they must have been indebted for a great part of their fascination.

Walter Scott, the ninth of twelve children, of whom the first six died in early childhood, was born in Edinburgh, on the 15th of August, 1771. Of the six later-born children, all but one were boys, and the one sister was a somewhat querulous invalid, whom he seems to have pitied almost more than he loved. At the age of eighteen months the boy had a teething-fever, ending in a lifelong lameness; and this was the reason why the child was sent to reside with his grandfather — the speculative grandfather, who had doubled his capital by buying a racehorse instead of sheep — at Sandy-Knowe, near the ruined tower of Smailholm, celebrated afterwards in his ballad of *The Eve of St. John*, in the neighbourhood of some fine crags. To these crags the housemaid sent from Edinburgh to look after him, used to carry him up, with a design (which she confessed to the housekeeper) — due, of course, to incipient insanity — of murdering the child there, and burying him in the moss. Of course the maid was dismissed. After this the child used to be sent out, when the weather was fine, in the safer charge of the shepherd, who would often lay him beside the sheep. Long afterwards Scott told Mr. Skene, during an excursion with Turner, the great painter, who was drawing his illustration of Smailholm tower for one of Scott's works, that "the habit of lying on the turf there among the sheep and the lambs had given his mind a peculiar tenderness for these animals, which it had ever since retained." Being forgotten one day upon the knolls when a thunderstorm came on, his aunt ran out to bring him in, and found him shouting, "Bonny! bonny!" at every flash of lightning. One of the old servants at Sandy-Knowe spoke of the child long afterwards as "a sweet-

tempered bairn, a darling with all about the house," and certainly the miniature taken of him in his seventh year confirms the impression thus given. It is sweet-tempered above everything, and only the long upper lip and large mouth, derived from his ancestress, Meg Murray, convey the promise of the power which was in him. Of course the high, almost conical forehead, which gained him in his later days from his comrades at the bar the name of "Old Peveril," in allusion to "the peak" which they saw towering high above the heads of other men as he approached, is not so much marked beneath the childish locks of this miniature as it was in later life; and the massive, and, in repose, certainly heavy face of his maturity, which conveyed the impression of the great bulk of his character, is still quite invisible under the sunny ripple of childish earnestness and gaiety. Scott's hair in childhood was light chestnut, which turned to nut brown in youth. His eyebrows were bushy, for we find mention made of them as a "penthouse." His eyes were always light blue. They had in them a capacity, on the one hand, for enthusiasm, sunny brightness, and even harebrained humour, and on the other for expressing determined resolve and kindly irony, which gave great range of expression to the face. There are plenty of materials for judging what sort of a boy Scott was. In spite of his lameness, he early taught himself to clamber about with an agility that few children could have surpassed, and to sit his first pony — a little Shetland, not bigger than a large Newfoundland dog, which used to come into the house to be fed by him — even in gallops on very rough ground. He became very early a declaimer. Having learned the ballad of Hardy Knute, he shouted it forth with such pertinacious enthusiasm that the clergyman of his grandfather's parish complained that he "might as well speak in a cannon's mouth as where that child was." At six years of age Mrs. Cockburn described him as the most astounding genius of a boy, she ever saw. "He was reading a poem to his mother when I went in. I made him read on: it was the description of a shipwreck. His passion rose with the storm. 'There's the mast gone,' says he; 'crash it goes; they will all perish.' After his agitation he turns to me, 'That is too melancholy,' says he; 'I had better read you something more amusing.'" And after the call, he told his aunt he liked Mrs. Cockburn, for "she was a *virtuoso* like himself." "Dear Walter," says Aunt Jenny, "what is a *virtuoso*?" "Don't ye know? Why, it's one who wishes and will know everything." This last scene took place in his father's house in Edinburgh; but Scott's life at Sandy-Knowe, including even the old

minister, Dr. Duncan, who so bitterly complained of the boy's ballad-spouting, is painted for us, as everybody knows, in the picture of his infancy given in the introduction to the third canto of *Marmion*: —

"It was a barren scene and wild, Where naked cliffs were rudely piled: But ever and anon between Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green; And well the lonely infant knew Recesses where the wallflower grew, And honeysuckle loved to crawl Up the low crag and ruin'd wall. I deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade The sun in all its round survey'd; And still I thought that shatter'd tower The mightiest work of human power; And marvell'd as the aged hind With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind, Of forayers, who, with headlong force, Down from that strength had spurr'd their horse, Their southern rapine to renew, Far in the distant Cheviots blue, And, home returning, fill'd the hall With revel, wassail-rout, and brawl. Methought that still with trump and clang The gateway's broken arches rang; Methought grim features, seam'd with scars, Glared through the window's rusty bars; And ever, by the winter hearth, Old tales I heard of woe or mirth, Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms, Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms, Of patriot battles, won of old By Wallace wight and Bruce the bold; Of later fields of feud and fight, When, pouring from their Highland height, The Scottish clans, in headlong sway, Had swept the scarlet ranks away. While, stretch'd at length upon the floor, Again I fought each combat o'er, Pebbles and shells in order laid, The mimic ranks of war display'd; And onward still the Scottish lion bore, And still the scattered Southron fled before. Still, with vain fondness, could I trace Anew each kind familiar face That brighten'd at our evening fire! From the thatch'd mansion's grey-hair'd sire, Wise without learning, plain and good, And sprung of Scotland's gentler blood; Whose eye in age, quick, clear, and keen, Show'd what in youth its glance had been; Whose doom discording neighbours sought, Content with equity unbought; To him the venerable priest, Our frequent and familiar guest, Whose life and manners well could paint Alike the student and the saint; Alas! whose speech too oft I broke With gambol rude and timeless joke; For I was wayward, bold, and wild, A self-will'd imp, a grandame's child; But, half a plague and half a jest, Was still endured, beloved, caress'd."

A picture this of a child of great spirit, though with that spirit was combined an active and subduing sweetness which could often conquer, as by a sudden spell, those whom the boy loved. Towards those, however, whom he did not love he could be vindictive. His relative, the laird of

Raeburn, on one occasion wrung the neck of a pet starling, which the child had partly tamed. “I flew at his throat like a wildcat,” he said, in recalling the circumstance, fifty years later, in his journal on occasion of the old laird’s death; “and was torn from him with no little difficulty.” And, judging from this journal, I doubt whether he had ever really forgiven the laird of Raeburn. Towards those whom he loved but had offended, his manner was very different. “I seldom,” said one of his tutors, Mr. Mitchell, “had occasion all the time I was in the family to find fault with him, even for trifles, and only once to threaten serious castigation, of which he was no sooner aware, than he suddenly sprang up, threw his arms about my neck and kissed me.” And the quaint old gentleman adds this commentary: — ”By such generous and noble conduct my displeasure was in a moment converted into esteem and admiration; my soul melted into tenderness, and I was ready to mingle my tears with his.” This spontaneous and fascinating sweetness of his childhood was naturally overshadowed to some extent in later life by Scott’s masculine and proud character, but it was always in him. And there was much of true character in the child behind this sweetness. He had wonderful selfcommand, and a peremptory kind of good sense, even in his infancy. While yet a child under six years of age, hearing one of the servants beginning to tell a ghost-story to another, and well knowing that if he listened, it would scare away his night’s rest, he acted for himself with all the promptness of an elder person acting for him, and, in spite of the fascination of the subject, resolutely muffled his head in the bedclothes and refused to hear the tale. His sagacity in judging of the character of others was shown, too, even as a schoolboy; and once it led him to take an advantage which caused him many compunctions in afterlife, whenever he recalled his skilful puerile tactics. On one occasion — I tell the story as he himself rehearsed it to Samuel Rogers, almost at the end of his life, after his attack of apoplexy, and just before leaving England for Italy in the hopeless quest of health — he had long desired to get above a schoolfellow in his class, who defied all his efforts, till Scott noticed that whenever a question was asked of his rival, the lad’s fingers grasped a particular button on his waistcoat, while his mind went in search of the answer. Scott accordingly anticipated that if he could remove this button, the boy would be thrown out, and so it proved. The button was cut off, and the next time the lad was questioned, his fingers being unable to find the button, and his eyes going in perplexed search after his fingers, he stood confounded, and Scott mastered

by strategy the place which he could not gain by mere industry. “Often in afterlife,” said Scott, in narrating the manœuvre to Rogers, “has the sight of him smote me as I passed by him; and often have I resolved to make him some reparation, but it ended in good resolutions. Though I never renewed my acquaintance with him, I often saw him, for he filled some inferior office in one of the courts of law at Edinburgh. Poor fellow! I believe he is dead; he took early to drinking.”

Scott’s school reputation was one of irregular ability; he “glanced like a meteor from one end of the class to the other,” and received more praise for his interpretation of the spirit of his authors than for his knowledge of their language. Out of school his fame stood higher. He extemporized innumerable stories to which his schoolfellows delighted to listen; and, in spite of his lameness, he was always in the thick of the “bickers,” or street fights with the boys of the town, and renowned for his boldness in climbing the “kittle nine stanes” which are “projected high in air from the precipitous black granite of the Castle-rock.” At home he was much bullied by his elder brother Robert, a lively lad, not without some powers of verse-making, who went into the navy, then in an unlucky moment passed into the merchant service of the East India Company, and so lost the chance of distinguishing himself in the great naval campaigns of Nelson. Perhaps Scott would have been all the better for a sister a little closer to him than Anne — sickly and fanciful — appears ever to have been. The masculine side of life appears to predominate a little too much in his school and college days, and he had such vast energy, vitality, and pride, that his life at this time would have borne a little taming under the influence of a sister thoroughly congenial to him. In relation to his studies he was wilful, though not perhaps perverse. He steadily declined, for instance, to learn Greek, though he mastered Latin pretty fairly. After a time spent at the High School, Edinburgh, Scott was sent to a school at Kelso, where his master made a friend and companion of him, and so poured into him a certain amount of Latin scholarship which he would never otherwise have obtained. I need hardly add that as a boy Scott was, so far as a boy could be, a Tory — a worshipper of the past, and a great Conservative of any remnant of the past which reformers wished to get rid of. In the autobiographical fragment of 1808, he says, in relation to these school-days, “I, with my head on fire for chivalry, was a Cavalier; my friend was a Roundhead; I was a Tory, and he was a Whig; I hated Presbyterians, and admired Montrose with his victorious Highlanders; he

liked the Presbyterian Ulysses, the deep and politic Argyle; so that we never wanted subjects of dispute, but our disputes were always amicable." And he adds candidly enough: "In all these tenets there was no real conviction on my part, arising out of acquaintance with the views or principles of either party…. I took up politics at that period, as King Charles II. did his religion, from an idea that the Cavalier creed was the more gentlemanlike persuasion of the two." And the uniformly amicable character of these controversies between the young people, itself shows how much more they were controversies of the imagination than of faith. I doubt whether Scott's *convictions* on the issues of the Past were ever very much more decided than they were during his boyhood; though undoubtedly he learned to understand much more profoundly what was really held by the ablest men on both sides of these disputed issues. The result, however, was, I think, that while he entered better and better into both sides as life went on, he never adopted either with any earnestness of conviction, being content to admit, even to himself, that while his feelings leaned in one direction, his reason pointed decidedly in the other; and holding that it was hardly needful to identify himself positively with either. As regarded the present, however, feeling always carried the day. Scott was a Tory all his life.

Chapter II

Youth — Choice of a Profession

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As Scott grew up, entered the classes of the college, and began his legal studies, first as apprentice to his father, and then in the law classes of the University, he became noticeable to all his friends for his gigantic memory, — the rich stores of romantic material with which it was loaded, — his giant feats of industry for any cherished purpose, — his delight in adventure and in all athletic enterprises, — his great enjoyment of youthful "rows," so long as they did not divide the knot of friends to which he belonged, and his skill in peacemaking amongst his own set. During his apprenticeship his only means of increasing his slender allowance with funds which he could devote to his favourite studies, was to earn money by copying, and he tells us himself that he remembered writing "120 folio pages with no interval either for food or rest," fourteen or fifteen hours' very hard work at the very least, — expressly for this purpose.

In the second year of Scott's apprenticeship, at about the age of sixteen, he had an attack of hæmorrhage, no recurrence of which took place for some forty years, but which was then the beginning of the end. During this illness silence was absolutely imposed upon him, — two old ladies putting their fingers on their lips, whenever he offered to speak. It was at this time that the lad began his study of the scenic side of history, and especially of campaigns, which he illustrated for himself by the arrangement of shells, seeds, and pebbles, so as to represent encountering armies, in the manner referred to (and referred to apparently in anticipation of a later stage of his life than that he was then speaking of) in the passage from the introduction to the third canto of *Marmion* which I have already given. He also managed so to arrange the looking-glasses in his room as to see the troops march out to exercise in the meadows, as he lay in bed. His reading was almost all in the direction of military exploit, or romance and mediæval legend and the later border songs of his own country. He learned Italian and read Ariosto. Later he learned Spanish and devoured Cervantes, whose "*novelas*," he said, "first inspired him with the ambition to excel in fiction;" and all that he read and admired he remembered. Scott used to illustrate the capricious

affinity of his own memory for what suited it, and its complete rejection of what did not, by old Beattie of Meikledale's answer to a Scotch divine, who complimented him on the strength of his memory. "No, sir," said the old Borderer, "I have no command of my memory. It only retains what hits my fancy; and probably, sir, if you were to preach to me for two hours, I would not be able, when you finished, to remember a word you had been saying." Such a memory, when it belongs to a man of genius, is really a sieve of the most valuable kind. It sifts away what is foreign and alien to his genius, and assimilates what is suited to it. In his very last days, when he was visiting Italy for the first time, Scott delighted in Malta, for it recalled to him Vertot's *Knights of Malta*, and much, other mediæval story which he had pored over in his youth. But when his friends descanted to him at Pozzuoli on the Thermæ — commonly called the Temple of Serapis — among the ruins of which he stood, he only remarked that he would believe whatever he was told, "for many of his friends, and particularly Mr. Morritt, had frequently tried to drive classical antiquities, as they are called, into his head, but they had always found his skull too thick." Was it not perhaps some deep literary instinct, like that here indicated, which made him, as a lad, refuse so steadily to learn Greek, and try to prove to his indignant professor that Ariosto was superior to Homer? Scott afterwards deeply regretted this neglect of Greek; but I cannot help thinking that his regret was misplaced. Greek literature would have brought before his mind standards of poetry and art which could not but have both deeply impressed and greatly daunted an intellect of so much power; I say both impressed and daunted, because I believe that Scott himself would never have succeeded in studies of a classical kind, while he might — like Goethe perhaps — have been either misled, by admiration for that school, into attempting what was not adapted to his genius, or else disheartened in the work for which his character and ancestry really fitted him. It has been said that there is a real affinity between Scott and Homer. But the long and refluent music of Homer, once naturalized in his mind, would have discontented him with that quick, sharp, metrical tramp of his own mosstroopers, to which alone his genius as a poet was perfectly suited.

It might be supposed that with these romantic tastes, Scott could scarcely have made much of a lawyer, though the inference would, I believe, be quite mistaken. His father, however, reproached him with being better fitted for a pedlar than a lawyer, — so persistently did he trudge over

all the neighbouring counties in search of the beauties of nature and the historic associations of battle, siege, or legend. On one occasion when, with their last penny spent, Scott and one of his companions had returned to Edinburgh, living during their last day on drinks of milk offered by generous peasant-women, and the hips and haws on the hedges, he remarked to his father how much he had wished for George Primrose's power of playing on the flute in order to earn a meal by the way, old Mr. Scott, catching grumpily at the idea, replied, "I greatly doubt, sir, you were born for nae better then a gangrel scrape-gut," — a speech which very probably suggested his son's conception of Darsie Latimer's adventures with the blind fiddler, "Wandering Willie," in *Redgauntlet*. And, it is true that these were the days of mental and moral fermentation, what was called in Germany the Sturm-und-Drang, the "fret-and-fury" period of Scott's life, so far as one so mellow and genial in temper ever passed through a period of fret and fury at all. In other words these were the days of rapid motion, of walks of thirty miles a day which the lame lad yet found no fatigue to him; of mad enterprises, scrapes and drinking-bouts, in one of which Scott was half persuaded by his friends that he actually sang a song for the only time in his life. But even in these days of youthful sociability, with companions of his own age, Scott was always himself, and his imperious will often asserted itself. Writing of this time, some thirtyfive years or so later, he said, "When I was a boy, and on foot expeditions, as we had many, no creature could be so indifferent which way our course was directed, and I acquiesced in what any one proposed; but if I was once driven to make a choice, and felt piqued in honour to maintain my proposition, I have broken off from the whole party, rather than yield to any one." No doubt, too, in that day of what he himself described as "the silly smart fancies that ran in my brain like the bubbles in a glass of champagne, as brilliant to my thinking, as intoxicating, as evanescent," solitude was no real deprivation to him; and one can easily imagine him marching off on his solitary way after a dispute with his companions, reciting to himself old songs or ballads, with that "noticeable but altogether indescribable play of the upper lip," which Mr. Lockhart thinks suggested to one of Scott's most intimate friends, on his first acquaintance with him, the grotesque notion that he had been "a hautboy-player." This was the first impression formed of Scott by William Clerk, one of his earliest and lifelong friends. It greatly amused Scott, who not only had never played on any instrument in his life, but could hardly

make shift to join in the chorus of a popular song without marring its effect; but perhaps the impression suggested was not so very far astray after all. Looking to the poetic side of his character, the trumpet certainly would have been the instrument that would have best symbolized the spirit both of Scott's thought and of his verses. Mr. Lockhart himself, in summing up his impressions of Sir Walter, quotes as the most expressive of his lines: —

"Sound, sound the clarion! fill the fife! To all the sensual world proclaim, One crowded hour of glorious life Is worth a world without a name."

And undoubtedly this gives us the keynote of Scott's personal life as well as of his poetic power. Above everything he was highspirited, a man of noble, and, at the same time, of martial feelings. Sir Francis Doyle speaks very justly of Sir Walter as "among English singers the undoubted inheritor of that trumpet-note, which, under the breath of Homer, has made the wrath of Achilles immortal;" and I do not doubt that there was something in Scott's face, and especially in the expression of his mouth, to suggest this even to his early college companions. Unfortunately, however, even "one crowded hour of glorious life" may sometimes have a "sensual" inspiration, and in these days of youthful adventure, too many such hours seem to have owed their inspiration to the Scottish peasant's chief bane, the Highland whisky. In his eager search after the old ballads of the Border, Scott had many a blithe adventure, which ended only too often in a carouse. It was soon after this time that he first began those raids into Liddesdale, of which all the world has enjoyed the records in the sketches — embodied subsequently in *Guy Mannering* — of Dandie Dinmont, his pony Dumple, and the various Peppers and Mustards from whose breed there were afterwards introduced into Scott's own family, generations of terriers, always named, as Sir Walter expressed it, after "the cruet." I must quote the now classic record of those youthful escapades: —

"Eh me," said Mr. Shortreed, his companion in all these Liddesdale raids, "sic an endless fund of humour and drollery as he had then wi' him. Never ten yards but we were either laughing or roaring and singing. Wherever we stopped, how brawlie he suited himsel' to everybody! He aye did as the lave did; never made himsel' the great man or took ony airs in the company. I've seen him in a' moods in these jaunts, grave and gay, daft and serious, sober and drunk — (this, however, even in our wildest rambles, was but rare) — but drunk or sober he was aye the gentleman. He looked

excessively heavy and stupid when he was *fou*, but he was never out o' gude humour."

One of the stories of that time will illustrate better the wilder days of Scott's youth than any comment: —

"On reaching one evening," says Mr. Lockhart, "some Charlieshope or other (I forget the name) among those wildernesses, they found a kindly reception as usual: but to their agreeable surprise, after some days of hard living, a measured and orderly hospitality as respected liquor. Soon after supper, at which a bottle of elderberry wine alone had been produced, a young student of divinity who happened to be in the house was called upon to take the 'big ha' Bible,' in the good old fashion of Burns' Saturday Night: and some progress had been already made in the service, when the good man of the farm, whose 'tendency,' as Mr. Mitchell says, 'was soporific,' scandalized his wife and the dominie by starting suddenly from his knees, and rubbing his eyes, with a stentorian exclamation of 'By — — ! here's the keg at last!' and in tumbled, as he spake the word, a couple of sturdy herdsmen, whom, on hearing, a day before, of the advocate's approaching visit, he had despatched to a certain smuggler's haunt at some considerable distance in quest of a supply of *run* brandy from the Solway frith. The pious 'exercise' of the household was hopelessly interrupted. With a thousand apologies for his hitherto shabby entertainment, this jolly Elliot or Armstrong had the welcome *keg* mounted on the table without a moment's delay, and gentle and simple, not forgetting the dominie, continued carousing about it until daylight streamed in upon the party. Sir Walter Scott seldom failed, when I saw him in company with his Liddesdale companions, to mimic with infinite humour the sudden outburst of his old host on hearing the clatter of horses' feet, which he knew to indicate the arrival of the keg, the consternation of the dame, and the rueful despair with which the young clergyman closed the book."

No wonder old Mr. Scott felt some doubt of his son's success at the bar, and thought him more fitted in many respects for a "gangrel scrape-gut."

In spite of all this love of excitement, Scott became a sound lawyer, and might have been a great lawyer, had not his pride of character, the impatience of his genius, and the stir of his imagination rendered him indisposed to wait and slave in the precise manner which the prepossessions of solicitors appoint.

For Scott's passion for romantic literature was not at all the sort of thing which we ordinarily mean by boys' or girls' love of romance. No amount of drudgery or labour deterred Scott from any undertaking on the prosecution of which he was bent. He was quite the reverse, indeed, of what is usually meant by sentimental, either in his manners or his literary interests. As regards the history of his own country he was no mean antiquarian. Indeed he cared for the mustiest antiquarian researches — of the mediæval kind — so much, that in the depth of his troubles he speaks of a talk with a Scotch antiquary and herald as one of the things which soothed him most. "I do not know anything which relieves the mind so much from the sullens as trifling discussions about antiquarian *old womanries*. It is like knitting a stocking, diverting the mind without occupying it." Thus his love of romantic literature was as far as possible from that of a mind which only feeds on romantic excitements; rather was it that of one who was so moulded by the transmitted and acquired love of feudal institutions with all their incidents, that he could not take any deep interest in any other fashion of human society. Now the Scotch law was full of vestiges and records of that period, — was indeed a great standing monument of it; and in numbers of his writings Scott shows with how deep an interest he had studied the Scotch law from this point of view. He remarks somewhere that it was natural for a Scotchman to feel a strong attachment to the principle of rank, if only on the ground that almost any Scotchman might, under the Scotch law, turn out to be heir-in-tail to some great Scotch title or estate by the death of intervening relations. And the law which sometimes caused such sudden transformations, had subsequently a true interest for him of course as a novel writer, to say nothing of his interest in it as an antiquarian and historian who loved to repeople the earth, not merely with the picturesque groups of the soldiers and courts of the past, but with the actors in all the various quaint and homely transactions and puzzlements which the feudal ages had brought forth. Hence though, as a matter of fact, Scott never made much figure as an advocate, he became a very respectable, and might unquestionably have become a very great, lawyer. When he started at the bar, however, he had not acquired the tact to impress an ordinary assembly. In one case which he conducted before the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, when defending a parish minister threatened with deposition for drunkenness and unseemly behaviour, he certainly missed the proper tone, — first receiving a censure for the freedom of his manner in treating the

allegations against his client, and then so far collapsing under the rebuke of the Moderator, as to lose the force and urgency necessary to produce an effect on his audience. But these were merely a boy's mishaps. He was certainly by no means a Heaven-born orator, and therefore could not expect to spring into exceptionally *early* distinction, and the only true reason for his relative failure was that he was so full of literary power, and so proudly impatient of the fetters which prudence seemed to impose on his extra-professional proceedings, that he never gained the credit he deserved for the general common sense, the unwearied industry, and the keen appreciation of the ins and outs of legal method, which might have raised him to the highest reputation even as a judge.

All readers of his novels know how Scott delights in the humours of the law. By way of illustration take the following passage, which is both short and amusing, in which Saunders Fairford — the old solicitor painted from Scott's father in *Redgauntlet* — descants on the law of the stirrup-cup. "It was decided in a case before the town bailies of Cupar Angus, when Luckie Simpson's cow had drunk up Luckie Jamieson's browst of ale, while it stood in the door to cool, that there was no damage to pay, because the crummie drank without sitting down; such being the circumstance constituting a Doch an Dorroch, which is a standing drink for which no reckoning is paid." I do not believe that any one of Scott's contemporaries had greater legal abilities than he, though, as it happened, they were never fairly tried. But he had both the pride and impatience of genius. It fretted him to feel that he was dependent on the good opinions of solicitors, and that they who were incapable of understanding his genius, thought the less instead of the better of him as an advocate, for every indication which he gave of that genius. Even on the day of his call to the bar he gave expression to a sort of humorous foretaste of this impatience, saying to William Clerk, who had been called with him, as he mimicked the air and tone of a Highland lass waiting at the Cross of Edinburgh to be hired for the harvest, "We've stood here an hour by the Tron, hinny, and deil a ane has speered our price." Scott continued to practise at the bar — nominally at least — for fourteen years, but the most which he ever seems to have made in any one year was short of 230*l.*, and latterly his practice was much diminishing instead of increasing. His own impatience of solicitors' patronage was against him; his wellknown dabblings in poetry were still more against him; and his general repute for wild and unprofessional

adventurousness — which was much greater than he deserved — was probably most of all against him. Before he had been six years at the bar he joined the organization of the Edinburgh Volunteer Cavalry, took a very active part in the drill, and was made their Quartermaster. Then he visited London, and became largely known for his ballads, and his love of ballads. In his eighth year at the bar he accepted a small permanent appointment, with 300*l.* a year, as sheriff of Selkirkshire; and this occurring soon after his marriage to a lady of some means, no doubt diminished still further his professional zeal. For one third of the time during which Scott practised as an advocate he made no pretence of taking interest in that part of his work, though he was always deeply interested in the law itself. In 1806 he undertook gratuitously the duties of a Clerk of Session — a permanent officer of the Court at Edinburgh — and discharged them without remuneration for five years, from 1806 to 1811, in order to secure his ultimate succession to the office in the place of an invalid, who for that period received all the emoluments and did none of the work. Nevertheless Scott's legal abilities were so well known, that it was certainly at one time intended to offer him a Barony of the Exchequer, and it was his own doing, apparently, that it was not offered. The life of literature and the life of the Bar hardly ever suit, and in Scott's case they suited the less, that he felt himself likely to be a dictator in the one field, and only a postulant in the other. Literature was a far greater gainer by his choice, than Law could have been a loser. For his capacity for the law he shared with thousands of able men, his capacity for literature with few or none.

Chapter III

Love and Marriage

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One Sunday, about two years before his call to the bar, Scott offered his umbrella to a young lady of much beauty who was coming out of the Greyfriars Church during a shower; the umbrella was graciously accepted; and it was not an unprecedented consequence that Scott fell in love with the borrower, who turned out to be Margaret, daughter of Sir John and Lady Jane Stuart Belches, of Invernay. For near six years after this, Scott indulged the hope of marrying this lady, and it does not seem doubtful that the lady herself was in part responsible for this impression. Scott's father, who thought his son's prospects very inferior to those of Miss Stuart Belches, felt it his duty to warn the baronet of his son's views, a warning which the old gentleman appears to have received with that grand unconcern characteristic of elderly persons in high position, as a hint intrinsically incredible, or at least unworthy of notice. But he took no alarm, and Scott's attentions to Margaret Stuart Belches continued till close on the eve of her marriage, in 1796, to William Forbes (afterwards Sir William Forbes), of Pitsligo, a banker, who proved to be one of Sir Walter's most generous and most delicate-minded friends, when his time of troubles came towards the end of both their lives. Whether Scott was in part mistaken as to the impression he had made on the young lady, or she was mistaken as to the impression he had made on herself, or whether other circumstances intervened to cause misunderstanding, or the grand indifference of Sir John gave way to active intervention when the question became a practical one, the world will now never know, but it does not seem very likely that a man of so much force as Scott, who certainly had at one time assured himself at least of the young lady's strong regard, should have been easily displaced even by a rival of ability and of most generous and amiable character. An entry in the diary which Scott kept in 1827, after Constable's and Ballantyne's failure, and his wife's death, seems to me to suggest that there may have been some misunderstanding between the young people, though I am not sure that the inference is justified. The passage completes the story of this passion — Scott's first and only deep passion — so far as it can ever

be known to us; and as it is a very pathetic and characteristic entry, and the attachment to which it refers had a great influence on Scott's life, both in keeping him free from some of the most dangerous temptations of the young, during his youth, and in creating within him an interior world of dreams and recollections throughout his whole life, on which his imaginative nature was continually fed — I may as well give it. "He had taken," says Mr. Lockhart, "for that winter , the house No. 6, Shandwick Place, which he occupied by the month during the remainder of his servitude as a clerk of session. Very near this house, he was told a few days after he took possession, dwelt the aged mother of his first love; and he expressed to his friend Mrs. Skene, a wish that she should carry him to renew an acquaintance which seems to have been interrupted from the period of his youthful romance. Mrs. Skene complied with his desire, and she tells me that a very painful scene ensued." His diary says, — "November 7th. Began to settle myself this morning after the hurry of mind and even of body which I have lately undergone. I went to make a visit and fairly softened myself, like an old fool, with recalling old stories till I was fit for nothing but shedding tears and repeating verses for the whole night. This is sad work. The very grave gives up its dead, and time rolls back thirty years to add to my perplexities. I don't care. I begin to grow casehardened, and like a stag turning at bay, my naturally good temper grows fierce and dangerous. Yet what a romance to tell — and told I fear it will one day be. And then my three years of dreaming and my two years of wakening will be chronicled, doubtless. But the dead will feel no pain. — November 10th. At twelve o'clock I went again to poor Lady Jane to talk over old stories. I am not clear that it is a right or healthful indulgence to be ripping up old sores, but it seems to give her deep-rooted sorrow words, and that is a mental bloodletting. To me these things are now matter of calm and solemn recollection, never to be forgotten, yet scarce to be remembered with pain." It was in 1797, after the break-up of his hopes in relation to this attachment, that Scott wrote the lines *To a Violet*, which Mr. F. T. Palgrave, in his thoughtful and striking introduction to Scott's poems, rightly characterizes as one of the most beautiful of those poems. It is, however, far from one characteristic of Scott, indeed, so different in style from the best of his other poems, that Mr. Browning might well have said of Scott, as he once affirmed of himself, that for the purpose of one particular poem, he "who blows through bronze," had "breathed through silver," — had "curbed

the liberal hand subservient proudly," — and tamed his spirit to a key elsewhere unknown.

"The violet in her greenwood bower, Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle, May boast itself the fairest flower In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

"Though fair her gems of azure hue, Beneath the dewdrop's weight reclining, I've seen an eye of lovelier blue, More sweet through watery lustre shining.

"The summer sun that dew shall dry, Ere yet the day be past its morrow; Nor longer in my false love's eye Remain'd the tear of parting sorrow."

These lines obviously betray a feeling of resentment, which may or may not have been justified; but they are perhaps the most delicate produced by his pen. The pride which was always so notable a feature in Scott, probably sustained him through the keen, inward pain which it is very certain from a great many of his own words that he must have suffered in this uprooting of his most passionate hopes. And it was in part probably the same pride which led him to form, within the year, a new tie — his engagement to Mademoiselle Charpentier, or Miss Carpenter as she was usually called, — the daughter of a French royalist of Lyons who had died early in the revolution. She had come after her father's death to England, chiefly, it seems, because in the Marquis of Downshire, who was an old friend of the family, her mother knew that she should find a protector for her children. Miss Carpenter was a lively beauty, probably of no great depth of character. The few letters given of hers in Mr. Lockhart's life of Scott, give the impression of an amiable, petted girl, of somewhat thin and *espiègle* character, who was rather charmed at the depth and intensity of Scott's nature, and at the expectations which he seemed to form of what love should mean, than capable of realizing them. Evidently she had no inconsiderable pleasure in display; but she made on the whole a very good wife, only one to be protected by him from every care, and not one to share Scott's deeper anxieties, or to participate in his dreams. Yet Mrs. Scott was not devoid of spirit and self-control. For instance, when Mr. Jeffrey, having reviewed *Marmion* in the *Edinburgh* in that depreciating and omniscient tone which was then considered the evidence of critical acumen, dined with Scott on the very day on which the review had appeared, Mrs. Scott behaved to him through the whole evening with the greatest politeness, but fired this parting shot in her broken English, as he took his leave, — "Well,

good night, Mr. Jeffrey, — dey tell me you have abused Scott in de *Review*, and I hope Mr. Constable has paid you very well for writing it." It is hinted that Mrs. Scott was, at the time of Scott's greatest fame, far more exhilarated by it than her husband with his strong sense and sure self-measurement ever was. Mr. Lockhart records that Mrs. Grant of Laggan once said of them, "Mr. Scott always seems to me like a glass, through which the rays of admiration pass without sensibly affecting it; but the bit of paper that lies beside it will presently be in a blaze, and no wonder." The bit of paper, however, never was in a blaze that I know of; and possibly Mrs. Grant's remark may have had a little feminine spite in it. At all events, it was not till the rays of misfortune, instead of admiration, fell upon Scott's life, that the delicate tissue paper shrivelled up; nor does it seem that, even then, it was the trouble, so much as a serious malady that had fixed on Lady Scott before Sir Walter's troubles began, which really scorched up her life. That she did not feel with the depth and intensity of her husband, or in the same key of feeling, is clear. After the failure, and during the preparations for abandoning the house in Edinburgh, Scott records in his diary: — "It is with a sense of pain that I leave behind a parcel of trumpery prints and little ornaments, once the pride of Lady Scott's heart, but which she saw consigned with indifference to the chance of an auction. Things that have had their day of importance with me, I cannot forget, though the merest trifles; but I am glad that she, with bad health, and enough to vex her, has not the same useless mode of associating recollections with this unpleasant business."

Poor Lady Scott! It was rather like a bird of paradise mating with an eagle. Yet the result was happy on the whole; for she had a thoroughly kindly nature, and a true heart. Within ten days before her death, Scott enters in his diary: — "Still welcoming me with a smile, and asserting she is better." She was not the ideal wife for Scott; but she loved him, sunned herself in his prosperity, and tried to bear his adversity cheerfully. In her last illness she would always reproach her husband and children for their melancholy faces, even when that melancholy was, as she well knew, due to the approaching shadow of her own death.

Chapter IV

Earliest Poetry and Border Minstrelsy

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Scott's first serious attempt in poetry was a version of Bürger's *Lenore*, a spectre-ballad of the violent kind, much in favour in Germany at a somewhat earlier period, but certainly not a specimen of the higher order of imaginative genius. However, it stirred Scott's youthful blood, and made him "wish to heaven he could get a skull and two cross-bones!" a modest desire, to be expressed with so much fervour, and one almost immediately gratified. Probably no one ever gave a more spirited version of Bürger's ballad than Scott has given; but the use to which Miss Cranstoun, a friend and confidante of his love for Miss Stuart Belches, strove to turn it, by getting it printed, blazoned, and richly bound, and presenting it to the young lady as a proof of her admirer's abilities, was perhaps hardly very sagacious. It is quite possible, at least, that Miss Stuart Belches may have regarded this vehement admirer of spectral wedding journeys and skeleton bridals, as unlikely to prepare for her that comfortable, trim, and decorous future which young ladies usually desire. At any rate, the bold stroke failed. The young lady admired the verses, but, as we have seen, declined the translator. Perhaps she regarded banking as safer, if less brilliant work than the most effective description of skeleton riders. Indeed, Scott at this time — to those who did not know what was in him, which no one, not even excepting himself, did — had no very sure prospects of comfort, to say nothing of wealth. It is curious, too, that his first adventure in literature was thus connected with his interest in the preternatural, for no man ever lived whose genius was sounder and healthier, and less disposed to dwell on the half-and-half lights of a dim and eerie world; yet ghostly subjects always interested him deeply, and he often touched them in his stories, more, I think, from the strong artistic contrast they afforded to his favourite conceptions of life, than from any other motive. There never was, I fancy, an organization less susceptible of this order of fears and superstitions than his own. When a friend jokingly urged him, within a few months of his death, not to leave Rome on a Friday, as it was a day of bad omen for a journey, he replied, laughing, "Superstition is very picturesque, and I make

it, at times, stand me in great stead, but I never allow it to interfere with interest or convenience." Basil Hall reports Scott's having told him on the last evening of the year 1824, when they were talking over this subject, that "having once arrived at a country inn, he was told there was no bed for him. 'No place to lie down at all?' said he. 'No,' said the people of the house; 'none, except a room in which there is a corpse lying.' 'Well,' said he, 'did the person die of any contagious disorder?' 'Oh, no; not at all,' said they. 'Well, then,' continued he, 'let me have the other bed. So,' said Sir Walter, 'I laid me down, and never had a better night's sleep in my life.'" He was, indeed, a man of iron nerve, whose truest artistic enjoyment was in noting the forms of character seen in full daylight by the light of the most ordinary experience. Perhaps for that reason he can on occasion relate a preternatural incident, such as the appearance of old Alice at the fountain, at the very moment of her death, to the Master of Ravenswood, in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, with great effect. It was probably the vivacity with which he realized the violence which such incidents do to the terrestrial common sense of our ordinary nature, and at the same time the sedulous accuracy of detail with which he narrated them, rather than any, even the smallest, special susceptibility of his own brain to thrills of the preternatural kind, which gave him rather a unique pleasure in dealing with such preternatural elements. Sometimes, however, his ghosts are a little too muscular to produce their due effect as ghosts. In translating Bürger's ballad his great success lay in the vividness of the spectre's horsemanship. For instance, —

"Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode, Splash! splash! along the sea; The scourge is red, the spur drops blood, The flashing pebbles flee,"

is far better than any ghostly touch in it; so, too, every one will remember how spirited a rider is the white Lady of Avenel, in *The Monastery*, and how vigorously she takes fords, — as vigorously as the sheriff himself, who was very fond of fords. On the whole, Scott was too sunny and healthy-minded for a ghost-seer; and the skull and cross-bones with which he ornamented his "den" in his father's house, did not succeed in tempting him into the world of twilight and cobwebs wherein he made his first literary excursion. His *William and Helen*, the name he gave to his translation of Bürger's *Lenore*, made in 1795, was effective, after all, more for its rapid movement, than for the weirdness of its effects.

If, however, it was the raw preternaturalism of such ballads as Bürger's which first led Scott to test his own powers, his genius soon turned to more

appropriate and natural subjects. Ever since his earliest college days he had been collecting, in those excursions of his into Liddesdale and elsewhere, materials for a book on *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*; and the publication of this work, in January, 1802 (in two volumes at first), was his first great literary success. The whole edition of eight hundred copies was sold within the year, while the skill and care which Scott had devoted to the historical illustration of the ballads, and the force and spirit of his own new ballads, written in imitation of the old, gained him at once a very high literary name. And the name was well deserved. The *Border Minstrelsy* was more commensurate *in range* with the genius of Scott, than even the romantic poems by which it was soon followed, and which were received with such universal and almost unparalleled delight. For Scott's *Border Minstrelsy* gives more than a glimpse of all his many great powers — his historical industry and knowledge, his masculine humour, his delight in restoring the vision of the "old, simple, violent world" of rugged activity and excitement, as well as that power to kindle men's hearts, as by a trumpet-call, which was the chief secret of the charm of his own greatest poems. It is much easier to discern the great novelist of subsequent years in the *Border Minstrelsy* than even in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, and *The Lady of the Lake* taken together. From those romantic poems you would never guess that Scott entered more eagerly and heartily into the common incidents and common cares of everyday human life than into the most romantic fortunes; from them you would never know how completely he had mastered the leading features of quite different periods of our history; from them you would never infer that you had before you one of the best plodders, as well as one of the most enthusiastic dreamers, in British literature. But all this might have been gathered from the various introductions and notes to the *Border Minstrelsy*, which are full of skilful illustrations, of comments teeming with humour, and of historic weight. The general introduction gives us a general survey of the graphic pictures of Border quarrels, their simple violence and simple cunning. It enters, for instance, with grave humour into the strong distinction taken in the debatable land between a "freebooter" and a "thief," and the difficulty which the inland counties had in grasping it, and paints for us, with great vivacity, the various Border superstitions. Another commentary on a very amusing ballad, commemorating the manner in which a blind harper stole a horse and got paid for a mare he had not lost, gives an account of the

curious tenure of land, called that of the "king's rentallers," or "kindly tenants;" and a third describes, in language as vivid as the historical romance of *Kenilworth*, written years after, the manner in which Queen Elizabeth received the news of a check to her policy, and vented her spleen on the King of Scotland.

So much as to the breadth of the literary area which this first book of Scott's covered. As regards the poetic power which his own new ballads, in imitation of the old ones, evinced, I cannot say that those of the first issue of the *Border Minstrelsy* indicated anything like the force which might have been expected from one who was so soon to be the author of *Marmion*, though many of Scott's warmest admirers, including Sir Francis Doyle, seem to place *Glenfinlas* among his finest productions. But in the third volume of the *Border Minstrelsy*, which did not appear till 1803, is contained a ballad on the assassination of the Regent Murray, the story being told by his assassin, which seems to me a specimen of his very highest poetical powers. In *Cadyow Castle* you have not only that rousing trumpet-note which you hear in *Marmion,* but the pomp and glitter of a grand martial scene is painted with all Scott's peculiar terseness and vigour. The opening is singularly happy in preparing the reader for the description of a violent deed. The Earl of Arran, chief of the clan of Hamiltons, is chasing among the old oaks of Cadyow Castle, — oaks which belonged to the ancient Caledonian forest, — the fierce, wild bulls, milk-white, with black muzzles, which were not extirpated till shortly before Scott's own birth: —

"Through the huge oaks of Evandale, Whose limbs a thousand years have worn, What sullen roar comes down the gale, And drowns the hunter's pealing horn?

"Mightiest of all the beasts of chase That roam in woody Caledon, Crashing the forest in his race, The mountain bull comes thundering on.

"Fierce on the hunter's quiver'd band He rolls his eyes of swarthy glow, Spurns, with black hoof and horn, the sand, And tosses high his mane of snow.

"Aim'd well, the chieftain's lance has flown; Struggling in blood the savage lies; His roar is sunk in hollow groan, — Sound, merry huntsman! sound the pryse!"

It is while the hunters are resting after this feat, that Bothwellhaugh dashes among them headlong, spurring his jaded steed with poniard instead

of spur: —

“From gory selle and reeling steed, Sprang the fierce horseman with a bound, And reeking from the recent deed, He dash’d his carbine on the ground.”

And then Bothwellhaugh tells his tale of blood, describing the procession from which he had singled out his prey: —

“‘Dark Morton, girt with many a spear, Murder’s foul minion, led the van; And clash’d their broadswords in the rear The wild Macfarlanes’ plaided clan.

“‘Glencairn and stout Parkhead were nigh, Obsequious at their Regent’s rein, And haggard Lindsay’s iron eye, That saw fair Mary weep in vain.

“”Mid pennon’d spears, a steely grove, Proud Murray’s plumage floated high; Scarce could his trampling charger move, So close the minions crowded nigh.

“‘From the raised vizor’s shade, his eye, Dark rolling, glanced the ranks along, And his steel truncheon waved on high, Seem’d marshalling the iron throng.

“‘But yet his sadden’d brow confess’d A passing shade of doubt and awe; Some fiend was whispering in his breast, “Beware of injured Bothwellhaugh!”

“‘The death-shot parts, — the charger springs, — Wild rises tumult’s startling roar! And Murray’s plumy helmet rings — Rings on the ground to rise no more.’“

This was the ballad which made so strong an impression on Thomas Campbell, the poet. Referring to some of the lines I have quoted, Campbell said, — ”I have repeated them so often on the North Bridge that the whole fraternity of coachmen know me by tongue as I pass. To be sure, to a mind in sober, serious, streetwalking humour, it must bear an appearance of lunacy when one stamps with the hurried pace and fervent shake of the head which strong, pithy poetry excites.” I suppose anecdotes of this kind have been oftener told of Scott than of any other English poet. Indeed, Sir Walter, who understood himself well, gives the explanation in one of his diaries: — ”I am sensible,” he says, “that if there be anything good about my poetry or prose either, it is a hurried frankness of composition, which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active dispositions.” He might have included old people too. I have heard of two old men — complete strangers — passing each other on a dark London night, when one of them happened

to be repeating to himself, just as Campbell did to the hackney coachmen of the North Bridge of Edinburgh, the last lines of the account of Flodden Field in *Marmion*, "Charge, Chester, charge," when suddenly a reply came out of the darkness, "On, Stanley, on," whereupon they finished the death of Marmion between them, took off their hats to each other, and parted, laughing. Scott's is almost the only poetry in the English language that not only runs thus in the head of average men, but heats the head in which it runs by the mere force of its hurried frankness of style, to use Scott's own terms, or by that of its strong and pithy eloquence, as Campbell phrased it. And in *Cadyow Castle* this style is at its culminating point.

Chapter V

Scott's Maturer Poems

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Scott's genius flowered late. *Cadyow Castle*, the first of his poems, I think, that has indisputable genius plainly stamped on its terse and fiery lines, was composed in 1802, when he was already thirty-one years of age. It was in the same year that he wrote the first canto of his first great romance in verse, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, a poem which did not appear till 1805, when he was thirtyfour. The first canto (not including the framework, of which the aged harper is the principal figure) was written in the lodgings to which he was confined for a fortnight in 1802, by a kick received from a horse on Portobello sands, during a charge of the Volunteer Cavalry in which Scott was cornet. The poem was originally intended to be included in the *Border Minstrelsy*, as one of the studies in the antique style, but soon outgrew the limits of such a study both in length and in the freedom of its manner. Both the poorest and the best parts of *The Lay* were in a special manner due to Lady Dalkeith (afterwards Duchess of Buccleugh), who suggested it, and in whose honour the poem was written. It was she who requested Scott to write a poem on the legend of the goblin page, Gilpin Horner, and this Scott attempted, — and, so far as the goblin himself was concerned, conspicuously failed. He himself clearly saw that the story of this unmanageable imp was both confused and uninteresting, and that in fact he had to extricate himself from the original groundwork of the tale, as from a regular literary scrape, in the best way he could. In a letter to Miss Seward, Scott says, — "At length the story appeared so uncouth that I was fain to put it into the mouth of my old minstrel, lest the nature of it should be misunderstood, and I should be suspected of setting up a new school of poetry, instead of a feeble attempt to imitate the old. In the process of the romance, the page, intended to be a principal person in the work, contrived (from the baseness of his natural propensities, I suppose) to slink down stairs into the kitchen, and now he must e'en abide there." And I venture to say that no reader of the poem ever has distinctly understood what the goblin page did or did not do, what it was that was "lost" throughout the poem and "found" at the conclusion, what was the object of his personating

the young heir of the house of Scott, and whether or not that object was answered; — what use, if any, the magic book of Michael Scott was to the Lady of Branksome, or whether it was only harm to her; and I doubt moreover whether any one ever cared an iota what answer, or whether any answer, might be given to any of these questions. All this, as Scott himself clearly perceived, was left confused, and not simply vague. The goblin imp had been more certainly an imp of mischief to him than even to his boyish ancestor. But if Lady Dalkeith suggested the poorest part of the poem, she certainly inspired its best part. Scott says, as we have seen, that he brought in the aged harper to save himself from the imputation of "setting-up a new school of poetry" instead of humbly imitating an old school. But I think that the chivalrous wish to do honour to Lady Dalkeith, both as a personal friend and as the wife of his "chief," — as he always called the head of the house of Scott, — had more to do with the introduction of the aged harper, than the wish to guard himself against the imputation of attempting a new poetic style. He clearly intended the Duchess of *The Lay* to represent the Countess for whom he wrote it, and the aged harper, with his reverence and gratitude and self-distrust, was only the disguise in which he felt that he could best pour out his loyalty, and the romantic devotion with which both Lord and Lady Dalkeith, but especially the latter, had inspired him. It was certainly this beautiful framework which assured the immediate success and permanent charm of the poem; and the immediate success was for that day something marvellous. The magnificent quarto edition of 750 copies was soon exhausted, and an octavo edition of 1500 copies was sold out within the year. In the following year two editions, containing together 4250 copies, were disposed of, and before twentyfive years had elapsed, that is, before 1830, 44,000 copies of the poem had been bought by the public in this country, taking account of the legitimate trade alone. Scott gained in all by *The Lay* 769*l.*, an unprecedented sum in those times for an author to obtain from any poem. Little more than half a century before, Johnson received but fifteen guineas for his stately poem on *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, and but ten guineas for his *London*. I do not say that Scott's poem had not much more in it of true poetic fire, though Scott himself, I believe, preferred these poems of Johnson's to anything that he himself ever wrote. But the disproportion in the reward was certainly enormous, and yet what Scott gained by his *Lay* was of course much less than he gained by any of his subsequent poems of equal, or anything like equal, length. Thus for

Marmion he received 1000 guineas long before the poem was published, and for *one half* of the copyright of *The Lord of the Isles* Constable paid Scott 1500 guineas. If we ask ourselves to what this vast popularity of Scott's poems, and especially of the earlier of them (for, as often happens, he was better remunerated for his later and much inferior poems than for his earlier and more brilliant productions) is due, I think the answer must be for the most part, the high romantic glow and extraordinary romantic simplicity of the poetical elements they contained. Take the old harper of *The Lay*, a figure which arrested the attention of Pitt during even that last most anxious year of his anxious life, the year of Ulm and Austerlitz. The lines in which Scott describes the old man's embarrassment when first urged to play, produced on Pitt, according to his own account, "an effect which I might have expected in painting, but could never have fancied capable of being given in poetry."

Every one knows the lines to which Pitt refers: —

"The humble boon was soon obtain'd; The aged minstrel audience gain'd. But, when he reach'd the room of state, Where she with all her ladies sate, Perchance he wish'd his boon denied; For, when to tune the harp he tried, His trembling hand had lost the ease Which marks security to please; And scenes long past, of joy and pain, Came wildering o'er his aged brain, — He tried to tune his harp in vain! The pitying Duchess praised its chime, And gave him heart, and gave him time, Till every string's according glee Was blended into harmony. And then, he said, he would full fain He could recall an ancient strain He never thought to sing again. It was not framed for village churls, But for high dames and mighty earls; He'd play'd it to King Charles the Good, When he kept Court at Holyrood; And much he wish'd, yet fear'd, to try The long-forgotten melody. Amid the strings his fingers stray'd, And an uncertain warbling made, And oft he shook his hoary head. But when he caught the measure wild The old man raised his face, and smiled; And lighten'd up his faded eye, With all a poet's ecstasy! In varying cadence, soft or strong, He swept the sounding chords along; The present scene, the future lot, His toils, his wants, were all forgot; Cold diffidence and age's frost In the full tide of song were lost; Each blank in faithless memory void The poet's glowing thought supplied; And, while his harp responsive rung, 'Twas thus the latest minstrel sung.

*

Here paused the harp; and with its swell The master's fire and courage fell; Dejectedly and low he bow'd, And, gazing timid on the crowd, He seem'd to seek in every eye If they approved his minstrelsy; And, diffident of present praise, Somewhat he spoke of former days, And how old age, and wandering long, Had done his hand and harp some wrong."

These lines hardly illustrate, I think, the particular form of Mr. Pitt's criticism, for a quick succession of fine shades of feeling of this kind could never have been delineated in a painting, or indeed in a series of paintings, at all, while they *are* so given in the poem. But the praise itself, if not its exact form, is amply deserved. The singular depth of the romantic glow in this passage, and its equally singular simplicity, — a simplicity which makes it intelligible to every one, — are conspicuous to every reader. It is not what is called classical poetry, for there is no severe outline, — no sculptured completeness and repose, — no satisfying wholeness of effect to the eye of the mind, — no embodiment of a great action. The poet gives us a breath, a ripple of alternating fear and hope in the heart of an old man, and that is all. He catches an emotion that had its roots deep in the past, and that is striving onward towards something in the future; — he traces the wistfulness and self-distrust with which age seeks to recover the feelings of youth, — the delight with which it greets them when they come, — the hesitation and diffidence with which it recalls them as they pass away, and questions the triumph it has just won, — and he paints all this without subtlety, without complexity, but with a swiftness such as few poets ever surpassed. Generally, however, Scott prefers action itself for his subject, to any feeling, however active in its bent. The cases in which he makes a study of any mood of feeling, as he does of this harper's feeling, are comparatively rare. Deloraine's night-ride to Melrose is a good deal more in Scott's ordinary way, than this study of the old harper's wistful mood. But whatever his subject, his treatment of it is the same. His lines are always strongly drawn; his handling is always simple; and his subject always romantic. But though romantic, it is simple almost to bareness, — one of the great causes both of his popularity, and of that deficiency in his poetry of which so many of his admirers become conscious when they compare him with other and richer poets. Scott used to say that in poetry Byron "bet" him; and no doubt that in which chiefly as a poet he "bet" him, was in the variety, the richness, the lustre of his effects. A certain ruggedness and

bareness was of the essence of Scott's idealism and romance. It was so in relation to scenery. He told Washington Irving that he loved the very nakedness of the Border country. "It has something," he said, "bold and stern and solitary about it. When I have been for some time in the rich scenery about Edinburgh, which is like ornamented garden-land, I begin to wish myself back again among my honest grey hills, and if I did not see the heather at least once a year, *I think I should die*." Now, the bareness which Scott so loved in his native scenery, there is in all his romantic elements of feeling. It is while he is bold and stern, that he is at his highest ideal point. Directly he begins to attempt rich or pretty subjects, as in parts of *The Lady of the Lake*, and a good deal of *The Lord of the Isles*, and still more in *The Bridal of Triermain*, his charm disappears. It is in painting those moods and exploits, in relation to which Scott shares most completely the feelings of ordinary men, but experiences them with far greater strength and purity than ordinary men, that he triumphs as a poet. Mr. Lockhart tells us that some of Scott's senses were decidedly "blunt," and one seems to recognize this in the simplicity of his romantic effects. "It is a fact," he says, "which some philosophers may think worth setting down, that Scott's organization, as to more than one of the senses, was the reverse of exquisite. He had very little of what musicians call an ear; his smell was hardly more delicate. I have seen him stare about, quite unconscious of the cause, when his whole company betrayed their uneasiness at the approach of an overkept haunch of venison; and neither by the nose nor the palate could he distinguish corked wine from sound. He could never tell Madeira from sherry, — nay, an Oriental friend having sent him a butt of *sheeraz*, when he remembered the circumstance some time afterwards and called for a bottle to have Sir John Malcolm's opinion of its quality, it turned out that his butler, mistaking the label, had already served up half the bin as *sherry*. Port he considered as physic … in truth he liked no wines except sparkling champagne and claret; but even as to the last he was no connoisseur, and sincerely preferred a tumbler of whisky-toddy to the most precious 'liquid-ruby' that ever flowed in the cup of a prince."

However, Scott's eye was very keen: — "*It was commonly him*," as his little son once said, "*that saw the hare sitting*." And his perception of colour was very delicate as well as his mere sight. As Mr. Ruskin has pointed out, his landscape painting is almost all done by the lucid use of colour. Nevertheless this bluntness of organization in relation to the less important

senses, no doubt contributed something to the singleness and simplicity of the deeper and more vital of Scott's romantic impressions; at least there is good reason to suppose that delicate and complicated susceptibilities do at least diminish the chance of living a strong and concentrated life — do risk the frittering away of feeling on the mere backwaters of sensations, even if they do not directly tend towards artificial and indirect forms of character. Scott's romance is like his native scenery, — bold, bare and rugged, with a swift deep stream of strong pure feeling running through it. There is plenty of colour in his pictures, as there is on the Scotch hills when the heather is out. And so too there is plenty of intensity in his romantic situations; but it is the intensity of simple, natural, unsophisticated, hardy, and manly characters. But as for subtleties and fine shades of feeling in his poems, or anything like the manifold harmonies of the richer arts, they are not to be found, or, if such complicated shading is to be found — and it is perhaps attempted in some faint measure in *The Bridal of Triermain,* the poem in which Scott tried to pass himself off for Erskine, — it is only at the expense of the higher qualities of his romantic poetry, that even in this small measure it is supplied. Again, there is no rich music in his verse. It is its rapid onset, its hurrying strength, which so fixes it in the mind.

It was not till 1808, three years after the publication of *The Lay*, that *Marmion*, Scott's greatest poem, was published. But I may as well say what seems necessary of that and his other poems, while I am on the subject of his poetry. *Marmion* has all the advantage over *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* that a coherent story told with force and fulness, and concerned with the same class of subjects as *The Lay*, must have over a confused and ill-managed legend, the only original purpose of which was to serve as the opportunity for a picture of Border life and strife. Scott's poems have sometimes been depreciated as mere *novelettes* in verse, and I think that some of them may be more or less liable to this criticism. For instance, *The Lady of the Lake*, with the exception of two or three brilliant passages, has always seemed to me more of a versified *novelette*, — without the higher and broader characteristics of Scott's prose novels — than of a poem. I suppose what one expects from a poem as distinguished from a romance — even though the poem incorporates a story — is that it should not rest for its chief interest on the mere development of the story; but rather that the narrative should be quite subordinate to that insight into the deeper side of life and manners, in expressing which poetry has so great an advantage over

prose. Of *The Lay* and *Marmion* this is true; less true of *The Lady of the Lake*, and still less of *Rokeby*, or *The Lord of the Isles*, and this is why *The Lay* and *Marmion* seem so much superior as poems to the others. They lean less on the interest of mere incident, more on that of romantic feeling and the great social and historic features of the day. *Marmion* was composed in great part in the saddle, and the stir of a charge of cavalry seems to be at the very core of it. "For myself," said Scott, writing to a lady correspondent at a time when he was in active service as a volunteer, "I must own that to one who has, like myself, *la tête un peu exaltée*, the pomp and circumstance of war gives, for a time, a very poignant and pleasing sensation." And you feel this all through *Marmion* even more than in *The Lay*. Mr. Darwin would probably say that Auld Wat of Harden had about as much responsibility for *Marmion* as Sir Walter himself. "You will expect," he wrote to the same lady, who was personally unknown to him at that time, "to see a person who had dedicated himself to literary pursuits, and you will find me a rattle-skulled, half-lawyer, half-sportsman, through whose head a regiment of horse has been exercising since he was five years old." And what Scott himself felt in relation to the martial elements of his poetry, soldiers in the field felt with equal force. "In the course of the day when *The Lady of the Lake* first reached Sir Adam Fergusson, he was posted with his company on a point of ground exposed to the enemy's artillery, somewhere no doubt on the lines of Torres Vedras. The men were ordered to lie prostrate on the ground; while they kept that attitude, the captain, kneeling at the head, read aloud the description of the battle in Canto VI., and the listening soldiers only interrupted him by a joyous huzza when the French shot struck the bank close above them." It is not often that martial poetry has been put to such a test; but we can well understand with what rapture a Scotch force lying on the ground to shelter from the French fire, would enter into such passages as the following: —

"Their light-arm'd archers far and near Survey'd the tangled ground, Their centre ranks, with pike and spear, A twilight forest frown'd, Their barbèd horsemen, in the rear, The stern battalia crown'd. No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang, Still were the pipe and drum; Save heavy tread, and armour's clang, The sullen march was dumb. There breathed no wind their crests to shake, Or wave their flags abroad; Scarce the frail aspen seem'd to quake, That shadow'd o'er their road. Their vanward scouts no tidings bring, Can rouse no lurking foe, Nor spy a trace of living thing Save

when they stirr'd the roe; The host moves like a deep-sea wave, Where rise no rocks its power to brave, High-swelling, dark, and slow. The lake is pass'd, and now they gain A narrow and a broken plain, Before the Trosach's rugged jaws, And here the horse and spearmen pause, While, to explore the dangerous glen, Dive through the pass the archer-men.

"At once there rose so wild a yell Within that dark and narrow dell, As all the fiends from heaven that fell Had peal'd the banner-cry of Hell! Forth from the pass, in tumult driven, Like chaff before the wind of heaven, The archery appear; For life! for life! their plight they ply, And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry, And plaids and bonnets waving high, And broadswords flashing to the sky, Are maddening in the rear. Onward they drive, in dreadful race, Pursuers and pursued; Before that tide of flight and chase, How shall it keep its rooted place, The spearmen's twilight wood? Down, down, cried Mar, 'your lances down Bear back both friend and foe!' Like reeds before the tempest's frown, That serried grove of lances brown At once lay levell'd low; And, closely shouldering side to side, The bristling ranks the onset bide, — 'We'll quell the savage mountaineer, As their Tinchel cows the game! They came as fleet as forest deer, We'll drive them back as tame.'"

But admirable in its stern and deep excitement as that is, the battle of Flodden in *Marmion* passes it in vigour, and constitutes perhaps the most perfect description of war by one who was — almost — both poet and warrior, which the English language contains.

And *Marmion* registers the high-water mark of Scott's poetical power, not only in relation to the painting of war, but in relation to the painting of nature. Critics from the beginning onwards have complained of the six introductory epistles, as breaking the unity of the story. But I cannot see that the remark has weight. No poem is written for those who read it as they do a novel — merely to follow the interest of the story; or if any poem be written for such readers, it deserves to die. On such a principle — which treats a poem as a mere novel and nothing else, — you might object to Homer that he interrupts the battle so often to dwell on the origin of the heroes who are waging it; or to Byron that he deserts Childe Harold to meditate on the rapture of solitude. To my mind the ease and frankness of these confessions of the author's recollections give a picture of his life and character while writing *Marmion*, which adds greatly to its attraction as a poem. You have a picture at once not only of the scenery, but of the mind in

which that scenery is mirrored, and are brought back frankly, at fit intervals, from the one to the other, in the mode best adapted to help you to appreciate the relation of the poet to the poem. At least if Milton's various interruptions of a much more ambitious theme, to muse upon his own qualifications or disqualifications for the task he had attempted, be not artistic mistakes — and I never heard of any one who thought them so — I cannot see any reason why Scott's periodic recurrence to his own personal history should be artistic mistakes either. If Scott's reverie was less lofty than Milton's, so also was his story. It seems to me as fitting to describe the relation between the poet and his theme in the one case as in the other. What can be more truly a part of *Marmion*, as a poem, though not as a story, than that introduction to the first canto in which Scott expresses his passionate sympathy with the high national feeling of the moment, in his tribute to Pitt and Fox, and then reproaches himself for attempting so great a subject and returns to what he calls his "rude legend," the very essence of which was, however, a passionate appeal to the spirit of national independence? What can be more germane to the poem than the delineation of the strength the poet had derived from musing in the bare and rugged solitudes of St. Mary's Lake, in the introduction to the second canto? Or than the striking autobiographical study of his own infancy which I have before extracted from the introduction to the third? It seems to me that *Marmion* without these introductions would be like the hills which border Yarrow, without the stream and lake in which they are reflected.

Never at all events in any later poem was Scott's touch as a mere painter so terse and strong. What a picture of a Scotch winter is given in these few lines: —

"The sheep before the pinching heaven To shelter'd dale and down are driven, Where yet some faded herbage pines, And yet a watery sunbeam shines: In meek despondency they eye The wither'd sward and wintry sky, And from beneath their summer hill Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill."

Again, if Scott is ever Homeric (which I cannot think he often is), in spite of Sir Francis Doyle's able criticism, — (he is too short, too sharp, and too eagerly bent on his rugged way, for a poet who is always delighting to find loopholes, even in battle, from which to look out upon the great story of human nature), he is certainly nearest to it in such a passage as this: —

"The Islesmen carried at their backs The ancient Danish battleaxe. They raised a wild and wondering cry As with his guide rode Marmion by. Loud

were their clamouring tongues, as when The clanging seafowl leave the fen, And, with their cries discordant mix'd, Grumbled and yell'd the pipes betwixt."

In hardly any of Scott's poetry do we find much of what is called the *curiosa felicitas* of expression, — the magic use of *words*, as distinguished from the mere general effect of vigour, purity, and concentration of purpose. But in *Marmion* occasionally we do find such a use. Take this description, for instance, of the Scotch tents near Edinburgh: —

"A thousand did I say? I ween Thousands on thousands there were seen, That chequer'd all the heath between The streamlet and the town; In crossing ranks extending far, Forming a camp irregular; Oft giving way where still there stood Some relics of the old oak wood, That darkly huge did intervene, *And tamed the glaring white with green*; In these extended lines there lay A martial kingdom's vast array."

The line I have italicized seems to me to have more of the poet's special magic of expression than is at all usual with Scott. The conception of the peaceful green oak wood *taming* the glaring white of the tented field, is as fine in idea as it is in relation to the effect of the mere colour on the eye. Judge Scott's poetry by whatever test you will — whether it be a test of that which is peculiar to it, its glow of national feeling, its martial ardour, its swift and rugged simplicity, or whether it be a test of that which is common to it with most other poetry, its attraction for all romantic excitements, its special feeling for the pomp and circumstance of war, its love of light and colour — and tested either way, *Marmion* will remain his finest poem. The battle of Flodden Field touches his highest point in its expression of stern patriotic feeling, in its passionate love of daring, and in the force and swiftness of its movement, no less than in the brilliancy of its romantic interests, the charm of its picturesque detail, and the glow of its scenic colouring. No poet ever equalled Scott in the description of wild and simple scenes and the expression of wild and simple feelings. But I have said enough now of his poetry, in which, good as it is, Scott's genius did not reach its highest point. The hurried tramp of his somewhat monotonous metre, is apt to weary the ears of men who do not find their sufficient happiness, as he did, in dreaming of the wild and daring enterprises of his loved Borderland. The very quality in his verse which makes it seize so powerfully on the imaginations of plain, bold, adventurous men, often

makes it hammer fatiguingly against the brain of those who need the relief of a wider horizon and a richer world.

Chapter VI

Companions and Friends

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I have anticipated in some degree, in speaking of Scott's later poetical works, what, in point of time at least, should follow some slight sketch of his chosen companions, and of his occupations in the first period of his married life. Scott's most intimate friend for some time after he went to college, probably the one who most stimulated his imagination in his youth, and certainly one of his most intimate friends to the very last, was William Clerk, who was called to the bar on the same day as Scott. He was the son of John Clerk of Eldin, the author of a book of some celebrity in its time on *Naval Tactics*. Even in the earliest days of this intimacy, the lads who had been Scott's fellow-apprentices in his father's office, saw with some jealousy his growing friendship with William Clerk, and remonstrated with Scott on the decline of his regard for them, but only succeeded in eliciting from him one of those outbursts of peremptory frankness which anything that he regarded as an attempt to encroach on his own interior liberty of choice always provoked. "I will never cut any man," he said, "unless I detect him in scoundrelism, but I know not what right any of you have to interfere with my choice of my company. As it is, I fairly own that though I like many of you very much, and have long done so, I think William Clerk well worth you all put together." Scott never lost the friendship which began with this eager enthusiasm, but his chief intimacy with Clerk was during his younger days.

In 1808 Scott describes Clerk as "a man of the most acute intellects and powerful apprehension, who, if he should ever shake loose the fetters of indolence by which he has been hitherto trammelled, cannot fail to be distinguished in the highest degree." Whether for the reason suggested, or for some other, Clerk never actually gained any other distinction so great as his friendship with Scott conferred upon him. Probably Scott had discerned the true secret of his friend's comparative obscurity. Even while preparing for the bar, when they had agreed to go on alternate mornings to each other's lodgings to read together, Scott found it necessary to modify the arrangement by always visiting his friend, whom he usually found in bed. It

was William Clerk who sat for the picture of Darsie Latimer, the hero of *Redgauntlet*, — whence we should suppose him to have been a lively, generous, susceptible, contentious, and rather helter-skelter young man, much alive to the ludicrous in all situations, very eager to see life in all its phases, and somewhat vain of his power of adapting himself equally to all these phases. Scott tells a story of Clerk's being once baffled — almost for the first time — by a stranger in a stage coach, who would not, or could not, talk to him on any subject, until at last Clerk addressed to him this stately remonstrance, "I have talked to you, my friend, on all the ordinary subjects — literature, farming, merchandise, gaming, game-laws, horse-races, suits-at-law, politics, swindling, blasphemy, and philosophy, — is there any one subject that you will favour me by opening upon?" "Sir," replied the inscrutable stranger, "can you say anything clever about '*bendleather*'?" No doubt this superficial familiarity with a vast number of subjects was a great fascination to Scott, and a great stimulus to his own imagination. To the last he held the same opinion of his friend's latent powers. "To my thinking," he wrote in his diary in 1825, "I never met a man of greater powers, of more complete information on all desirable subjects." But in youth at least Clerk seems to have had what Sir Walter calls a characteristic Edinburgh complaint, the "itch for disputation," and though he softened this down in later life, he had always that slight contentiousness of bias which enthusiastic men do not often heartily like, and which may have prevented Scott from continuing to the full the close intimacy of those earlier years. Yet almost his last record of a really delightful evening, refers to a bachelor's dinner given by Mr. Clerk, who remained unmarried, as late as 1827, after all Sir Walter's worst troubles had come upon him. "In short," says the diary, "we really laughed, and real laughter is as rare as real tears. I must say, too, there was a *heart*, a kindly feeling prevailed over the party. Can London give such a dinner?" It is clear, then, that Clerk's charm for his friend survived to the last, and that it was not the mere inexperience of boyhood, which made Scott esteem him so highly in his early days.

If Clerk pricked, stimulated, and sometimes badgered Scott, another of his friends who became more and more intimate with him, as life went on, and who died before him, always soothed him, partly by his gentleness, partly by his almost feminine dependence. This was William Erskine, also a barrister, and son of an Episcopalian clergyman in Perthshire, — to whose influence it is probably due that Scott himself always read the English

Church service in his own country house, and does not appear to have retained the Presbyterianism into which he was born. Erskine, who was afterwards raised to the Bench as Lord Kinnedder — a distinction which he did not survive for many months — was a good classic, a man of fine, or, as some of his companions thought, of almost superfine taste. The style apparently for which he had credit must have been a somewhat mimini-pimini style, if we may judge by Scott's attempt in *The Bridal of Triermain*, to write in a manner which he intended to be attributed to his friend. Erskine was left a widower in middle life, and Scott used to accuse him of philandering with pretty women, — - a mode of lovemaking which Scott certainly contrived to render into verse, in painting Arthur's lovemaking to Lucy in that poem. It seems that some absolutely false accusation brought against Lord Kinnedder, of an intrigue with a lady with whom he had been thus philandering, broke poor Erskine's heart, during his first year as a Judge. "The Counsellor (as Scott always called him) was," says Mr. Lockhart, "a little man of feeble make, who seemed unhappy when his pony got beyond a footpace, and had never, I should suppose, addicted himself to any out of door's sports whatever. He would, I fancy, as soon have thought of slaying his own mutton as of handling a fowlingpiece; he used to shudder when he saw a party equipped for coursing, as if murder was in the wind; but the cool, meditative angler was in his eyes the abomination of abominations. His small elegant features, hectic cheek and soft hazel eyes, were the index of the quick, sensitive, gentle spirit within." "He would dismount to lead his horse down what his friend hardly perceived to be a descent at all; grew pale at a precipice; and, unlike the white lady of Avenel, would go a long way round for a bridge." He shrank from general society, and lived in closer intimacies, and his intimacy with Scott was of the closest. He was Scott's confidant in all literary matters, and his advice was oftener followed on questions of style and form, and of literary enterprise, than that of any other of Scott's friends. It is into Erskine's mouth that Scott puts the supposed exhortation to himself to choose more classical subjects for his poems: —

"'Approach those masters o'er whose tomb Immortal laurels ever bloom; Instructive of the feebler bard, Still from the grave their voice is heard; From them, and from the paths they show'd, Choose honour'd guide and practised road; Nor ramble on through brake and maze, With harpers rude of barbarous days."

And it is to Erskine that Scott replies, —

"For me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask The classic poet's well-conn'd task? Nay, Erskine, nay, — on the wild hill Let the wild heathbell flourish still; Cherish the tulip, prune the vine, But freely let the woodbine twine, And leave untrimm'd the eglantine: Nay, my friend, nay, — since oft thy praise Hath given fresh vigour to my lays; Since oft thy judgment could refine My flatten'd thought or cumbrous line, Still kind, as is thy wont, attend, And in the minstrel spare the friend!"

It was Erskine, too, as Scott expressly states in his introduction to the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, who reviewed with far too much partiality the *Tales of my Landlord*, in the *Quarterly Review*, for January, 1817, — a review unjustifiably included among Scott's own critical essays, on the very insufficient ground that the MS. reached Murray in Scott's own handwriting. There can, however, be no doubt at all that Scott copied out his friend's MS., in order to increase the mystification which he so much enjoyed as to the authorship of his variously named series of tales. Possibly enough, too, he may have drawn Erskine's attention to the evidence which justified his sketch of the Puritans in *Old Mortality*, evidence which he certainly intended at one time to embody in a reply of his own to the adverse criticism on that book. But though Erskine was Scott's *alter ego* for literary purposes, it is certain that Erskine, with his fastidious, not to say finical, sense of honour, would never have lent his name to cover a puff written by Scott of his own works. A man who, in Scott's own words, died "a victim to a hellishly false story, or rather, I should say, to the sensibility of his own nature, which could not endure even the shadow of reproach, — like the ermine, which is said to pine if its fur is soiled," was not the man to father a puff, even by his dearest friend, on that friend's own creations. Erskine was indeed almost feminine in his love of Scott; but he was feminine with all the irritable and scrupulous delicacy of a man who could not derogate from his own ideal of right, even to serve a friend.

Another friend of Scott's earlier days was John Leyden, Scott's most efficient coadjutor in the collection of the *Border Minstrelsy*, — that eccentric genius, marvellous linguist, and goodnatured bear, who, bred a shepherd in one of the wildest valleys of Roxburghshire, had accumulated before the age of nineteen an amount of learning which confounded the Edinburgh Professors, and who, without any previous knowledge of medicine, prepared himself to pass an examination for the medical

profession, at six months' notice of the offer of an assistant-surgeoncy in the East India Company. It was Leyden who once walked between forty and fifty miles and back, for the sole purpose of visiting an old person who possessed a copy of a border ballad that was wanting for the *Minstrelsy*. Scott was sitting at dinner one day with company, when he heard a sound at a distance, "like that of the whistling of a tempest through the torn rigging of a vessel which scuds before it. The sounds increased as they approached more near; and Leyden (to the great astonishment of such of the guests as did not know him) burst into the room chanting the desiderated ballad with the most enthusiastic gesture, and all the energy of what he used to call the *saw-tones* of his voice." Leyden's great antipathy was Ritson, an ill-conditioned antiquarian, of vegetarian principles, whom Scott alone of all the antiquarians of that day could manage to tame and tolerate. In Scott's absence one day, during his early married life at Lasswade, Mrs. Scott inadvertently offered Ritson a slice of beef, when that strange man burst out in such outrageous tones at what he chose to suppose an insult, that Leyden threatened to "thraw his neck" if he were not silent, a threat which frightened Ritson out of the cottage. On another occasion, simply in order to tease Ritson, Leyden complained that the meat was overdone, and sent to the kitchen for a plate of literally raw beef, and ate it up solely for the purpose of shocking his crazy rival in antiquarian research. Poor Leyden did not long survive his experience of the Indian climate. And with him died a passion for knowledge of a very high order, combined with no inconsiderable poetical gifts. It was in the study of such eccentric beings as Leyden that Scott doubtless acquired his taste for painting the humours of Scotch character.

Another wild shepherd, and wilder genius among Scott's associates, not only in those earlier days, but to the end, was that famous Ettrick Shepherd, James Hogg, who was always quarrelling with his brother poet, as far as Scott permitted it, and making it up again when his better feelings returned. In a shepherd's dress, and with hands fresh from sheep-shearing, he came to dine for the first time with Scott in Castle Street, and finding Mrs. Scott lying on the sofa, immediately stretched himself at full length on another sofa; for, as he explained afterwards, "I thought I could not do better than to imitate the lady of the house." At dinner, as the wine passed, he advanced from "Mr. Scott," to "Shirra" (Sheriff), "Scott," "Walter," and finally "Wattie," till at supper he convulsed every one by addressing Mrs. Scott

familiarly as “Charlotte.” Hogg wrote certain short poems, the beauty of which in their kind Sir Walter himself never approached; but he was a man almost without self-restraint or self-knowledge, though he had a great deal of self-importance, and hardly knew how much he owed to Scott’s magnanimous and ever-forbearing kindness, or if he did, felt the weight of gratitude a burden on his heart. Very different was William Laidlaw, a farmer on the banks of the Yarrow, always Scott’s friend, and afterwards his manager at Abbotsford, through whose hand he dictated many of his novels. Mr. Laidlaw was one of Scott’s humbler friends, — a class of friends with whom he seems always to have felt more completely at his ease than any others — who gave at least as much as he received, one of those wise, loyal, and thoughtful men in a comparatively modest position of life, whom Scott delighted to trust, and never trusted without finding his trust justified. In addition to these Scotch friends, Scott had made, even before the publication of his *Border Minstrelsy*, not a few in London or its neighbourhood, — of whom the most important at this time was the grey-eyed, hatchet-faced, courteous George Ellis, as Leyden described him, the author of various works on ancient English poetry and romance, who combined with a shrewd, satirical vein, and a great knowledge of the world, political as well as literary, an exquisite taste in poetry, and a warm heart. Certainly Ellis’s criticism on his poems was the truest and best that Scott ever received; and had he lived to read his novels, — only one of which was published before Ellis’s death, — he might have given Scott more useful help than either Ballantyne or even Erskine.

Chapter VII

First Country Homes

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So completely was Scott by nature an out-of-doors man that he cannot be adequately known either through his poems or through his friends, without also knowing his external surroundings and occupations. His first country home was the cottage at Lasswade, on the Esk, about six miles from Edinburgh, which he took in 1798, a few months after his marriage, and retained till 1804. It was a pretty little cottage, in the beautification of which Scott felt great pride, and where he exercised himself in the small beginnings of those tastes for altering and planting which grew so rapidly upon him, and at last enticed him into castle-building and tree-culture on a dangerous, not to say, ruinous scale. One of Scott's intimate friends, the master of Rokeby, by whose house and neighbourhood the poem of that name was suggested, Mr. Morritt, walked along the Esk in 1808 with Scott four years after he had left it, and was taken out of his way to see it. "I have been bringing you," he said, "where there is little enough to be seen, only that Scotch cottage, but though not worth looking at, I could not pass it. It was our first country house when newly married, and many a contrivance it had to make it comfortable. I made a dining-table for it with my own hands. Look at these two miserable willow-trees on either side the gate into the enclosure; they are tied together at the top to be an arch, and a cross made of two sticks over them is not yet decayed. To be sure it is not much of a lion to show a stranger; but I wanted to see it again myself, for I assure you that after I had constructed it, *mamma* (Mrs. Scott) and I both of us thought it so fine, we turned out to see it by moonlight, and walked backwards from it to the cottage-door, in admiration of our own magnificence and its picturesque effect." It was here at Lasswade that he bought the phaeton, which was the first wheeled carriage that ever penetrated to Liddesdale, a feat which it accomplished in the first August of this century.

When Scott left the cottage at Lasswade in 1804, it was to take up his country residence in Selkirkshire, of which he had now been made sheriff, in a beautiful little house belonging to his cousin, MajorGeneral Sir James Russell, and known to all the readers of Scott's poetry as the Ashestiel of

the *Marmion* introductions. The Glenkinnon brook dashes in a deep ravine through the grounds to join the Tweed; behind the house rise the hills which divide the Tweed from the Yarrow; and an easy ride took Scott into the scenery of the Yarrow. The description of Ashestiel, and the brook which runs through it, in the introduction to the first canto of *Marmion* is indeed one of the finest specimens of Scott's descriptive poetry: —

"November's sky is chill and drear, November's leaf is red and sear; Late, gazing down the steepy linn, That hems our little garden in, Low in its dark and narrow glen, You scarce the rivulet might ken, So thick the tangled greenwood grew, So feeble trill'd the streamlet through; Now, murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen, Through bush and briar no longer green, An angry brook, it sweeps the glade, Brawls over rock and wild cascade, And, foaming brown with doubled speed, Hurries its waters to the Tweed."

Selkirk was his nearest town, and that was seven miles from Ashestiel; and even his nearest neighbour was at Yair, a few miles off lower down the Tweed, — Yair of which he wrote in another of the introductions to *Marmion*: —

"From Yair, which hills so closely bind Scarce can the Tweed his passage find, Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil, Till all his eddying currents boil."

At Ashestiel it was one of his greatest delights to look after his relative's woods, and to dream of planting and thinning woods of his own, a dream only too amply realized. It was here that a new kitchen-range was sunk for some time in the ford, which was so swollen by a storm in 1805 that the horse and cart that brought it were themselves with difficulty rescued from the waters. And it was here that Scott first entered on that active life of literary labour in close conjunction with an equally active life of rural sport, which gained him a well-justified reputation as the hardest worker and the heartiest player in the kingdom. At Lasswade Scott's work had been done at night; but serious headaches made him change his habit at Ashestiel, and rise steadily at five, lighting his own fire in winter. "Arrayed in his shooting-jacket, or whatever dress he meant to use till dinner-time, he was seated at his desk by six o'clock, all his papers arranged before him in the most accurate order, and his books of reference marshalled around him on the floor, while at least one favourite dog lay watching his eye, just beyond the line of circumvallation. Thus, by the time the family assembled for breakfast, between nine and ten, he had done enough, in his own language,

‘to break the neck of the day’s work.’ After breakfast a couple of hours more were given to his solitary tasks, and by noon he was, as he used to say, his ‘own man.’ When the weather was bad, he would labour incessantly all the morning; but the general rule was to be out and on horseback by one o’clock at the latest; while, if any more distant excursion had been proposed overnight, he was ready to start on it by ten; his occasional rainy days of unintermitted study, forming, as he said, a fund in his favour, out of which he was entitled to draw for accommodation whenever the sun shone with special brightness.” In his earlier days none of his horses liked to be fed except by their master. When Brown Adam was saddled, and the stable-door opened, the horse would trot round to the leaping-on stone of his own accord, to be mounted, and was quite intractable under any one but Scott. Scott’s life might well be fairly divided — just as history is divided into reigns — by the succession of his horses and dogs. The reigns of Captain, Lieutenant, Brown Adam, Daisy, divide at least the period up to Waterloo; while the reigns of Sybil Grey, and the Covenanter, or Douce Davie, divide the period of Scott’s declining years. During the brilliant period of the earlier novels we hear less of Scott’s horses; but of his deerhounds there is an unbroken succession. Camp, Maida (the “Bevis” of *Woodstock*), and Nimrod, reigned successively between Sir Walter’s marriage and his death. It was Camp on whose death he relinquished a dinner invitation previously accepted, on the ground that the death of “an old friend” rendered him unwilling to dine out; Maida to whom he erected a marble monument, and Nimrod of whom he spoke so affectingly as too good a dog for his diminished fortunes during his absence in Italy on the last hopeless journey.

Scott’s amusements at Ashestiel, besides riding, in which he was fearless to rashness, and coursing, which was the chief form of sporting in the neighbourhood, comprehended “burning the water,” as salmon-spearing by torchlight was called, in the course of which he got many a ducking. Mr. Skene gives an amusing picture of their excursions together from Ashestiel among the hills, he himself followed by a lanky Savoyard, and Scott by a portly Scotch butler — both servants alike highly sensitive as to their personal dignity — on horses which neither of the attendants could sit well. “Scott’s heavy lumbering buffetier had provided himself against the mountain storms with a huge cloak, which, when the cavalcade was at gallop, streamed at full stretch from his shoulders, and kept flapping in the other’s face, who, having more than enough to do in preserving his own

equilibrium, could not think of attempting at any time to control the pace of his steed, and had no relief but fuming and *pesting* at the *sacré manteau*, in language happily unintelligible to its wearer. Now and then some ditch or turf-fence rendered it indispensable to adventure on a leap, and no farce could have been more amusing than the display of politeness which then occurred between these worthy equestrians, each courteously declining in favour of his friend the honour of the first experiment, the horses fretting impatient beneath them, and the dogs clamouring encouragement." Such was Scott's order of life at Ashestiel, where he remained from 1804 to 1812. As to his literary work here, it was enormous.

Besides finishing *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, writing *Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, part of *The Bridal of Triermain*, and part of *Rokeby*, and writing reviews, he wrote a *Life of Dryden*, and edited his works anew with some care, in eighteen volumes, edited *Somers's Collection of Tracts*, in thirteen volumes, quarto, *Sir Ralph Sadler's Life, Letters, and State Papers*, in three volumes, quarto, *Miss Seward's Life and Poetical Works*, *The Secret History of the Court of James I.*, in two volumes, *Strutt's Queenhoo Hall*, in four volumes, 12mo., and various other single volumes, and began his heavy work on the edition of Swift. This was the literary work of eight years, during which he had the duties of his Sheriffship, and, after he gave up his practice as a barrister, the duties of his Deputy Clerkship of Session to discharge regularly. The editing of Dryden alone would have seemed to most men of leisure a pretty full occupation for these eight years, and though I do not know that Scott edited with the anxious care with which that sort of work is often now prepared, that he went into all the arguments for a doubtful reading with the pains that Mr. Dyce spent on the various readings of Shakespeare, or that Mr. Spedding spent on a various reading of Bacon, yet Scott did his work in a steady, workmanlike manner, which satisfied the most fastidious critics of that day, and he was never, I believe, charged with hurrying or scamping it. His biographies of Swift and Dryden are plain solid pieces of work — not exactly the works of art which biographies have been made in our day — not comparable to Carlyle's studies of Cromwell or Frederick, or, in point of art, even to the life of John Sterling, but still sensible and interesting, sound in judgment, and animated in style.

Chapter VIII

Removal to Abbotsford, and Life There

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In May, 1812, Scott having now at last obtained the salary of the Clerkship of Session, the work of which he had for more than five years discharged without pay, indulged himself in realizing his favourite dream of buying a "mountain farm" at Abbotsford, — five miles lower down the Tweed than his cottage at Ashestiel, which was now again claimed by the family of Russell, — and migrated thither with his household goods. The children long remembered the leave-taking as one of pure grief, for the villagers were much attached both to Scott and to his wife, who had made herself greatly beloved by her untiring goodness to the sick among her poor neighbours. But Scott himself describes the migration as a scene in which their neighbours found no small share of amusement. "Our flitting and removal from Ashestiel baffled all description; we had twentyfive cartloads of the veriest trash in nature, besides dogs, pigs, ponies, poultry, cows, calves, bareheaded wenches, and bare-breeched boys."

To another friend Scott wrote that the neighbours had "been much delighted with the procession of my furniture, in which old swords, bows, targets, and lances, made a very conspicuous show. A family of turkeys was accommodated within the helmet of some *preux chevalier* of ancient border fame; and the very cows, for aught I know, were bearing banners and muskets. I assure your ladyship that this caravan attended by a dozen of ragged rosy peasant children, carrying fishingrods and spears, and leading ponies, greyhounds, and spaniels, would, as it crossed the Tweed, have furnished no bad subject for the pencil, and really reminded me of one of the gipsy groups of Callot upon their march."

The place thus bought for 4000*l.*, — half of which, according to Scott's bad and sanguine habit, was borrowed from his brother, and half raised on the security of a poem at the moment of sale wholly unwritten, and not completed even when he removed to Abbotsford — "Rokeby" — became only too much of an idol for the rest of Scott's life. Mr. Lockhart admits that before the crash came he had invested 29,000*l.* in the purchase of land alone. But at this time only the kernel of the subsequent estate was bought,

in the shape of a hundred acres or rather more, part of which ran along the shores of the Tweed — ”a beautiful river flowing broad and bright over a bed of milk-white pebbles, unless here and there where it darkened into a deep pool, overhung as yet only by birches and alders.” There was also a poor farmhouse, a staring barn, and a pond so dirty that it had hitherto given the name of “Clarty Hole” to the place itself. Scott renamed the place from the adjoining ford which was just above the confluence of the Gala with the Tweed. He chose the name of Abbotsford because the land had formerly all belonged to the Abbots of Melrose, — the ruin of whose beautiful abbey was visible from many parts of the little property. On the other side of the river the old British barrier called “the Catrail” was full in view. As yet the place was not planted, — the only effort made in this direction by its former owner, Dr. Douglas, having been a long narrow stripe of firs, which Scott used to compare to a black hair-comb, and which gave the name of “The Doctor’s Redding-Kame” to the stretch of woods of which it is still the central line. Such was the place which he made it the too great delight of the remainder of his life to increase and beautify, by spending on it a good deal more than he had earned, and that too in times when he should have earned a good deal more than he ought to have thought even for a moment of spending. The cottage grew to a mansion, and the mansion to a castle. The farm by the Tweed made him long for a farm by the Cauldshiel’s loch, and the farm by the Cauldshiel’s loch for Thomas the Rhymer’s Glen; and as, at every step in the ladder, his means of buying were really increasing — though they were so cruelly discounted and forestalled by this growing land-hunger, — Scott never realized into what troubles he was carefully running himself.

Of his life at Abbotsford at a later period when his building was greatly enlarged, and his children grown up, we have a brilliant picture from the pen of Mr. Lockhart. And though it does not belong to his first years at Abbotsford, I cannot do better than include it here as conveying probably better than anything I could elsewhere find, the charm of that ideal life which lured Scott on from one project to another in that scheme of castle-building, in relation to which he confused so dangerously the world of dreams with the harder world of wages, capital, interest, and rent.

“I remember saying to William Allan one morning, as the whole party mustered before the porch after breakfast, ‘A faithful sketch of what you at this moment see would be more interesting a hundred years hence than the

grandest so-called historical picture that you will ever exhibit in Somerset House;' and my friend agreed with me so cordially that I often wondered afterwards he had not attempted to realize the suggestion. The subject ought, however, to have been treated conjointly by him (or Wilkie) and Edwin Landseer.

"It was a clear, bright September morning, with a sharpness in the air that doubled the animating influence of the sunshine, and all was in readiness for a grand coursing match on Newark Hill. The only guest who had chalked out other sport for himself was the staunchest of anglers, Mr. Rose; but he too was there on his *shelty*, armed with his salmon-rod and landing-net, and attended by his humorous squire, Hinves, and Charlie Purdie, a brother of Tom, in those days the most celebrated fisherman of the district. This little group of Waltonians, bound for Lord Somerville's preserve, remained lounging about to witness the start of the main cavalcade. Sir Walter, mounted on Sybil, was marshalling the order of procession with a huge hunting-whip; and among a dozen frolicsome youths and maidens, who seemed disposed to laugh at all discipline, appeared, each on horseback, each as eager as the youngest sportsman in the troop, Sir Humphry Davy, Dr. Wollaston, and the patriarch of Scottish *belles lettres*, Henry Mackenzie. The Man of Feeling, however, was persuaded with some difficulty to resign his steed for the present to his faithful negro follower, and to join Lady Scott in the sociable, until we should reach the ground of our *battue*. Laidlaw, on a long-tailed, wiry Highlander, yclept Hoddin Grey, which carried him nimbly and stoutly, although his feet almost touched the ground as he sat, was the adjutant. But the most picturesque figure was the illustrious inventor of the safety-lamp. He had come for his favourite sport of angling, and had been practising it successfully with Rose, his travelling-companion, for two or three days preceding this, but he had not prepared for coursing fields, and had left Charlie Purdie's troop for Sir Walter's on a sudden thought; and his fisherman's costume — a brown hat with flexible brim, surrounded with line upon line, and innumerable fly-hooks, jackboots worthy of a Dutch smuggler, and a fustian surtout dabbled with the blood of salmon, — made a fine contrast with the smart jackets, white cord breeches, and well-polished jockey-boots of the less distinguished cavaliers about him. Dr. Wollaston was in black, and, with his noble, serene dignity of countenance, might have passed for a sporting archbishop. Mr. Mackenzie, at this time in

the seventy-sixth year of his age, with a white hat turned up with green, green spectacles, green jacket, and long brown leather gaiters buttoned upon his nether anatomy, wore a dog-whistle round his neck, and had all over the air of as resolute a devotee as the gay captain of Huntly Burn. Tom Purdie and his subalterns had preceded us by a few hours with all the greyhounds that could be collected at Abbotsford, Darnick, and Melrose; but the giant Maida had remained as his master's orderly, and now gambolled about Sibyl Grey, barking for mere joy, like a spaniel puppy.

"The order of march had been all settled, and the sociable was just getting under weigh, when *the Lady Anne* broke from the line, screaming with laughter, and exclaimed, 'Papa! papa! I know you could never think of going without your pet.' Scott looked round, and I rather think there was a blush as well as a smile upon his face, when he perceived a little black pig frisking about his pony, and evidently a self-elected addition to the party of the day. He tried to look stern, and cracked his whip at the creature, but was in a moment obliged to join in the general cheers. Poor piggy soon found a strap round his neck, and was dragged into the background. Scott, watching the retreat, repeated with mock pathos the first verse of an old pastoral song: —

"What will I do gin my hoggie die? My joy, my pride, my hoggie! My only beast, I had nae mae, And wow! but I was vogie!"

The cheers were redoubled, and the squadron moved on. This pig had taken, nobody could tell how, a most sentimental attachment to Scott, and was constantly urging its pretension to be admitted a regular member of his *tail*, along with the greyhounds and terriers; but indeed I remember him suffering another summer under the same sort of pertinacity on the part of an affectionate hen. I leave the explanation for philosophers; but such were the facts. I have too much respect for the vulgarly calumniated donkey to name him in the same category of pets with the pig and the hen; but a year or two after this time, my wife used to drive a couple of these animals in a little garden chair, and whenever her father appeared at the door of our cottage, we were sure to see Hannah More and Lady Morgan (as Anne Scott had wickedly christened them) trotting from their pasture to lay their noses over the paling, and, as Washington Irving says of the old white-haired hedger with the Parisian snuffbox, 'to have a pleasant crack wi' the laird.'"

Carlyle, in his criticism on Scott — a criticism which will hardly, I think, stand the test of criticism in its turn, so greatly does he overdo the reaction against the first excessive appreciation of his genius — adds a contribution of his own to this charming idyll, in reference to the natural fascination which Scott seemed to exert over almost all dumb creatures. A little Blenheim cocker, "one of the smallest, beautifullest, and tiniest of lapdogs," with which Carlyle was well acquainted, and which was also one of the shyest of dogs, that would crouch towards his mistress and draw back "with angry timidity" if any one did but look at him admiringly, once met in the street "a tall, singular, busy-looking man," who halted by. The dog ran towards him and began "fawning, frisking, licking at his feet;" and every time he saw Sir Walter afterwards, in Edinburgh, he repeated his demonstration of delight. Thus discriminating was this fastidious Blenheim cocker even in the busy streets of Edinburgh.

And Scott's attraction for dumb animals was only a lesser form of his attraction for all who were in any way dependent on him, especially his own servants and labourers. The story of his demeanour towards them is one of the most touching ever written. "Sir Walter speaks to every man as if they were blood-relations" was the common *formula* in which this demeanour was described. Take this illustration. There was a little hunchbacked tailor, named William Goodfellow, living on his property (but who at Abbotsford was termed Robin Goodfellow). This tailor was employed to make the curtains for the new library, and had been very proud of his work, but fell ill soon afterwards, and Sir Walter was unremitting in his attention to him. "I can never forget," says Mr. Lockhart, "the evening on which the poor tailor died. When Scott entered the hovel, he found everything silent, and inferred from the looks of the good women in attendance that the patient had fallen asleep, and that they feared his sleep was the final one. He murmured some syllables of kind regret: at the sound of his voice the dying tailor unclosed his eyes, and eagerly and wistfully sat up, clasping his hands with an expression of rapturous gratefulness and devotion that, in the midst of deformity, disease, pain, and wretchedness, was at once beautiful and sublime. He cried with a loud voice, 'The Lord bless and reward you!' and expired with the effort." Still more striking is the account of his relation with Tom Purdie, the wide-mouthed, undersized, broad-shouldered, square-made, thin-flanked woodsman, so well known afterwards by all Scott's friends as he waited for his master in his green

shooting-jacket, white hat, and drab trousers. Scott first made Tom Purdie's acquaintance in his capacity as judge, the man being brought before him for poaching, at the time that Scott was living at Ashestiel. Tom gave so touching an account of his circumstances — work scarce — wife and children in want — grouse abundant — and his account of himself was so fresh and even humorous, that Scott let him off the penalty, and made him his shepherd. He discharged these duties so faithfully that he came to be his master's forester and factotum, and indeed one of his best friends, though a little disposed to tyrannize over Scott in his own fashion. A visitor describes him as unpacking a box of new importations for his master "as if he had been sorting some toys for a restless child." But after Sir Walter had lost the bodily strength requisite for riding, and was too melancholy for ordinary conversation, Tom Purdie's shoulder was his great stay in wandering through his woods, for with him he felt that he might either speak or be silent at his pleasure. "What a blessing there is," Scott wrote in his diary at that time, "in a fellow like Tom, whom no familiarity can spoil, whom you may scold and praise and joke with, knowing the quality of the man is unalterable in his love and reverence to his master." After Scott's failure, Mr. Lockhart writes: "Before I leave this period, I must note how greatly I admired the manner in which all his dependents appeared to have met the reverse of his fortunes — a reverse which inferred very considerable alteration in the circumstances of every one of them. The butler, instead of being the easy chief of a large establishment, was now doing half the work of the house at probably half his former wages. Old Peter, who had been for five and twenty years a dignified coachman, was now ploughman in ordinary, only putting his horses to the carriage upon high and rare occasions; and so on with all the rest that remained of the ancient train. And all, to my view, seemed happier than they had ever done before." The illustration of this true confidence between Scott and his servants and labourers might be extended to almost any length.

Chapter IX

Scott's Partnerships With the Ballantynes

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Before I make mention of Scott's greatest works, his novels, I must say a few words of his relation to the Ballantyne Brothers, who involved him, and were involved by him, in so many troubles, and with whose name the story of his broken fortunes is inextricably bound up. James Ballantyne, the elder brother, was a schoolfellow of Scott's at Kelso, and was the editor and manager of the *Kelso Mail*, an anti-democratic journal, which had a fair circulation. Ballantyne was something of an artist as regarded "type," and Scott got him therefore to print his *Minstrelsy of the Border*, the excellent workmanship of which attracted much attention in London. In 1802, on Scott's suggestion, Ballantyne moved to Edinburgh; and to help him to move, Scott, who was already meditating some investment of his little capital in business other than literary, lent him 500l. Between this and 1805, when Scott first became a partner of Ballantyne's in the printing business, he used every exertion to get legal and literary printing offered to James Ballantyne, and, according to Mr. Lockhart, the concern "grew and prospered." At Whitsuntide, 1805, when *The Lay* had been published, but before Scott had the least idea of the prospects of gain which mere literature would open to him, he formally, though secretly, joined Ballantyne as a partner in the printing business. He explains his motives for this step, so far at least as he then recalled them, in a letter written after his misfortunes, in 1826. "It is easy," he said, "no doubt for any friend to blame me for entering into connexion with commercial matters at all. But I wish to know what I could have done better — excluded from the bar, and then from all profits for six years, by my colleague's prolonged life. Literature was not in those days what poor Constable has made it; and with my little capital I was too glad to make commercially the means of supporting my family. I got but 600*l.* for *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and — it was a price that made men's hair stand on end — 1000*l.* for *Marmion*. I have been far from suffering by James Ballantyne. I owe it to him to say, that his difficulties, as well as his advantages, are owing to me."

This, though a true, was probably a very imperfect account of Scott's motives. He ceased practising at the bar, I do not doubt, in great degree from a kind of hurt pride at his ill-success, at a time when he felt during every month more and more confidence in his own powers. He believed, with some justice, that he understood some of the secrets of popularity in literature, but he had always, till towards the end of his life, the greatest horror of resting on literature alone as his main resource; and he was not a man, nor was Lady Scott a woman, to pinch and live narrowly. Were it only for his lavish generosity, that kind of life would have been intolerable to him. Hence, he reflected, that if he could but use his literary instinct to feed some commercial undertaking, managed by a man he could trust, he might gain a considerable percentage on his little capital, without so embarking in commerce as to oblige him either to give up his status as a sheriff, or his official duties as a clerk of session, or his literary undertakings. In his old schoolfellow, James Ballantyne, he believed he had found just such an agent as he wanted, the requisite link between literary genius like his own, and the world which reads and buys books; and he thought that, by feeling his way a little, he might secure, through this partnership, besides the then very bare rewards of authorship, at least a share in those more liberal rewards which commercial men managed to squeeze for themselves out of successful authors. And, further, he felt — and this was probably the greatest unconscious attraction for him in this scheme — that with James Ballantyne for his partner he should be the real leader and chief, and rather in the position of a patron and benefactor of his colleague, than of one in any degree dependent on the generosity or approval of others. "If I have a very strong passion in the world," he once wrote of himself — and the whole story of his life seems to confirm it — "it is pride." In James Ballantyne he had a faithful, but almost humble friend, with whom he could deal much as he chose, and fear no wound to his pride. He had himself helped Ballantyne to a higher line of business than any hitherto aspired to by him. It was his own book which first got the Ballantyne press its public credit. And if he could but create a great commercial success upon this foundation, he felt that he should be fairly entitled to share in the gains, which not merely his loan of capital, but his foresight and courage had opened to Ballantyne.

And it is quite possible that Scott might have succeeded — or at all events not seriously failed — if he had been content to stick to the printing

firm of James Ballantyne and Co., and had not launched also into the bookselling and publishing firm of John Ballantyne and Co., or had never begun the wild and dangerous practice of forestalling his gains, and spending wealth which he had not earned. But when by way of feeding the printing press of James Ballantyne and Co., he started in 1809 the bookselling and publishing firm of John Ballantyne and Co., using as his agent a man as inferior in sterling worth to James, as James was inferior in general ability to himself, he carefully dug a mine under his own feet, of which we can only say, that nothing except his genius could have prevented it from exploding long before it did. The truth was evidently that James Ballantyne's respectful homage, and John's humorous appreciation, all but blinded Scott's eyes to the utter inadequacy of either of these men, especially the latter, to supply the deficiencies of his own character for conducting business of this kind with proper discretion. James Ballantyne, who was pompous and indolent, though thoroughly honest, and not without some intellectual insight, Scott used to call Aldiborontiphoscophornio. John, who was clever but frivolous, dissipated, and tricksy, he termed Rigdumfunnidos, or his "little Picaroon." It is clear from Mr. Lockhart's account of the latter that Scott not only did not respect, but despised him, though he cordially liked him, and that he passed over, in judging him, vices which in a brother or son of his own he would severely have rebuked. I believe myself that his liking for cooperation with both, was greatly founded on his feeling that they were simply creatures of his, to whom he could pretty well dictate what he wanted, — colleagues whose inferiority to himself unconsciously flattered his pride. He was evidently inclined to resent bitterly the patronage of publishers. He sent word to Blackwood once with great hauteur, after some suggestion from that house had been made to him which appeared to him to interfere with his independence as an author, that he was one of "the Black Hussars" of literature, who would not endure that sort of treatment. Constable, who was really very liberal, hurt his sensitive pride through the *Edinburgh Review*, of which Jeffrey was editor. Thus the Ballantynes' great deficiency — that neither of them had any independent capacity for the publishing business, which would in any way hamper his discretion — though this is just what commercial partners ought to have had, or they were not worth their salt, — was, I believe, precisely what induced this Black Hussar of literature, in spite of his otherwise

considerable sagacity and knowledge of human nature, to select them for partners.

And yet it is strange that he not only chose them, but chose the inferior and lighter-headed of the two for far the most important and difficult of the two businesses. In the printing concern there was at least this to be said, that of part of the business — the selection of type and the superintendence of the executive part, — James Ballantyne was a good judge. He was never apparently a good man of business, for he kept no strong hand over the expenditure and accounts, which is the core of success in every concern. But he understood types; and his customers were publishers, a wealthy and judicious class, who were not likely all to fail together. But to select a "Rigdumfunnidos," — a dissipated comic-song singer and horse-fancier, — for the head of a publishing concern, was indeed a kind of insanity. It is told of John Ballantyne, that after the successful negotiation with Constable for *Rob Roy*, and while "hopping up and down in his glee," he exclaimed, "'Is Rob's gun here, Mr. Scott? Would you object to my trying the old barrel with a *few de joy*?' 'Nay, Mr. Puff,' said Scott, 'it would burst and blow you to the devil before your time.' 'Johnny, my man,' said Constable, 'what the mischief puts drawing at sight into *your* head?' Scott laughed heartily at this innuendo; and then observing that the little man felt somewhat sore, called attention to the notes of a bird in the adjoining shrubbery. 'And by-the-bye,' said he, as they continued listening, "tis a long time, Johnny, since we have had "The Cobbler of Kelso."' Mr. Puff forthwith jumped up on a mass of stone, and seating himself in the proper attitude of one working with an awl, began a favourite interlude, mimicking a certain son of Crispin, at whose stall Scott and he had often lingered when they were schoolboys, and a blackbird, the only companion of his cell, that used to sing to him while he talked and whistled to it all day long. With this performance Scott was always delighted. Nothing could be richer than the contrast of the bird's wild, sweet notes, some of which he imitated with wonderful skill, and the accompaniment of the cobbler's hoarse, cracked voice, uttering all manner of endearing epithets, which Johnny multiplied and varied in a style worthy of the old women in Rabelais at the birth of Pantagruel." That passage gives precisely the kind of estimation in which John Ballantyne was held both by Scott and Constable. And yet it was to him that Scott entrusted the dangerous and difficult duty of setting up a new publishing house as a rival to the best publishers of the day. No doubt Scott really relied on his own

judgment for working the publishing house. But except where his own books were concerned, no judgment could have been worse. In the first place he was always wanting to do literary jobs for a friend, and so advised the publishing of all sorts of unsaleable books, because his friends desired to write them. In the next place, he was a genuine historian, and one of the antiquarian kind himself; he was himself really interested in all sorts of historical and antiquarian issues, — and very mistakenly gave the public credit for wishing to know what he himself wished to know. I should add that Scott's good nature and kindness of heart not only led him to help on many books which he knew in himself could never answer, and some which, as he well knew, would be altogether worthless, but that it greatly biassed his own intellectual judgment. Nothing can be plainer than that he really held his intimate friend, Joanna Baillie, a very great dramatic poet, a much greater poet than himself, for instance; one fit to be even mentioned as following — at a distance — in the track of Shakespeare. He supposes Erskine to exhort him thus: —

"Or, if to touch such chord be thine, Restore the ancient tragic line, And emulate the notes that rung From the wild harp which silent hung By silver Avon's holy shore, Till twice a hundred years roll'd o'er, — When she, the bold enchantress, came With fearless hand and heart on flame, From the pale willow snatch'd the treasure, And swept it with a kindred measure, Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove With Montfort's hate and Basil's love, Awakening at the inspired strain, Deem'd their own Shakespeare lived again."

Avon's swans must have been Avon's geese, I think, if they had deemed anything of the kind. Joanna Baillie's dramas are "nice," and rather dull; now and then she can write a song with the ease and sweetness that suggest Shakespearian echoes. But Scott's judgment was obviously blinded by his just and warm regard for Joanna Baillie herself.

Of course with such interfering causes to bring unsaleable books to the house — of course I do not mean that John Ballantyne and Co. published for Joanna Baillie, or that they would have lost by it if they had — the new firm published all sorts of books which did not sell at all; while John Ballantyne himself indulged in a great many expenses and dissipations, for which John Ballantyne and Co. had to pay. Nor was it very easy for a partner who himself drew bills on the future — even though he were the well-spring of all the paying business the company had — to be very severe

on a fellow-partner who supplied his pecuniary needs in the same way. At all events, there is no question that all through 1813 and 1814 Scott was kept in constant suspense and fear of bankruptcy, by the ill-success of John Ballantyne and Co., and the utter want of straightforwardness in John Ballantyne himself as to the bills out, and which had to be provided against. It was the publication of *Waverley*, and the consequent opening up of the richest vein not only in Scott's own genius, but in his popularity with the public, which alone ended these alarms; and the many unsaleable works of John Ballantyne and Co. were then gradually disposed of to Constable and others, to their own great loss, as part of the conditions on which they received a share in the copyright of the wonderful novels which sold like wildfire. But though in this way the publishing business of John Ballantyne and Co. was saved, and its affairs pretty decently wound up, the printing firm remained saddled with some of their obligations; while Constable's business, on which Scott depended for the means with which he was buying his estate, building his castle, and settling money on his daughter-in-law, was seriously injured by the purchase of all this unsaleable stock.

I do not think that any one who looks into the complicated controversy between the representatives of the Ballantynes and Mr. Lockhart, concerning these matters, can be content with Mr. Lockhart's — no doubt perfectly sincere — judgment on the case. It is obvious that amidst these intricate accounts, he fell into one or two serious blunders — blunders very unjust to James Ballantyne. And without pretending to have myself formed any minute judgment on the details, I think the following points clear: — (1.) That James Ballantyne was very severely judged by Mr. Lockhart, on grounds which were never alleged by Scott against him at all, — indeed on grounds on which he was expressly exempted from all blame by Sir Walter. (2.) That Sir Walter Scott was very severely judged by the representatives of the Ballantynes, on grounds on which James Ballantyne himself never brought any charge against him; on the contrary, he declared that he had no charge to bring. (3.) That both Scott and his partners invited ruin by freely spending gains which they only expected to earn, and that in this Scott certainly set an example which he could hardly expect feebler men not to follow. On the whole, I think the troubles with the Ballantyne brothers brought to light not only that eager gambling spirit in him, which his grandfather indulged with better success and more moderation when he bought the hunter with money destined for a flock of sheep, and then gave

up gambling for ever, but a tendency still more dangerous, and in some respects involving an even greater moral defect, — I mean a tendency, chiefly due, I think, to a very deep-seated pride, — to prefer inferior men as working colleagues in business. And yet it is clear that if Scott were to dabble in publishing at all, he really needed the check of men of larger experience, and less literary turn of mind. The great majority of consumers of popular literature are not, and indeed will hardly ever be, literary men; and that is precisely why a publisher who is not, in the main, literary, — who looks on authors' MSS. for the most part with distrust and suspicion, much as a rich man looks at a begging-letter, or a sober and judicious fish at an angler's fly, — is so much less likely to run aground than such a man as Scott. The untried author should be regarded by a wise publisher as a natural enemy, — an enemy indeed of a class, rare specimens whereof will always be his best friends, and who, therefore, should not be needlessly affronted — but also as one of a class of whom nineteen out of every twenty will dangle before the publisher's eyes wiles and hopes and expectations of the most dangerous and illusory character, — which constitute indeed the very perils that it is his true function in life skilfully to evade. The Ballantynes were quite unfit for this function; first, they had not the experience requisite for it; next, they were altogether too much under Scott's influence. No wonder that the partnership came to no good, and left behind it the germs of calamity even more serious still.

Chapter X

The Waverley Novels

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In the summer of 1814, Scott took up again and completed — almost at a single heat, — a fragment of a Jacobite story, begun in 1805 and then laid aside. It was published anonymously, and its astonishing success turned back again the scales of Scott's fortunes, already inclining ominously towards a catastrophe. This story was *Waverley*. Mr. Carlyle has praised *Waverley* above its fellows. "On the whole, contrasting *Waverley*, which was carefully written, with most of its followers which were written extempore, one may regret the extempore method." This is, however, a very unfortunate judgment. Not one of the whole series of novels appears to have been written more completely extempore than the great bulk of *Waverley*, including almost everything that made it either popular with the million or fascinating to the fastidious; and it is even likely that this is one of the causes of its excellence.

"The last two volumes," says Scott, in a letter to Mr. Morritt, "were written in three weeks." And here is Mr. Lockhart's description of the effect which Scott's incessant toil during the composition, produced on a friend whose window happened to command the novelist's study: —

"Happening to pass through Edinburgh in June, 1814, I dined one day with the gentleman in question (now the Honourable William Menzies, one of the Supreme Judges at the Cape of Good Hope), whose residence was then in George Street, situated very near to, and at right angles with, North Castle Street. It was a party of very young persons, most of them, like Menzies and myself, destined for the Bar of Scotland, all gay and thoughtless, enjoying the first flush of manhood, with little remembrance of the yesterday, or care of the morrow. When my companion's worthy father and uncle, after seeing two or three bottles go round, left the juveniles to themselves, the weather being hot, we adjourned to a library which had one large window looking northwards. After carousing here for an hour or more, I observed that a shade had come over the aspect of my friend, who happened to be placed immediately opposite to myself, and said something that intimated a fear of his being unwell. 'No,' said he, 'I shall be well

enough presently, if you will only let me sit where you are, and take my chair; for there is a confounded hand in sight of me here, which has often bothered me before, and now it won't let me fill my glass with a good will.' I rose to change places with him accordingly, and he pointed out to me this hand, which, like the writing on Belshazzar's wall, disturbed his hour of hilarity. 'Since we sat down,' he said, 'I have been watching it — it fascinates my eye — it never stops — page after page is finished, and thrown on that heap of MS., and still it goes on unwearied; and so it will be till candles are brought in, and God knows how long after that. It is the same every night — I can't stand a sight of it when I am not at my books.' 'Some stupid, dogged engrossing clerk, probably,' exclaimed myself, 'or some other giddy youth in our society.' 'No, boys,' said our host; 'I well know what hand it is — 'tis Walter Scott's.'"

If that is not extempore writing, it is difficult to say what extempore writing is. But in truth, there is no evidence that any one of the novels was laboured, or even so much as carefully composed. Scott's method of composition was always the same; and, when writing an imaginative work, the rate of progress seems to have been pretty even, depending much more on the absence of disturbing engagements, than on any mental irregularity. The morning was always his brightest time; but morning or evening, in country or in town, well or ill, writing with his own pen or dictating to an amanuensis in the intervals of screaming-fits due to the torture of cramp in the stomach, Scott spun away at his imaginative web almost as evenly as a silkworm spins at its golden cocoon. Nor can I detect the slightest trace of any difference in quality between the stories, such as can be reasonably ascribed to comparative care or haste. There are differences, and even great differences, of course, ascribable to the less or greater suitability of the subject chosen to Scott's genius, but I can find no trace of the sort of cause to which Mr. Carlyle refers. Thus, few, I suppose, would hesitate to say that while *Old Mortality* is very near, if not quite, the finest of Scott's works, *The Black Dwarf* is not far from the other end of the scale. Yet the two were written in immediate succession (*The Black Dwarf* being the first of the two), and were published together, as the first series of *Tales of my Landlord*, in 1816. Nor do I think that any competent critic would find any clear deterioration of quality in the novels of the later years, — excepting of course the two written after the stroke of paralysis. It is true, of course, that some of the subjects which most powerfully stirred his imagination were

among his earlier themes, and that he could not effectually use the same subject twice, though he now and then tried it. But making allowance for this consideration, the imaginative power of the novels is as astonishingly *even* as the rate of composition itself. For my own part, I greatly prefer *The Fortunes of Nigel* (which was written in 1822) to *Waverley* which was begun in 1805, and finished in 1814, and though very many better critics would probably decidedly disagree, I do not think that any of them would consider this preference grotesque or purely capricious. Indeed, though *Anne of Geierstein*, — the last composed before Scott's stroke, — would hardly seem to any careful judge the equal of *Waverley*, I do not much doubt that if it had appeared in place of *Waverley*, it would have excited very nearly as much interest and admiration; nor that had *Waverley* appeared in 1829, in place of *Anne of Geierstein*, it would have failed to excite very much more. In these fourteen most effective years of Scott's literary life, during which he wrote twenty-three novels besides shorter tales, the best stories appear to have been on the whole the most rapidly written, probably because they took the strongest hold of the author's imagination.

Till near the close of his career as an author, Scott never avowed his responsibility for any of these series of novels, and even took some pains to mystify the public as to the identity between the author of *Waverley* and the author of *Tales of my Landlord*. The care with which the secret was kept is imputed by Mr. Lockhart in some degree to the habit of mystery which had grown upon Scott during his secret partnership with the Ballantynes; but in this he seems to be confounding two very different phases of Scott's character. No doubt he was, as a professional man, a little ashamed of his commercial speculation, and unwilling to betray it. But he was far from ashamed of his literary enterprise, though it seems that he was at first very anxious lest a comparative failure, or even a mere moderate success, in a less ambitious sphere than that of poetry, should endanger the great reputation he had gained as a poet. That was apparently the first reason for secrecy. But, over and above this, it is clear that the mystery stimulated Scott's imagination and saved him trouble as well. He was obviously more free under the veil — free from the liability of having to answer for the views of life or history suggested in his stories; but besides this, what was of more importance to him, the slight disguise stimulated his sense of humour, and gratified the whimsical, boyish pleasure which he always had

in acting an imaginary character. He used to talk of himself as a sort of Abou Hassan — a private man one day, and acting the part of a monarch the next — with the kind of glee which indicated a real delight in the change of parts, and I have little doubt that he threw himself with the more gusto into characters very different from his own, in consequence of the pleasure it gave him to conceive his friends hopelessly misled by this display of traits, with which he supposed that they could not have credited him even in imagination. Thus besides relieving him of a host of compliments which he did not enjoy, and enabling him the better to evade an illbred curiosity, the disguise no doubt was the same sort of fillip to the fancy which a mask and domino or a fancy dress are to that of their wearers. Even in a disguise a man cannot cease to be himself; but he can get rid of his improperly "imputed" righteousness — often the greatest burden he has to bear — and of all the expectations formed on the strength, as Mr. Clough says, —

"Of having been what one has been, What one thinks one is, or thinks that others suppose one."

To some men the freedom of this disguise is a real danger and temptation. It never could have been so to Scott, who was in the main one of the simplest as well as the boldest and proudest of men. And as most men perhaps would admit that a good deal of even the best part of their nature is rather suppressed than expressed by the name by which they are known in the world, Scott must have felt this in a far higher degree, and probably regarded the manifold characters under which he was known to society, as representing him in some respects more justly than any individual name could have done. His mind ranged hither and thither over a wide field — far beyond that of his actual experience, — and probably ranged over it all the more easily for not being absolutely tethered to a single class of associations by any public confession of his authorship. After all, when it became universally known that Scott was the only author of all these tales, it may be doubted whether the public thought as adequately of the imaginative efforts which had created them, as they did while they remained in some doubt whether there was a multiplicity of agencies at work, or only one. The uncertainty helped them to realize the many lives which were really led by the author of all these tales, more completely than any confession of the individual authorship could have done. The shrinking

of activity in public curiosity and wonder which follows the final determination of such ambiguities, is very apt to result rather in a dwindling of the imaginative effort to enter into the genius which gave rise to them, than in an increase of respect for so manifold a creative power.

When Scott wrote, such fertility as his in the production of novels was regarded with amazement approaching to absolute incredulity. Yet he was in this respect only the advancedguard of a not inconsiderable class of men and women who have a special gift for pouring out story after story, containing a great variety of figures, while retaining a certain even level of merit. There is more than one novelist of the present day who has far surpassed Scott in the number of his tales, and one at least of very high repute, who has, I believe, produced more even within the same time. But though to our larger experience, Scott's achievement, in respect of mere fertility, is by no means the miracle which it once seemed, I do not think one of his successors can compare with him for a moment in the ease and truth with which he painted, not merely the life of his own time and country — seldom indeed that of precisely his own time — but that of days long past, and often too of scenes far distant. The most powerful of all his stories, *Old Mortality*, was the story of a period more than a century and a quarter before he wrote; and others, — which though inferior to this in force, are nevertheless, when compared with the so-called historical romances of any other English writer, what sunlight is to moonlight, if you can say as much for the latter as to admit even that comparison, — go back to the period of the Tudors, that is, two centuries and a half. *Quentin Durward*, which is all but amongst the best, runs back farther still, far into the previous century, while *Ivanhoe* and *The Talisman*, though not among the greatest of Scott's works, carry us back more than five hundred years. The new class of extempore novel writers, though more considerable than, sixty years ago, any one could have expected ever to see it, is still limited, and on any high level of merit will probably always be limited, to the delineation of the times of which the narrator has personal experience. Scott seemed to have had something very like personal experience of a few centuries at least, judging by the ease and freshness with which he poured out his stories of these centuries, and though no one can pretend that even he could describe the period of the Tudors as Miss Austen described the country parsons and squires of George the Third's reign, or as Mr. Trollope describes the politicians and hunting-men of Queen Victoria's, it is

nevertheless the evidence of a greater imagination to make us live so familiarly as Scott does amidst the political and religious controversies of two or three centuries' duration, to be the actual witnesses, as it were, of Margaret of Anjou's throes of vain ambition, and Mary Stuart's fascinating remorse, and Elizabeth's domineering and jealous balancings of noble against noble, of James the First's shrewd pedantries, and the Regent Murray's large forethought, of the politic craft of Argyle, the courtly ruthlessness of Claverhouse, and the high-bred clemency of Monmouth, than to reflect in countless modifications the freaks, figures, and fashions of our own time.

The most striking feature of Scott's romances is that, for the most part, they are pivoted on public rather than mere private interests and passions. With but few exceptions — (*The Antiquary*, *St. Ronan's Well*, and *Guy Mannering* are the most important) — Scott's novels give us an imaginative view, not of mere individuals, but of individuals as they are affected by the public strifes and social divisions of the age. And this it is which gives his books so large an interest for old and young, soldiers and statesmen, the world of society and the recluse, alike. You can hardly read any novel of Scott's and not become better aware what public life and political issues mean. And yet there is no artificiality, no elaborate attitudinizing before the antique mirrors of the past, like Bulwer's, no dressing out of clothes-horses like G. P. R. James. The boldness and freshness of the present are carried back into the past, and you see Papists and Puritans, Cavaliers and Roundheads, Jews, Jacobites, and freebooters, preachers, schoolmasters, mercenary soldiers, gipsies, and beggars, all living the sort of life which the reader feels that in their circumstances and under the same conditions of time and place and parentage, he might have lived too. Indeed, no man can read Scott without being more of a public man, whereas the ordinary novel tends to make its readers rather less of one than before.

Next, though most of these stories are rightly called romances, no one can avoid observing that they give that side of life which is unromantic, quite as vigorously as the romantic side. This was not true of Scott's poems, which only expressed onehalf of his nature, and were almost pure romances. But in the novels the business of life is even better portrayed than its sentiments. Mr. Bagehot, one of the ablest of Scott's critics, has pointed out this admirably in his essay on *The Waverley Novels*. "Many historical novelists," he says, "especially those who with care and pains

have read up the detail, are often evidently in a strait how to pass from their history to their sentiment. The fancy of Sir Walter could not help connecting the two. If he had given us the English side of the race to Derby, *he would have described the Bank of England paying in sixpences, and also the loves of the cashier*." No one who knows the novels well can question this. Fergus MacIvor's ways and means, his careful arrangements for receiving subsidies in black mail, are as carefully recorded as his lavish highland hospitalities; and when he sends his silver cup to the Gaelic bard who chaunts his greatness, the faithful historian does not forget to let us know that the cup is his last, and that he is hard-pressed for the generosities of the future. So too the habitual thievishness of the highlanders is pressed upon us quite as vividly as their gallantry and superstitions. And so careful is Sir Walter to paint the petty pedantries of the Scotch traditional conservatism, that he will not spare even Charles Edward — of whom he draws so graceful a picture — the humiliation of submitting to old Bradwardine's "solemn act of homage," but makes him go through the absurd ceremony of placing his foot on a cushion to have its brogue unlatched by the dry old enthusiast of heraldic lore. Indeed it was because Scott so much enjoyed the contrast between the high sentiment of life and its dry and often absurd detail, that his imagination found so much freer a vent in the historical romance, than it ever found in the romantic poem. Yet he clearly needed the romantic excitement of picturesque scenes and historical interests, too. I do not think he would ever have gained any brilliant success in the narrower region of the domestic novel. He said himself, in expressing his admiration of Miss Austen, "The big bow-wow strain I can do myself, like any now going, but the exquisite touch which renders ordinary commonplace things and characters interesting, from the truth of the description and the sentiment, is denied to me." Indeed he tried it to some extent in *St. Ronan's Well*, and so far as he tried it, I think he failed. Scott needed a certain largeness of type, a strongly-marked class-life, and, where it was possible, a free, out-of-doors life, for his delineations. *No* one could paint beggars and gipsies, and wandering fiddlers, and mercenary soldiers, and peasants and farmers and lawyers, and magistrates, and preachers, and courtiers, and statesmen, and best of all perhaps queens and kings, with anything like his ability. But when it came to describing the small differences of manner, differences not due to external habits, so much as to internal sentiment or education, or mere domestic circumstance, he was beyond his proper field.

In the sketch of the St. Ronan's Spa and the company at the *table-d'hôte*, he is of course somewhere near the mark, — he was too able a man to fall far short of success in anything he really gave to the world; but it is not interesting. Miss Austen would have made Lady Penelope Penfeather a hundred times as amusing. We turn to Meg Dods and Touchwood, and Cargill, and Captain Jekyl, and Sir Bingo Binks, and to Clara Mowbray, — i. e. to the lives really moulded by large and specific causes, for enjoyment, and leave the small gossip of the company at the Wells as, relatively at least, a failure. And it is well for all the world that it was so. The domestic novel, when really of the highest kind, is no doubt a perfect work of art, and an unfailing source of amusement; but it has nothing of the tonic influence, the large instructiveness, the stimulating intellectual air, of Scott's historic tales. Even when Scott is farthest from reality — as in *Ivanhoe* or *The Monastery* — he makes you open your eyes to all sorts of historical conditions to which you would otherwise be blind. The domestic novel, even when its art is perfect, gives little but pleasure at the best; at the worst it is simply scandal idealized.

Scott often confessed his contempt for his own heroes. He said of Edward Waverley, for instance, that he was "a sneaking piece of imbecility," and that "if he had married Flora, she would have set him up upon the chimneypiece as Count Borowlaski's wife used to do with him. I am a bad hand at depicting a hero, properly so called, and have an unfortunate propensity for the dubious characters of borderers, buccaneers, highland robbers, and all others of a Robin-Hood description." In another letter he says, "My rogue always, in despite of me, turns out my hero." And it seems very likely that in most of the situations Scott describes so well, his own course would have been that of his wilder impulses, and not that of his reason. Assuredly he would never have stopped hesitating on the line between opposite courses as his Waverleys, his Mortons, his Osbaldistones do. Whenever he was really involved in a party strife, he flung prudence and impartiality to the winds, and went in like the hearty partisan which his strong impulses made of him. But granting this, I do not agree with his condemnation of all his own colourless heroes. However much they differed in nature from Scott himself, the even balance of their reason against their sympathies is certainly well conceived, is in itself natural, and is an admirable expedient for effecting that which was probably its real use to Scott, — the affording an opportunity for the delineation of all the pros

and cons of the case, so that the characters on both sides of the struggle should be properly understood. Scott's imagination was clearly far wider — was far more permeated with the fixed air of sound judgment — than his practical impulses. He needed a machinery for displaying his insight into both sides of a public quarrel, and his colourless heroes gave him the instrument he needed. Both in Morton's case (in *Old Mortality*), and in Waverley's, the hesitation is certainly well described. Indeed in relation to the controversy between Covenanters and Royalists, while his political and martial prepossessions went with Claverhouse, his reason and educated moral feeling certainly were clearly identified with Morton.

It is, however, obviously true that Scott's heroes are mostly created for the sake of the facility they give in delineating the other characters, and not the other characters for the sake of the heroes. They are the imaginative neutral ground, as it were, on which opposing influences are brought to play; and what Scott best loved to paint was those who, whether by nature, by inheritance, or by choice, had become unique and characteristic types of onesided feeling, not those who were merely in process of growth, and had not ranged themselves at all. Mr. Carlyle, who, as I have said before, places Scott's romances far below their real level, maintains that these great types of his are drawn from the outside, and not made actually to live. "His Bailie Jarvies, Dinmonts, Dalgettys (for their name is legion), do look and talk like what they give themselves out for; they are, if not *created* and made poetically alive, yet deceptively *enacted* as a good player might do them. What more is wanted, then? For the reader lying on a sofa, nothing more; yet for another sort of reader much. It were a long chapter to unfold the difference in drawing a character between a Scott and a Shakespeare or Goethe. Yet it is a difference literally immense; they are of a different species; the value of the one is not to be counted in the coin of the other. We might say in a short word, which covers a long matter, that your Shakespeare fashions his characters from the heart outwards; your Scott fashions them from the skin inwards, never getting near the heart of them. The one set become living men and women; the other amount to little more than mechanical cases, deceptively painted automatons." And then he goes on to contrast Fenella in *Peveril of the Peak* with Goethe's Mignon. Mr. Carlyle could hardly have chosen a less fair comparison. If Goethe is to be judged by his women, let Scott be judged by his men. So judged, I think Scott will, as a painter of character — of course, I am not now speaking of

him as a poet, — come out far above Goethe. Excepting the hero of his first drama (Götz of the iron hand), which by the way was so much in Scott's line that his first essay in poetry was to translate it — not very well — I doubt if Goethe was ever successful with his pictures of men. *Wilhelm Meister* is, as Niebuhr truly said, "a ménagerie of tame animals." Doubtless Goethe's women — certainly his women of culture — are more truly and inwardly conceived and created than Scott's. Except Jeanie Deans and Madge Wildfire, and perhaps Lucy Ashton, Scott's women are apt to be uninteresting, either pink and white toys, or hardish women of the world. But then no one can compare the men of the two writers, and not see Scott's vast preeminence on that side.

I think the deficiency of his pictures of women, odd as it seems to say so, should be greatly attributed to his natural chivalry. His conception of women of his own or a higher class was always too romantic. He hardly ventured, as it were, in his tenderness for them, to look deeply into their little weaknesses and intricacies of character. With women of an inferior class, he had not this feeling. Nothing can be more perfect than the manner in which he blends the dairy-woman and woman of business in Jeanie Deans, with the lover and the sister. But once make a woman beautiful, or in any way an object of homage to him, and Scott bowed so low before the image of her, that he could not go deep into her heart. He could no more have analysed such a woman, as Thackeray analyzed Lady Castlewood, or Amelia, or Becky, or as George Eliot analysed Rosamond Vincy, than he could have vivisected Camp or Maida. To some extent, therefore, Scott's pictures of women remain something in the style of the miniatures of the last age — bright and beautiful beings without any special character in them. He was dazzled by a fair heroine. He could not take them up into his imagination as real beings as he did men. But then how living are his men, whether coarse or noble! What a picture, for instance, is that in *A Legend of Montrose* of the conceited, pragmatic, but prompt and dauntless soldier of fortune, rejecting Argyle's attempts to tamper with him, in the dungeon at Inverary, suddenly throwing himself on the disguised Duke so soon as he detects him by his voice, and wresting from him the means of his own liberation! Who could read that scene and say for a moment that Dalgetty is painted "from the skin inwards"? It was just Scott himself breathing his own life through the habits of a good specimen of the mercenary soldier — realizing where the spirit of hire would end, and the sense of honour would

begin — and preferring, even in a dungeon, the audacious policy of a sudden attack to that of crafty negotiation. What a picture (and a very different one) again is that in *Redgauntlet* of Peter Peebles, the mad litigant, with face emaciated by poverty and anxiety, and rendered wild by "an insane lightness about the eyes," dashing into the English magistrate's court for a warrant against his fugitive counsel. Or, to take a third instance, as different as possible from either, how powerfully conceived is the situation in *Old Mortality*, where Balfour of Burley, in his fanatic fury at the defeat of his plan for a new rebellion, pushes the oak-tree, which connects his wild retreat with the outer world, into the stream, and tries to slay Morton for opposing him. In such scenes and a hundred others — for these are mere random examples — Scott undoubtedly painted his masculine figures from as deep and inward a conception of the character of the situation as Goethe ever attained, even in drawing Mignon, or Klärchen, or Gretchen. The distinction has no real existence. Goethe's pictures of women were no doubt the intuitions of genius; and so are Scott's of men — and here and there of his women too. Professional women he can always paint with power. Meg Dods, the innkeeper, Meg Merrilies, the gipsy, Mause Headrigg, the Covenanter, Elspeth, the old fishwife in *The Antiquary*, and the old crones employed to nurse and watch, and lay out the corpse, in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, are all in their way impressive figures.

And even in relation to women of a rank more fascinating to Scott, and whose inner character was perhaps on that account, less familiar to his imagination, grant him but a few hints from history, and he draws a picture which, for vividness and brilliancy, may almost compare with Shakespeare's own studies in English history. Had Shakespeare painted the scene in *The Abbot*, in which Mary Stuart commands one of her Mary's in waiting to tell her at what bridal she last danced, and Mary Fleming blurts out the reference to the marriage of Sebastian at Holyrood, would any one hesitate to regard it as a stroke of genius worthy of the great dramatist? This picture of the Queen's mind suddenly thrown off its balance, and betraying, in the agony of the moment, the fear and remorse which every association with Darnley conjured up, is painted "from the heart outwards," not "from the skin inwards," if ever there were such a painting in the world. Scott hardly ever failed in painting kings or peasants, queens or peasant-women. There was something in the well-marked type of both to catch his imagination, which can always hit off the grander features of royalty, and

the homelier features of laborious humility. Is there any sketch traced in lines of more sweeping grandeur and more impressive force than the following of Mary Stuart's lucid interval of remorse — lucid compared with her ordinary mood, though it was of a remorse that was almost delirious — which breaks in upon her hour of fascinating condescension? —

"'Are they not a lovely couple, my Fleming? and is it not heartrending to think that I must be their ruin?'

"'Not so,' said Roland Græme, 'it is we, gracious sovereign, who will be your deliverers.' '*Ex oribus parvulorum!*' said the queen, looking upward; 'if it is by the mouth of these children that heaven calls me to resume the stately thoughts which become my birth and my rights, thou wilt grant them thy protection, and to me the power of rewarding their zeal.' Then turning to Fleming, she instantly added, 'Thou knowest, my friend, whether to make those who have served me happy, was not ever Mary's favourite pastime. When I have been rebuked by the stern preachers of the Calvinistic heresy — when I have seen the fierce countenances of my nobles averted from me, has it not been because I mixed in the harmless pleasures of the young and gay, and rather for the sake of their happiness than my own, have mingled in the masque, the song or the dance, with the youth of my household? Well, I repent not of it — though Knox termed it sin, and Morton degradation — I was happy because I saw happiness around me: and woe betide the wretched jealousy that can extract guilt out of the overflowings of an unguarded gaiety! — Fleming, if we are restored to our throne, shall we not have one blithesome day at a blithesome bridal, of which we must now name neither the bride nor the bridegroom? But that bridegroom shall have the barony of Blairgowrie, a fair gift even for a queen to give, and that bride's chaplet shall be twined with the fairest pearls that ever were found in the depths of Lochlomond; and thou thyself, Mary Fleming, the best dresser of tires that ever busked the tresses of a queen, and who would scorn to touch those of any woman of lower rank — thou thyself shalt for my love twine them into the bride's tresses. — Look, my Fleming, suppose then such clustered locks as these of our Catherine, they would not put shame upon thy skill.' So saying she passed her hand fondly over the head of her youthful favourite, while her more aged attendant replied despondently, 'Alas, madam, your thoughts stray far from home.' 'They do, my Fleming,' said the queen, 'but is it well or kind in you to call them back? — God knows they have kept the perch this night but too

closely. — Come, I will recall the gay vision, were it but to punish them. Yes, at that blithesome bridal, Mary herself shall forget the weight of sorrows, and the toil of state, and herself once more lead a measure. — At whose wedding was it that we last danced, my Fleming? I think care has troubled my memory — yet something of it I should remember, canst thou not aid me? I know thou canst.' 'Alas, madam,' replied the lady. 'What,' said Mary, 'wilt thou not help us so far? this is a peevish adherence to thine own graver opinion which holds our talk as folly. But thou art court-bred and wilt well understand me when I say the queen *commands* Lady Fleming to tell her when she led the last *branle*.' With a face deadly pale and a mien as if she were about to sink into the earth, the court-bred dame, no longer daring to refuse obedience, faltered out, 'Gracious lady — if my memory err not — it was at a masque in Holyrood — at the marriage of Sebastian.' The unhappy queen, who had hitherto listened with a melancholy smile, provoked by the reluctance with which the Lady Fleming brought out her story, at this illfated word interrupted her with a shriek so wild and loud that the vaulted apartment rang, and both Roland and Catherine sprung to their feet in the utmost terror and alarm. Meantime, Mary seemed, by the train of horrible ideas thus suddenly excited, surprised not only beyond selfcommand, but for the moment beyond the verge of reason. 'Traitress,' she said to the Lady Fleming, 'thou wouldst slay thy sovereign. Call my French guards — *à moi! à moi! mes Français*! — I am beset with traitors in mine own palace — they have murdered my husband — Rescue! Rescue! for the Queen of Scotland!' She started up from her chair — her features late so exquisitely lovely in their paleness, now inflamed with the fury of frenzy, and resembling those of a Bellona. 'We will take the field ourself,' she said; 'warn the city — warn Lothian and Fife — saddle our Spanish barb, and bid French Paris see our petronel be charged. Better to die at the head of our brave Scotsmen, like our grandfather at Flodden, than of a broken heart like our ill-starred father.' 'Be patient — be composed, dearest sovereign,' said Catherine; and then addressing Lady Fleming angrily, she added, 'How could you say aught that reminded her of her husband?' The word reached the ear of the unhappy princess who caught it up, speaking with great rapidity, 'Husband! — what husband? Not his most Christian Majesty — he is ill at ease — he cannot mount on horseback — not him of the Lennox — but it was the Duke of Orkney thou wouldst say?' 'For God's love, madam, be patient!' said the Lady Fleming. But the queen's excited

imagination could by no entreaty be diverted from its course. ‘Bid him come hither to our aid,’ she said, ‘and bring with him his lambs, as he calls them — Bowton, Hay of Talla, Black Ormiston and his kinsman Hob — Fie, how swart they are, and how they smell of sulphur! What! closeted with Morton? Nay, if the Douglas and the Hepburn hatch the complot together, the bird when it breaks the shell will scare Scotland, will it not, my Fleming?’ ‘She grows wilder and wilder,’ said Fleming. ‘We have too many hearers for these strange words.’ ‘Roland,’ said Catherine, ‘in the name of God begone! — you cannot aid us here — leave us to deal with her alone — away — away!”

And equally fine is the scene in *Kenilworth* in which Elizabeth undertakes the reconciliation of the haughty rivals, Sussex and Leicester, unaware that in the course of the audience she herself will have to bear a great strain on her selfcommand, both in her feelings as a queen and her feelings as a lover. Her grand rebukes to both, her ill-concealed preference for Leicester, her whispered ridicule of Sussex, the impulses of tenderness which she stifles, the flashes of resentment to which she gives way, the triumph of policy over private feeling, her imperious impatience when she is baffled, her jealousy as she grows suspicious of a personal rival, her gratified pride and vanity when the suspicion is exchanged for the clear evidence, as she supposes, of Leicester’s love, and her peremptory conclusion of the audience, bring before the mind a series of pictures far more vivid and impressive than the greatest of historical painters could fix on canvas, even at the cost of the labour of years. Even more brilliant, though not so sustained and difficult an effort of genius, is the later scene in the same story, in which Elizabeth drags the unhappy Countess of Leicester from her concealment in one of the grottoes of Kenilworth Castle, and strides off with her, in a fit of vindictive humiliation and Amazonian fury, to confront her with her husband. But this last scene no doubt is more in Scott’s way. He can always paint women in their more masculine moods. Where he frequently fails is in the attempt to indicate the finer shades of women’s nature. In Amy Robsart herself, for example, he is by no means generally successful, though in an early scene her childish delight in the various orders and decorations of her husband is painted with much freshness and delicacy. But wherever, as in the case of queens, Scott can get a telling hint from actual history, he can always so use it as to make history itself seem dim to the equivalent for it which he gives us.

And yet, as every one knows, Scott was excessively free in his manipulations of history for the purposes of romance. In *Kenilworth* he represents Shakespeare's plays as already in the mouths of courtiers and statesmen, though he lays the scene in the eighteenth year of Elizabeth, when Shakespeare was hardly old enough to rob an orchard. In *Woodstock*, on the contrary, he insists, if you compare Sir Henry Lee's dates with the facts, that Shakespeare died twenty years at least before he actually died. The historical basis, again, of *Woodstock* and of *Redgauntlet* is thoroughly untrustworthy, and about all the minuter details of history, — unless so far as they were characteristic of the age, — I do not suppose that Scott in his romances ever troubled himself at all. And yet few historians — not even Scott himself when he exchanged romance for history — ever drew the great figures of history with so powerful a hand. In writing history and biography Scott has little or no advantage over very inferior men. His pictures of Swift, of Dryden, of Napoleon, are in no way very vivid. It is only where he is working from the pure imagination, — though imagination stirred by historic study, — that he paints a picture which follows us about, as if with living eyes, instead of creating for us a mere series of lines and colours. Indeed, whether Scott draws truly or falsely, he draws with such genius that his pictures of Richard and Saladin, of Louis XI. and Charles the Bold, of Margaret of Anjou and René of Provence, of Mary Stuart and Elizabeth Tudor, of Sussex and of Leicester, of James and Charles and Buckingham, of the two Dukes of Argyle — the Argyle of the time of the revolution, and the Argyle of George II., of Queen Caroline, of Claverhouse, and Monmouth, and of Rob Roy, will live in English literature beside Shakespeare's pictures — probably less faithful if more imaginative — of John and Richard and the later Henries, and all the great figures by whom they were surrounded. No historical portrait that we possess will take precedence — as a mere portrait — of Scott's brilliant study of James I. in *The Fortunes of Nigel*. Take this illustration for instance, where George Heriot the goldsmith (Jingling Geordie, as the king familiarly calls him) has just been speaking of Lord Huntinglen, as "a man of the old rough world that will drink and swear:" —

"'O Geordie!' exclaimed the king, 'these are auld-warld frailties, of whilk we dare not pronounce even ourselves absolutely free. But the warld grows worse from day to day, Geordie. The juveniles of this age may weel say with the poet, —

"*Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit Nos nequiores* — "

This Dalgarno does not drink so much; aye or swear so much, as his father, but he wenches, Geordie, and he breaks his word and oath baith. As to what ye say of the leddy and the ministers, we are all fallible creatures, Geordie, priests and kings as weel as others; and wha kens but what that may account for the difference between this Dalgarno and his father? The earl is the vera soul of honour, and cares nae mair for warld's gear than a noble hound for the quest of a foulmart; but as for his son, he was like to brazen us all out — ourselves, Steenie, Baby Charles, and our Council, till he heard of the tocher, and then by my kingly crown he lap like a cock at a grossart! These are discrepancies betwixt parent and son not to be accounted for naturally, according to Baptista Porta, Michael Scott *de secretis*, and others. Ah, Jingling Geordie, if your clouting the caldron, and jingling on pots, pans, and veshels of all manner of metal, hadna jingled a' your grammar out of your head, I could have touched on that matter to you at mair length.' … Heriot inquired whether Lord Dalgarno had consented to do the Lady Hermione justice. 'Troth, man, I have small doubt that he will,' quoth the king, 'I gave him the schedule of her worldly substance, which you delivered to us in the council, and we allowed him half an hour to chew the cud upon that. It is rare reading for bringing him to reason. I left Baby Charles and Steenie laying his duty before him, and if he can resist doing what *they* desire him, why I wish he would teach *me* the gate of it. O Geordie, Jingling Geordie, it was grand to hear Baby Charles laying down the guilt of dissimulation, and Steenie lecturing *on* the turpitude of incontinence.' 'I am afraid,' said George Heriot, more hastily than prudently, 'I might have thought of the old proverb of Satan reproving sin.' 'Deil hae our saul, neighbour,' said the king, reddening, 'but ye are not blate! I gie ye licence to speak freely, and by our saul, ye do not let the privilege become lost, *non utendo* — it will suffer no negative prescription in your hands. Is it fit, think ye, that Baby Charles should let his thoughts be publicly seen? No, no, princes' thoughts are *arcana imperii: qui nescit dissimulare, nescit regnare*. Every liege subject is bound to speak the whole truth to the king, but there is nae reciprocity of obligation — and for Steenie having been whiles a dike-louper at a time, is it for you, who are his goldsmith, and to whom, I doubt, he awes an uncomatable sum, to cast that up to him?"

Assuredly there is no undue favouring of Stuarts in such a picture as that.

Scott's humour is, I think, of very different qualities in relation to different subjects. Certainly he was at times capable of considerable heaviness of hand, — of the Scotch "wut" which has been so irreverently treated by English critics. His rather elaborate jocular introductions, under the name of Jedediah Cleishbotham, are clearly laborious at times. And even his own letters to his daughter-in-law, which Mr. Lockhart seems to regard as models of tender playfulness and pleasantry, seem to me decidedly elephantine. Not unfrequently, too, his stereotyped jokes weary. Dalgetty bores you almost as much as he would do in real life, — which is a great fault in art. Bradwardine becomes a nuisance, and as for Sir Piercie Shafton, he is beyond endurance. Like some other Scotchmen of genius, Scott twanged away at any effective chord till it more than lost its expressiveness. But in dry humour, and in that higher humour which skilfully blends the ludicrous and the pathetic, so that it is hardly possible to separate between smiles and tears, Scott is a master. His canny innkeeper, who, having sent away all the peasemeal to the camp of the Covenanters, and all the oatmeal (with deep professions of duty) to the castle and its cavaliers, in compliance with the requisitions sent to him on each side, admits with a sigh to his daughter that "they maun gar wheat flour serve themsels for a blink," — his firm of solicitors, Greenhorn and Grinderson, whose senior partner writes respectfully to clients in prosperity, and whose junior partner writes familiarly to those in adversity, — his arbitrary nabob who asks how the devil any one should be able to mix spices so well "as one who has been where they grow;" — his little ragamuffin who indignantly denies that he has broken his promise not to gamble away his sixpences at pitch-and-toss because he has gambled them away at "neevie-neevie-nicknack," — and similar figures abound in his tales, — are all creations which make one laugh inwardly as we read. But he has a much higher humour still, that inimitable power of shading off ignorance into knowledge and simplicity into wisdom, which makes his picture of Jeanie Deans, for instance, so humorous as well as so affecting. When Jeanie reunites her father to her husband by reminding the former how it would sometimes happen that "twa precious saints might pu' sundrywise like twa cows riving at the same hayband," she gives us an admirable instance of Scott's higher humour. Or take Jeanie Deans's letter to her father

communicating to him the pardon of his daughter and her own interview with the Queen: —

"Dearest and truly honoured Father. — This comes with my duty to inform you, that it has pleased God to redeem that captivitie of my poor sister, in respect the Queen's blessed Majesty, for whom we are ever bound to pray, hath redeemed her soul from the slayer, granting the ransom of her, whilk is ane pardon or reprieve. And I spoke with the Queen face to face, and yet live; for she is not muckle differing from other grand leddies, saving that she has a stately presence, and een like a blue huntin' hawk's, whilk gaed throu' and throu' me like a Highland durk — And all this good was, alway under the Great Giver, to whom all are but instruments, wrought for us by the Duk of Argile, wha is ane native truehearted Scotsman, and not pridefu', like other folk we ken of — and likewise skeely enow in bestial, whereof he has promised to gie me twa Devonshire kye, of which he is enamoured, although I do still haud by the real hawkit Airshire breed — and I have promised him a cheese; and I wad wuss ye, if Gowans, the brockit cow, has a quey, that she suld suck her fill of milk, as I am given to understand he has none of that breed, and is not scornfu' but will take a thing frae a puir body, that it may lighten their heart of the loading of debt that they awe him. Also his honour the Duke will accept ane of our Dunlop cheeses, and it sall be my faut if a better was ever yearned in Lowden." — [Here follow some observations respecting the breed of cattle, and the produce of the dairy, which it is our intention to forward to the Board of Agriculture.] — "Nevertheless, these are but matters of the after-harvest, in respect of the great good which Providence hath gifted us with — and, in especial, poor Effie's life. And oh, my dear father, since it hath pleased God to be merciful to her, let her not want your free pardon, whilk will make her meet to be ane vessel of grace, and also a comfort to your ain graie hairs. Dear Father, will ye let the Laird ken that we have had friends strangely raised up to us, and that the talent whilk he lent me will be thankfully repaid. I hae some of it to the fore; and the rest of it is not knotted up in ane purse or napkin, but in ane wee bit paper, as is the fashion heir, whilk I am assured is gude for the siller. And, dear father, through Mr. Butler's means I hae gude friendship with the Duke, for there had been kindness between their forbears in the auld troublesome time byepast. And Mrs. Glass has been kind like my very mother. She has a braw house here, and lives bien and warm, wi' twa servant lasses, and a man and a callant in the shop. And

she is to send you doun a pound of her hie-dried, and some other tobaka, and we maun think of some propine for her, since her kindness hath been great. And the Duk is to send the pardon doun by an express messenger, in respect that I canna travel sae fast; and I am to come doun wi' twa of his Honour's servants — that is, John Archibald, a decent elderly gentleman, that says he has seen you lang syne, when ye were buying beasts in the west frae the Laird of Aughtermuggitie — but maybe ye winna mind him — ony way, he's a civil man — and Mrs. Dolly Dutton, that is to be dairymaid at Inverara: and they bring me on as far as Glasgo', whilk will make it nae pinch to win hame, whilk I desire of all things. May the Giver of all good things keep ye in your outgauns and incomings, whereof devoutly prayeth your loving dauter,

"Jean Deans."

This contains an example of Scott's rather heavy jocularity as well as giving us a fine illustration of his highest and deepest and sunniest humour. Coming where it does, the joke inserted about the Board of Agriculture is rather like the gambol of a rhinoceros trying to imitate the curvettings of a thoroughbred horse.

Some of the finest touches of his humour are no doubt much heightened by his perfect command of the genius as well as the dialect of a peasantry, in whom a true culture of mind and sometimes also of heart is found in the closest possible contact with the humblest pursuits and the quaintest enthusiasm for them. But Scott, with all his turn for irony — and Mr. Lockhart says that even on his deathbed he used towards his children the same sort of good-humoured irony to which he had always accustomed them in his life — certainly never gives us any example of that highest irony which is found so frequently in Shakespeare, which touches the paradoxes of the spiritual life of the children of earth, and which reached its highest point in Isaiah. Now and then in his latest diaries — the diaries written in his deep affliction — he comes near the edge of it. Once, for instance, he says, "What a strange scene if the surge of conversation could suddenly ebb like the tide, and show us the state of people's real minds!

'No eyes the rocks discover Which lurk beneath the deep.'

Life could not be endured were it seen in reality." But this is not irony, only the sort of meditation which, in a mind inclined to thrust deep into the secrets of life's paradoxes, is apt to lead to irony. Scott, however, does not thrust deep in this direction. He met the cold steel which inflicts the deepest

interior wounds, like a soldier, and never seems to have meditated on the higher paradoxes of life till reason reeled. The irony of Hamlet is far from Scott. His imagination was essentially one of distinct embodiment. He never even seemed so much as to contemplate that sundering of substance and form, that rending away of outward garments, that unclothing of the soul, in order that it might be more effectually clothed upon, which is at the heart of anything that may be called spiritual irony. The constant abiding of his mind within the well-defined forms of some one or other of the conditions of outward life and manners, among the scores of different spheres of human habit, was, no doubt, one of the secrets of his genius; but it was also its greatest limitation.

Chapter XI

Morality and Religion

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The very same causes which limited Scott's humour and irony to the commoner fields of experience, and prevented him from ever introducing into his stories characters of the highest type of moral thoughtfulness, gave to his own morality and religion, which were, I think, true to the core so far as they went, a shade of distinct conventionality. It is no doubt quite true, as he himself tells us, that he took more interest in his mercenaries and mosstroopers, outlaws, gipsies, and beggars, than he did in the fine ladies and gentlemen under a cloud whom he adopted as heroines and heroes. But that was the very sign of his conventionalism. Though he interested himself more in these irregular persons, he hardly ever ventured to paint their inner life so as to show how little there was to choose between the sins of those who are at war with society and the sins of those who bend to the yoke of society. He widened rather than narrowed the chasm between the outlaw and the respectable citizen, even while he did not disguise his own romantic interest in the former. He extenuated, no doubt, the sins of all brave and violent defiers of the law, as distinguished from the sins of crafty and cunning abusers of the law. But the leaning he had to the former was, as he was willing to admit, what he regarded as a "naughty" leaning. He did not attempt for a moment to balance accounts between them and society. He paid his tribute as a matter of course to the established morality, and only put in a word or two by way of attempt to diminish the severity of the sentence on the bold transgressor. And then, where what is called the "law of honour" comes in to traverse the law of religion, he had no scruple in setting aside the latter in favour of the customs of gentlemen, without any attempt to justify that course. Yet it is evident from various passages in his writings that he held Christian duty inconsistent with duelling, and that he held himself a sincere Christian. In spite of this, when he was fifty-six, and under no conceivable hurry or perturbation of feeling, but only concerned to defend his own conduct — which was indeed plainly right — as to a political disclosure which he had made in his life of Napoleon, he asked his old friend William Clerk to be his second, if the expected challenge from

General Gourgaud should come, and declared his firm intention of accepting it. On the strength of official evidence he had exposed some conduct of General Gourgaud's at St. Helena, which appeared to be far from honourable, and he thought it his duty on that account to submit to be shot at by General Gourgaud, if General Gourgaud had wished it. In writing to William Clerk to ask him to be his second, he says, "Like a man who finds himself in a scrape, General Gourgaud may wish to fight himself out of it, and if the quarrel should be thrust on me, why, *I will not baulk him, Jackie*. He shall not dishonour the country through my sides, I can assure him." In other words, Scott acted just as he had made Waverley and others of his heroes act, on a code of honour which he knew to be false, and he must have felt in this case to be something worse. He thought himself at that time under the most stringent obligations both to his creditors and his children, to do all in his power to redeem himself and his estate from debt. Nay, more, he held that his life was a trust from his Creator, which he had no right to throw away merely because a man whom he had not really injured, was indulging a strong wish to injure him; but he could so little brook the imputation of physical cowardice, that he was moral coward enough to resolve to meet General Gourgaud, if General Gourgaud lusted after a shot at him. Nor is there any trace preserved of so much as a moral scruple in his own mind on the subject, and this though there are clear traces in his other writings as to what he thought Christian morality required. But the Border chivalry was so strong in Scott that, on subjects of this kind at least, his morality was the conventional morality of a day rapidly passing away.

He showed the same conventional feeling in his severity towards one of his own brothers who had been guilty of cowardice. Daniel Scott was the black sheep of the family. He got into difficulties in business, formed a bad connexion with an artful woman, and was sent to try his fortunes in the West Indies. There he was employed in some service against a body of refractory negroes — we do not know its exact nature — and apparently showed the white feather. Mr. Lockhart says that "he returned to Scotland a dishonoured man; and though he found shelter and compassion from his mother, his brother would never see him again. Nay, when, soon after, his health, shattered by dissolute indulgence, … gave way altogether, and he died, as yet a young man, the poet refused either to attend his funeral or to wear mourning for him, like the rest of his family." Indeed he always spoke of him as his "relative," not as his brother. Here again Scott's severity was

due to his brother's failure as a "man of honour," i. e. in courage. He was forbearing enough with vices of a different kind; made John Ballantyne's dissipation the object rather of his jokes than of his indignation; and not only mourned for him, but really grieved for him when he died. It is only fair to say, however, that for this conventional scorn of a weakness rather than a sin, Scott sorrowed sincerely later in life, and that in sketching the physical cowardice of Connochar in *The Fair Maid of Perth*, he deliberately made an attempt to atone for this hardness towards his brother by showing how frequently the foundation of cowardice may be laid in perfectly involuntary physical temperament, and pointing out with what noble elements of disposition it may be combined. But till reflection on many forms of human character had enlarged Scott's charity, and perhaps also the range of his speculative ethics, he remained a conventional moralist, and one, moreover, the type of whose conventional code was borrowed more from that of honour than from that of religious principle. There is one curious passage in his diary, written very near the end of his life, in which Scott even seems to declare that conventional standards of conduct are better, or at least safer, than religious standards of conduct. He says in his diary for the 15th April, 1828, — "Dined with Sir Robert Inglis, and met Sir Thomas Acland, my old and kind friend. I was happy to see him. He may be considered now as the head of the religious party in the House of Commons — a powerful body which Wilberforce long commanded. It is a difficult situation, for the adaptation of religious motives to earthly policy is apt — among the infinite delusions of the human heart — to be a snare." His letters to his eldest son, the young cavalry officer, on his first start in life, are much admired by Mr. Lockhart, but to me they read a little hard, a little worldly, and extremely conventional. Conventionality was certainly to his mind almost a virtue.

Of enthusiasm in religion Scott always spoke very severely; both in his novels and in his letters and private diary. In writing to Lord Montague, he speaks of such enthusiasm as was then prevalent at Oxford, and which makes, he says, "religion a motive and a pretext for particular lines of thinking in politics and in temporal affairs" [as if it could help doing that!] as "teaching a new way of going to the devil for God's sake," and this expressly, because when the young are infected with it, it disunites families, and sets "children in opposition to their parents." He gives us, however, one reason for his dread of anything like enthusiasm, which is not conventional;

— that it interferes with the submissive and tranquil mood which is the only true religious mood. Speaking in his diary of a weakness and fluttering at the heart, from which he had suffered, he says, “It is an awful sensation, and would have made an enthusiast of me, had I indulged my imagination on religious subjects. I have been always careful to place my mind in the most tranquil posture which it can assume, during my private exercises of devotion.” And in this avoidance of indulging the imagination on religious, or even spiritual subjects, Scott goes far beyond Shakespeare. I do not think there is a single study in all his romances of what may be fairly called a preeminently spiritual character as such, though Jeanie Deans approaches nearest to it. The same may be said of Shakespeare. But Shakespeare, though he has never drawn a preeminently spiritual character, often enough indulged his imagination while meditating on spiritual themes.

Chapter XII

Distractions and Amusements at Abbotsford

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Between 1814 and the end of 1825, Scott's literary labour was interrupted only by one serious illness, and hardly interrupted by that, — by a few journeys, — one to Paris after the battle of Waterloo, and several to London, — and by the worry of a constant stream of intrusive visitors. Of his journeys he has left some records; but I cannot say that I think Scott would ever have reached, as a mere observer and recorder, at all the high point which he reached directly his imagination went to work to create a story. That imagination was, indeed, far less subservient to his mere perceptions than to his constructive powers. *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk* — the records of his Paris journey after Waterloo — for instance, are not at all above the mark of a good special correspondent. His imagination was less the imagination of insight, than the imagination of one whose mind was a great kaleidoscope of human life and fortunes. But far more interrupting than either illness or travel, was the lion-hunting of which Scott became the object, directly after the publication of the earlier novels. In great measure, no doubt, on account of the mystery as to his authorship, his fame became something oppressive. At one time as many as *sixteen* parties of visitors applied to see Abbotsford in a single day. Strangers, — especially the American travellers of that day, who were much less reticent and more irrepressible than the American travellers of this, — would come to him without introductions, facetiously cry out "Prodigious!" in imitation of Dominie Sampson, whatever they were shown, inquire whether the new house was called Tullyveolan or Tillytudlem, cross-examine, with open notebooks, as to Scott's age, and the age of his wife, and appear to be taken quite by surprise when they were bowed out without being asked to dine. In those days of high postage Scott's bill for letters "seldom came under 150*l.* a year," and "as to coach parcels, they were a perfect ruination." On one occasion a mighty package came by post from the United States, for which Scott had to pay five pounds sterling. It contained a MS. play called *The Cherokee Lovers*, by a young lady of New York, who begged Scott to read and correct it, write a prologue and epilogue, get it put on the stage at Drury

Lane, and negotiate with Constable or Murray for the copyright. In about a fortnight another packet not less formidable arrived, charged with a similar postage, which Scott, not grown cautious through experience, recklessly opened; out jumped a duplicate copy of *The Cherokee Lovers*, with a second letter from the authoress, stating that as the weather had been stormy, and she feared that something might have happened to her former MS., she had thought it prudent to send him a duplicate. Of course, when fame reached such a point as this, it became both a worry and a serious waste of money, and what was far more valuable than money, of time, privacy, and tranquillity of mind. And though no man ever bore such worries with the equanimity of Scott, no man ever received less pleasure from the adulation of unknown and often vulgar and ignorant admirers. His real amusements were his trees and his friends. "Planting and pruning trees," he said, "I could work at from morning to night. There is a sort of self-congratulation, a little tickling self-flattery, in the idea that while you are pleasing and amusing yourself, you are seriously contributing to the future welfare of the country, and that your very acorn may send its future ribs of oak to future victories like Trafalgar," — for the day of iron ships was not yet. And again, at a later stage of his planting: — "You can have no idea of the exquisite delight of a planter, — he is like a painter laying on his colours, — at every moment he sees his effects coming out. There is no art or occupation comparable to this; it is full of past, present, and future enjoyment. I look back to the time when there was not a tree here, only bare heath; I look round and see thousands of trees growing up, all of which, I may say almost each of which, have received my personal attention. I remember, five years ago, looking forward with the most delighted expectation to this very hour, and as each year has passed, the expectation has gone on increasing. I do the same now. I anticipate what this plantation and that one will presently be, if only taken care of, and there is not a spot of which I do not watch the progress. Unlike building, or even painting, or indeed any other kind of pursuit, this has no end, and is never interrupted; but goes on from day to day, and from year to year, with a perpetually augmenting interest. Farming I hate. What have I to do with fattening and killing beasts, or raising corn, only to cut it down, and to wrangle with farmers about prices, and to be constantly at the mercy of the seasons? There can be no such disappointments or annoyances in planting trees." Scott indeed regarded planting as a mode of so moulding the form and

colour of the outward world, that nature herself became indebted to him for finer outlines, richer masses of colour, and deeper shadows, as well as for more fertile and sheltered soils. And he was as skilful in producing the last result, as he was in the artistic effects of his planting. In the essay on the planting of waste lands, he mentions a story, — drawn from his own experience, — of a planter, who having scooped out the lowest part of his land for enclosures, and "planted the wood round them in masses enlarged or contracted as the natural lying of the ground seemed to dictate," met, six years after these changes, his former tenant on the ground, and said to him, "I suppose, Mr. R — — , you will say I have ruined your farm by laying half of it into woodland?" "I should have expected it, sir," answered Mr. R — — , "if you had told me beforehand what you were going to do; but I am now of a very different opinion; and as I am looking for land at present, if you are inclined to take for the remaining sixty acres the same rent which I formerly gave for a hundred and twenty, I will give you an offer to that amount. I consider the benefit of the enclosing, and the complete shelter afforded to the fields, as an advantage which fairly counterbalances the loss of onehalf of the land."

And Scott was not only thoughtful in his own planting, but induced his neighbours to become so too. So great was their regard for him, that many of them planted their estates as much with reference to the effect which their plantations would have on the view from Abbotsford, as with reference to the effect they would have on the view from their own grounds. Many was the consultation which he and his neighbours, Scott of Gala, for instance, and Mr. Henderson of Eildon Hall, had together on the effect which would be produced on the view from their respective houses, of the planting going on upon the lands of each. The reciprocity of feeling was such that the various proprietors acted more like brothers in this matter, than like the jealous and exclusive creatures which landowners, as such, so often are.

Next to his interest in the management and growth of his own little estate was Scott's interest in the management and growth of the Duke of Buccleuch's. To the Duke he looked up as the head of his clan, with something almost more than a feudal attachment, greatly enhanced of course by the personal friendship which he had formed for him in early life as the Earl of Dalkeith. This mixture of feudal and personal feeling towards the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch continued during their lives. Scott was

away on a yachting tour to the Shetlands and Orkneys in July and August, 1814, and it was during this absence that the Duchess of Buccleuch died. Scott, who was in no anxiety about her, employed himself in writing an amusing descriptive epistle to the Duke in rough verse, chronicling his voyage, and containing expressions of the profoundest reverence for the goodness and charity of the Duchess, a letter which did not reach its destination till after the Duchess's death. Scott himself heard of her death by chance when they landed for a few hours on the coast of Ireland; he was quite overpowered by the news, and went to bed only to drop into short nightmare sleeps, and to wake with the dim memory of some heavy weight at his heart. The Duke himself died five years later, leaving a son only thirteen years of age (the present Duke), over whose interests, both as regarded his education and his estates, Scott watched as jealously as if they had been those of his own son. Many were the anxious letters he wrote to Lord Montague as to his "young chief's" affairs, as he called them, and great his pride in watching the promise of his youth. Nothing can be clearer than that to Scott the feudal principle was something far beyond a name; that he had at least as much pride in his devotion to his chief, as he had in founding a house which he believed would increase the influence — both territorial and personal — of the clan of Scotts. The unaffected reverence which he felt for the Duke, though mingled with warm personal affection, showed that Scott's feudal feeling had something real and substantial in it, which did not vanish even when it came into close contact with strong personal feelings. This reverence is curiously marked in his letters. He speaks of "the distinction of rank" being ignored by both sides, as of something quite exceptional, but it was never really ignored by him, for though he continued to write to the Duke as an intimate friend, it was with a mingling of awe, very different indeed from that which he ever adopted to Ellis or Erskine. It is necessary to remember this, not only in estimating the strength of the feeling which made him so anxious to become himself the founder of a house within a house, — of a new branch of the clan of Scotts, — but in estimating the loyalty which Scott always displayed to one of the least respectable of English sovereigns, George IV., — a matter of which I must now say a few words, not only because it led to Scott's receiving the baronetcy, but because it forms to my mind the most grotesque of all the threads in the lot of this strong and proud man.

Chapter XIII

Scott and George Iv

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The first relations of Scott with the Court were, oddly enough, formed with the Princess, not with the Prince of Wales. In 1806 Scott dined with the Princess of Wales at Blackheath, and spoke of his invitation as a great honour. He wrote a tribute to her father, the Duke of Brunswick, in the introduction to one of the cantos of *Marmion*, and received from the Princess a silver vase in acknowledgment of this passage in the poem. Scott's relations with the Prince Regent seem to have begun in an offer to Scott of the Laureateship in the summer of 1813, an offer which Scott would have found it very difficult to accept, so strongly did his pride revolt at the idea of having to commemorate in verse, as an official duty, all conspicuous incidents affecting the throne. But he was at the time of the offer in the thick of his first difficulties on account of Messrs. John Ballantyne and Co., and it was only the Duke of Buccleuch's guarantee of 4000*l.* — a guarantee subsequently cancelled by Scott's paying the sum for which it was a security — that enabled him at this time to decline what, after Southey had accepted it, he compared in a letter to Southey to the herring for which the poor Scotch clergyman gave thanks in a grace wherein he described it as "even this, the very least of Providence's mercies." In March, 1815, Scott being then in London, the Prince Regent asked him to dinner, addressed him uniformly as Walter, and struck up a friendship with him which seems to have lasted their lives, and which certainly did much more honour to George than to Sir Walter Scott. It is impossible not to think rather better of George IV. for thus valuing, and doing his best in every way to show his value for, Scott. It is equally impossible not to think rather worse of Scott for thus valuing, and in every way doing his best to express his value for, this very worthless, though by no means incapable king. The consequences were soon seen in the indignation with which Scott began to speak of the Princess of Wales's sins. In 1806, in the squib he wrote on Lord Melville's acquittal, when impeached for corruption by the Liberal Government, he had written thus of the Princess Caroline: —

"Our King, too — our Princess, — I dare not say more, sir, — May Providence watch them with mercy and might! While there's one Scottish hand that can wag a claymore, sir, They shall ne'er want a friend to stand up for their right. Be damn'd he that dare not — For my part I'll spare not To beauty afflicted a tribute to give; Fill it up steadily, Drink it off readily, Here's to the Princess, and long may she live."

But whoever "stood up" for the Princess's right, certainly Scott did not do so after his intimacy with the Prince Regent began. He mentioned her only with severity, and in one letter at least, written to his brother, with something much coarser than severity; but the king's similar vices did not at all alienate him from what at least had all the appearance of a deep personal devotion to his sovereign. The first baronet whom George IV. made on succeeding to the throne, after his long Regency, was Scott, who not only accepted the honour gratefully, but dwelt with extreme pride on the fact that it was offered to him by the king himself, and was in no way due to the prompting of any minister's advice. He wrote to Joanna Baillie on hearing of the Regent's intention — for the offer was made by the Regent at the end of 1818, though it was not actually conferred till after George's accession, namely, on the 30th March, 1820, — "The Duke of Buccleuch and Scott of Harden, who, as the heads of my clan and the sources of my gentry, are good judges of what I ought to do, have both given me their earnest opinion to accept of an honour directly derived from the source of honour, and neither begged nor bought, as is the usual fashion. Several of my ancestors bore the title in the seventeenth century, and, were it of consequence, I have no reason to be ashamed of the decent and respectable persons who connect me with that period when they carried into the field, like Madoc,

"The Crescent at whose gleam the Cambrian oft, Cursing his perilous tenure, wound his horn,"

so that, as a gentleman, I may stand on as good a footing as other new creations." Why the honour was any greater for coming from such a king as George, than it would have been if it had been suggested by Lord Sidmouth, or even Lord Liverpool, — or half as great as if Mr. Canning had proposed it, it is not easy to conceive. George was a fair judge of literary merit, but not one to be compared for a moment with that great orator and wit; and as to his being the fountain of honour, there was so much dishonour of which the king was certainly the fountain too, that I do not think it was very easy for two fountains both springing from such a person to have flowed quite

unmingled. George justly prided himself on Sir Walter Scott's having been the first creation of his reign, and I think the event showed that the poet was the fountain of much more honour for the king, than the king was for the poet.

When George came to Edinburgh in 1822, it was Sir Walter who acted virtually as the master of the ceremonies, and to whom it was chiefly due that the visit was so successful. It was then that George clad his substantial person for the first time in the Highland costume — to wit, in the Steuart Tartans — and was so much annoyed to find himself outvied by a wealthy alderman, Sir William Curtis, who had gone and done likewise, and, in his equally grand Steuart Tartans, seemed a kind of parody of the king. The day on which the king arrived, Tuesday, 14th of August, 1822, was also the day on which Scott's most intimate friend, William Erskine, then Lord Kinnedder, died. Yet Scott went on board the royal yacht, was most graciously received by George, had his health drunk by the king in a bottle of Highland whiskey, and with a proper show of devoted loyalty entreated to be allowed to retain the glass out of which his Majesty had just drunk his health. The request was graciously acceded to, but let it be pleaded on Scott's behalf, that on reaching home and finding there his friend Crabbe the poet, he sat down on the royal gift, and crushed it to atoms. One would hope that he was really thinking more even of Crabbe, and much more of Erskine, than of the royal favour for which he had appeared, and doubtless had really believed himself, so grateful. Sir Walter retained his regard for the king, such as it was, to the last, and even persuaded himself that George's death would be a great political calamity for the nation. And really I cannot help thinking that Scott believed more in the king, than he did in his friend George Canning. Assuredly, greatly as he admired Canning, he condemned him more and more as Canning grew more liberal, and sometimes speaks of his veerings in that direction with positive asperity. George, on the other hand, who believed more in number one than in any other number, however large, became much more conservative after he became Regent than he was before, and as he grew more conservative Scott grew more conservative likewise, till he came to think this particular king almost a pillar of the Constitution. I suppose we ought to explain this little bit of fetish-worship in Scott much as we should the quaint practical adhesion to duelling which he gave as an old man, who had had all his life much more to do with the pen than the sword — that is, as an evidence of

the tendency of an improved type to recur to that of the old wild stock on which it had been grafted. But certainly no feudal devotion of his ancestors to their chief was ever less justified by moral qualities than Scott's loyal devotion to the fountain of honour as embodied in "our fat friend." The whole relation to George was a grotesque thread in Scott's life; and I cannot quite forgive him for the utterly conventional severity with which he threw over his first patron, the Queen, for sins which were certainly not grosser, if they were not much less gross, than those of his second patron, the husband who had set her the example which she faithfully, though at a distance, followed.

Chapter XIV

Scott as a Politician

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Scott usually professed great ignorance of politics, and did what he could to hold aloof from a world in which his feelings were very easily heated, while his knowledge was apt to be very imperfect. But now and again, and notably towards the close of his life, he got himself mixed up in politics, and I need hardly say that it was always on the Tory, and generally on the red-hot Tory, side. His first hasty intervention in politics was the song I have just referred to on Lord Melville's acquittal, during the short Whig administration of 1806. In fact Scott's comparative abstinence from politics was due, I believe, chiefly to the fact that during almost the whole of his literary life, Tories and not Whigs were in power. No sooner was any reform proposed, any abuse threatened, than Scott's eager Conservative spirit flashed up. Proposals were made in 1806 for changes — and, as it was thought, reforms — in the Scotch Courts of Law, and Scott immediately saw something like national calamity in the prospect. The mild proposals in question were discussed at a meeting of the Faculty of Advocates, when Scott made a speech longer than he had ever before delivered, and animated by a "flow and energy of eloquence" for which those who were accustomed to hear his debating speeches were quite unprepared. He walked home between two of the reformers, Mr. Jeffrey and another, when his companions began to compliment him on his eloquence, and to speak playfully of its subject. But Scott was in no mood for playfulness. "No, no," he exclaimed, "'tis no laughing matter; little by little, whatever your wishes may be, you will destroy and undermine, until nothing of what makes Scotland Scotland shall remain!" "And so saying," adds Mr. Lockhart, "he turned round to conceal his agitation, but not until Mr. Jeffrey saw tears gushing down his cheek, — resting his head, until he recovered himself, on the wall of the Mound." It was the same strong feeling for old Scotch institutions which broke out so quaintly in the midst of his own worst troubles in 1826, on behalf of the Scotch banking-system, when he so eloquently defended, in the letters of *Malachi Malagrowther*, what would now be called Home-Rule for Scotland, and indeed really defeated the

attempt of his friends the Tories, who were the innovators this time, to encroach on those sacred institutions — the Scotch one-pound note, and the private-note circulation of the Scotch banks. But when I speak of Scott as a Home-Ruler, I should add that had not Scotland been for generations governed to a great extent, and, as he thought successfully, by Home-Rule, he was far too good a Conservative to have apologized for it at all. The basis of his Conservatism was always the danger of undermining a system which had answered so well. In the concluding passages of the letters to which I have just referred, he contrasts "Theory, a scroll in her hand, full of deep and mysterious combinations of figures, the least failure in any one of which may alter the result entirely," with "a practical system successful for upwards of a century." His vehement and unquailing opposition to Reform in almost the very last year of his life, when he had already suffered more than one stroke of paralysis, was grounded on precisely the same argument. At Jedburgh, on the 21st March, 1831, he appeared in the midst of an angry population (who hooted and jeered at him till he turned round fiercely upon them with the defiance, "I regard your gabble no more than the geese on the green,") to urge the very same protest. "We in this district," he said, "are proud, and with reason, that the first chain-bridge was the work of a Scotchman. It still hangs where he erected it a pretty long time ago. The French heard of our invention, and determined to introduce it, but with great improvements and embellishments. A friend of my own saw the thing tried. It was on the Seine at Marly. The French chain-bridge looked lighter and airier than the prototype. Every Englishman present was disposed to confess that we had been beaten at our own trade. But by-and-by the gates were opened, and the multitude were to pass over. It began to swing rather formidably beneath the pressure of the good company; and by the time the architect, who led the procession in great pomp and glory, reached the middle, the whole gave way, and he — worthy, patriotic artist — was the first that got a ducking. They had forgot the middle bolt, — or rather this ingenious person had conceived that to be a clumsy-looking feature, which might safely be dispensed with, while he put some invisible gimcrack of his own to supply its place." It is strange that Sir Walter did not see that this kind of criticism, so far as it applied at all to such an experiment as the Reform Bill, was even more in point as a rebuke to the rashness of the Scotch reformer who hung the first successful chain-bridge, than to the rashness of the French reformer of reform who devised an unsuccessful

variation on it. The audacity of the first experiment was much the greater, though the competence of the person who made it was the greater also. And as a matter of fact, the political structure against the supposed insecurity of which Sir Walter was protesting, with all the courage of that dauntless though dying nature, was made by one who understood his work at least as well as the Scotch architect. The tramp of the many multitudes who have passed over it has never yet made it to "swing dangerously," and Lord Russell in the fulness of his age was but yesterday rejoicing in what he had achieved, and even in what those have achieved who have altered his work in the same spirit in which he designed it.

But though Sir Walter persuaded himself that his Conservatism was all founded in legitimate distrust of reckless change, there is evidence, I think, that at times at least it was due to elements less noble. The least creditable incident in the story of his political life — which Mr. Lockhart, with his usual candour, did not conceal — was the bitterness with which he resented a most natural and reasonable Parliamentary opposition to an appointment which he had secured for his favourite brother, Tom. In 1810 Scott appointed his brother Tom, who had failed as a Writer to the Signet, to a place vacant under himself as Clerk of Session. He had not given him the best place vacant, because he thought it his duty to appoint an official who had grown grey in the service, but he gave Tom Scott this man's place, which was worth about 250*l.* a year. In the meantime Tom Scott's affairs did not render it convenient for him to be come-at-able, and he absented himself, while they were being settled, in the Isle of Man. Further, the Commission on the Scotch system of judicature almost immediately reported that his office was one of supererogation, and ought to be abolished; but, to soften the blow, they proposed to allow him a pension of 130*l.* per annum. This proposal was discussed with some natural jealousy in the House of Lords. Lord Lauderdale thought that when Tom Scott was appointed, it must have been pretty evident that the Commission would propose to abolish his office, and that the appointment therefore should not have been made. "Mr. Thomas Scott," he said, "would have 130*l.* for life as an indemnity for an office the duties of which he never had performed, while those clerks who had laboured for twenty years had no adequate remuneration." Lord Holland supported this very reasonable and moderate view of the case; but of course the Ministry carried their way, and Tom Scott got his unearned pension. Nevertheless, Scott was furious with Lord

Holland. Writing soon after to the happy recipient of this little pension, he says, "Lord Holland has been in Edinburgh, and we met accidentally at a public party. He made up to me, but I remembered his part in your affair, and *cut* him with as little remorse as an old pen." Mr. Lockhart says, on Lord Jeffrey's authority, that the scene was a very painful one. Lord Jeffrey himself declared that it was the only rudeness of which he ever saw Scott guilty in the course of a lifelong familiarity. And it is pleasant to know that he renewed his cordiality with Lord Holland in later years, though there is no evidence that he ever admitted that he had been in the wrong. But the incident shows how very doubtful Sir Walter ought to have felt as to the purity of his Conservatism. It is quite certain that the proposal to abolish Tom Scott's office without compensation was not a reckless experiment of a fundamental kind. It was a mere attempt at diminishing the heavy burdens laid on the people for the advantage of a small portion of the middle class, and yet Scott resented it with as much display of selfish passion — considering his genuine nobility of breeding — as that with which the rude working men of Jedburgh afterwards resented his gallant protest against the Reform Bill, and, later again, saluted the dauntless old man with the dastardly cry of "Burk Sir Walter!" Judged truly, I think Sir Walter's conduct in cutting Lord Holland "with as little remorse as an old pen," for simply doing his duty in the House of Lords, was quite as ignoble in him as the bullying and insolence of the democratic party in 1831, when the dying lion made his last dash at what he regarded as the foes of the Constitution. Doubtless he held that the mob, or, as we more decorously say, the residuum, were in some sense the enemies of true freedom. "I cannot read in history," he writes once to Mr. Laidlaw, "of any free State which has been brought to slavery till the rascal and uninstructed populace had had their short hour of anarchical government, which naturally leads to the stern repose of military despotism." But he does not seem ever to have perceived that educated men identify themselves with "the rascal and uninstructed populace," whenever they indulge on behalf of the selfish interests of their own class, passions such as he had indulged in fighting for his brother's pension. It is not the want of instruction, it is the rascaldom, i. e. the violent *esprit de corps* of a selfish class, which "naturally leads" to violent remedies. Such rascaldom exists in all classes, and not least in the class of the cultivated and refined. Generous and magnanimous as Scott was, he was evidently by no means free from the germs of it.

One more illustration of Scott's political Conservatism, and I may leave his political life, which was not indeed his strong side, though, as with all sides of Scott's nature, it had an energy and spirit all his own. On the subject of Catholic Emancipation he took a peculiar view. As he justly said, he hated bigotry, and would have left the Catholics quite alone, but for the great claims of their creed to interfere with political life. And even so, when the penal laws were once abolished, he would have abolished also the representative disabilities, as quite useless, as well as very irritating when the iron system of effective repression had ceased. But he disapproved of the abolition of the political parts of the penal laws. He thought they would have stamped out Roman Catholicism; and whether that were just or unjust, he thought it would have been a great national service. "As for Catholic Emancipation," he wrote to Southey in 1807, "I am not, God knows, a bigot in religious matters, nor a friend to persecution; but if a particular set of religionists are *ipso facto* connected with foreign politics, and placed under the spiritual direction of a class of priests, whose unrivalled dexterity and activity are increased by the rules which detach them from the rest of the world — I humbly think that we may be excused from entrusting to them those places in the State where the influence of such a clergy, who act under the direction of a passive tool of our worst foe, is likely to be attended with the most fatal consequences. If a gentleman chooses to walk about with a couple of pounds of gunpowder in his pocket, if I give him the shelter of my roof, I may at least be permitted to exclude him from the seat next to the fire." And in relation to the year 1825, when Scott visited Ireland, Mr. Lockhart writes, "He on all occasions expressed manfully his belief that the best thing for Ireland would have been never to relax the strictly *political* enactments of the penal laws, however harsh these might appear. Had they been kept in vigour for another half-century, it was his conviction that Popery would have been all but extinguished in Ireland. But he thought that after admitting Romanists to the elective franchise, it was a vain notion that they could be permanently or advantageously deterred from using that franchise in favour of those of their own persuasion."

In his diary in 1829 he puts the same view still more strongly: — "I cannot get myself to feel at all anxious about the Catholic question. I cannot see the use of fighting about the platter, when you have let them snatch the meat off it. I hold Popery to be such a mean and degrading superstition, that I am not sure I could have found myself liberal enough for voting the repeal

of the penal laws as they existed before 1780. They must and would, in course of time, have smothered Popery; and I confess that I should have seen the old lady of Babylon's mouth stopped with pleasure. But now that you have taken the plaster off her mouth, and given her free respiration, I cannot see the sense of keeping up the irritation about the claim to sit in Parliament. Unopposed, the Catholic superstition may sink into dust, with all its absurd ritual and solemnities. Still it is an awful risk. The world is in fact as silly as ever, and a good competence of nonsense will always find believers." That is the view of a strong and rather unscrupulous politician — a mosstrooper in politics — which Scott certainly was. He was thinking evidently very little of justice, almost entirely of the most effective means of keeping the Kingdom, the Kingdom which he loved. Had he understood — what none of the politicians of that day understood — the strength of the Church of Rome as the only consistent exponent of the principle of Authority in religion, I believe his opposition to Catholic emancipation would have been as bitter as his opposition to Parliamentary reform. But he took for granted that while only "silly" persons believed in Rome, and only "infidels" rejected an authoritative creed altogether, it was quite easy by the exercise of common sense, to find the true compromise between reason and religious humility. Had Scott lived through the religious controversies of our own days, it seems not unlikely that with his vivid imagination, his warm Conservatism, and his rather inadequate critical powers, he might himself have become a Roman Catholic.

Chapter XV

Scott in Adversity

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With the year 1825 came a financial crisis, and Constable began to tremble for his solvency. From the date of his baronetcy Sir Walter had launched out into a considerable increase of expenditure. He got plans on a rather large scale in 1821 for the increase of Abbotsford, which were all carried out. To meet his expenses in this and other ways he received Constable's bills for "four unnamed works of fiction," of which he had not written a line, but which came to exist in time, and were called *Peveril of the Peak*, *Quentin Durward*, *St. Ronan's Well*, and *Redgauntlet*. Again, in the very year before the crash, 1825, he married his eldest son, the heir to the title, to a young lady who was herself an heiress, Miss Jobson of Lochore, when Abbotsford and its estates were settled, with the reserve of 10,000*l.*, which Sir Walter took power to charge on the property for purposes of business. Immediately afterwards he purchased a captaincy in the King's Hussars for his son, which cost him 3500*l.* Nor were the obligations he incurred on his own account, or that of his family, the only ones by which he was burdened. He was always incurring expenses, often heavy expenses, for other people. Thus, when Mr. Terry, the actor, became joint lessee and manager of the Adelphi Theatre, London, Scott became his surety for 1250*l.*, while James Ballantyne became his surety for 500*l.* more, and both these sums had to be paid by Sir Walter after Terry's failure in 1828. Such obligations as these, however, would have been nothing when compared with Sir Walter's means, had all his bills on Constable been duly honoured, and had not the printing firm of Ballantyne and Co. been so deeply involved with Constable's house that it necessarily became insolvent when he stopped. Taken altogether, I believe that Sir Walter earned during his own lifetime at least 140,000*l.* by his literary work alone, probably more; while even on his land and building combined he did not apparently spend more than half that sum. Then he had a certain income, about 1000*l.* a year, from his own and Lady Scott's private property, as well as 1300*l.* a year as Clerk of Session, and 300*l.* more as Sheriff of Selkirk. Thus even his loss of the price of several novels by Constable's failure would not seriously have

compromised Scott's position, but for his share in the printing-house which fell with Constable, and the obligations of which amounted to 117,000*l.*

As Scott had always forestalled his income, — spending the purchase-money of his poems and novels before they were written, — such a failure as this, at the age of fifty-five, when all the freshness of his youth was gone out of him, when he saw his son's prospects blighted as well as his own, and knew perfectly that James Ballantyne, unassisted by him, could never hope to pay any fraction of the debt worth mentioning, would have been paralysing, had he not been a man of iron nerve, and of a pride and courage hardly ever equalled. Domestic calamity, too, was not far off. For two years he had been watching the failure of his wife's health with increasing anxiety, and as calamities seldom come single, her illness took a most serious form at the very time when the blow fell, and she died within four months of the failure. Nay, Scott was himself unwell at the critical moment, and was taking sedatives which discomposed his brain. Twelve days before the final failure, — which was announced to him on the 17th January, 1826, — he enters in his diary, "Much alarmed. I had walked till twelve with Skene and Russell, and then sat down to my work. To my horror and surprise I could neither write nor spell, but put down one word for another, and wrote nonsense. I was much overpowered at the same time and could not conceive the reason. I fell asleep, however, in my chair, and slept for two hours. On my waking my head was clearer, and I began to recollect that last night I had taken the anodyne left for the purpose by Clarkson, and being disturbed in the course of the night, I had not slept it off." In fact the hyoscyamus had, combined with his anxieties, given him a slight attack of what is now called *aphasia*, that brain disease the most striking symptom of which is that one word is mistaken for another. And this was Scott's preparation for his failure, and the bold resolve which followed it, to work for his creditors as he had worked for himself, and to pay off, if possible, the whole 117,000*l.* by his own literary exertions.

There is nothing in its way in the whole of English biography more impressive than the stoical extracts from Scott's diary which note the descent of this blow. Here is the anticipation of the previous day: "Edinburgh, January 16th. — Came through cold roads to as cold news. Hurst and Robinson have suffered a bill to come back upon Constable, which, I suppose, infers the ruin of both houses. We shall soon see. Dined with the Skenes." And here is the record itself: "January 17th. — James

Ballantyne this morning, good honest fellow, with a visage as black as the crook. He hopes no salvation; has, indeed, taken measures to stop. It is hard, after having fought such a battle. I have apologized for not attending the Royal Society Club, who have a *gaudeamus* on this day, and seemed to count much on my being the præses. My old acquaintance Miss Elizabeth Clerk, sister of Willie, died suddenly. I cannot choose but wish it had been Sir W. S., and yet the feeling is unmanly. I have Anne, my wife, and Charles to look after. I felt rather sneaking as I came home from the Parliament-house — felt as if I were liable *monstrari digito* in no very pleasant way. But this must be borne *cum cœteris*; and, thank God, however uncomfortable, I do not feel despondent." On the following day, the 18th January, the day after the blow, he records a bad night, a wish that the next two days were over, but that "the worst *is* over," and on the same day he set about making notes for the *magnum opus*, as he called it — the complete edition of all the novels, with a new introduction and notes. On the 19th January, two days after the failure, he calmly resumed the composition of *Woodstock* — the novel on which he was then engaged — and completed, he says, "about twenty printed pages of it;" to which he adds that he had "a painful scene after dinner and another after supper, endeavouring to convince these poor creatures" [his wife and daughter] "that they must not look for miracles, but consider the misfortune as certain, and only to be lessened by patience and labour." On the 21st January, after a number of business details, he quotes from Job, "Naked we entered the world and naked we leave it; blessed be the name of the Lord." On the 22nd he says, "I feel neither dishonoured nor broken down by the bad, now truly bad, news I have received. I have walked my last in the domains I have planted — sat the last time in the halls I have built. But death would have taken them from me, if misfortune had spared them. My poor people whom I loved so well! There is just another die to turn up against me in this run of ill-luck, i. e. if I should break my magic wand in the fall from this elephant, and lose my popularity with my fortune. Then *Woodstock* and *Boney*" [his life of Napoleon] "may both go to the papermaker, and I may take to smoking cigars and drinking grog, or turn devotee and intoxicate the brain another way." He adds that when he sets to work doggedly, he is exactly the same man he ever was, "neither low-spirited nor *distrait*," nay, that adversity is to him "a tonic and bracer."

The heaviest blow was, I think, the blow to his pride. Very early he begins to note painfully the different way in which different friends greet him, to remark that some smile as if to say, “think nothing about it, my lad, it is quite out of our thoughts;” that others adopt an affected gravity, “such as one sees and despises at a funeral,” and the best-bred “just shook hands and went on.” He writes to Mr. Morritt with a proud indifference, clearly to some extent simulated: — ”My womenkind will be the greater sufferers, yet even they look cheerily forward; and, for myself, the blowing off of my hat on a stormy day has given me more uneasiness.” To Lady Davy he writes truly enough: — ”I beg my humblest compliments to Sir Humphrey, and tell him, Ill Luck, that direful chemist, never put into his crucible a more indissoluble piece of stuff than your affectionate cousin and sincere wellwisher, Walter Scott.” When his *Letters of Malachi Malagrowther* came out he writes: — ”I am glad of this bruilzie, as far as I am concerned; people will not dare talk of me as an object of pity — no more ‘poor-manning.’ Who asks how many punds Scots the old champion had in his pocket when

‘He set a bugle to his mouth, And blew so loud and shrill, The trees in greenwood shook thereat, Sae loud rang every hill.’

This sounds conceited enough, yet is not far from truth.” His dread of pity is just the same when his wife dies: — ”Will it be better,” he writes, “when left to my own feelings, I see the whole world pipe and dance around me? I think it will. Their sympathy intrudes on my present affliction.” Again, on returning for the first time from Edinburgh to Abbotsford after Lady Scott’s funeral: — ”I again took possession of the family bedroom and my widowed couch. This was a sore trial, but it was necessary not to blink such a resolution. Indeed I do not like to have it thought that there is any way in which I can be beaten.” And again: — ”I have a secret pride — I fancy it will be so most truly termed — which impels me to mix with my distresses strange snatches of mirth, ‘which have no mirth in them.’“

But though pride was part of Scott’s strength, pride alone never enabled any man to struggle so vigorously and so unremittingly as he did to meet the obligations he had incurred. When he was in Ireland in the previous year, a poor woman who had offered to sell him gooseberries, but whose offer had not been accepted, remarked, on seeing his daughter give some pence to a beggar, that they might as well give her an alms too, as she was “an old

struggler." Sir Walter was struck with the expression, and said that it deserved to become classical, as a name for those who take arms against a sea of troubles, instead of yielding to the waves. It was certainly a name the full meaning of which he himself deserved. His house in Edinburgh was sold, and he had to go into a certain Mrs. Brown's lodgings, when he was discharging his duties as Clerk of Session. His wife was dead. His estate was conveyed to trustees for the benefit of his creditors till such time as he should pay off Ballantyne and Co's. debt, which of course in his lifetime he never did. Yet between January, 1826, and January, 1828, he earned for his creditors very nearly 40,000*l.* *Woodstock* sold for 8228*l.*, "a matchless sale," as Sir Walter remarked, "for less than three months' work." The first two editions of *The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, on which Mr. Lockhart says that Scott had spent the unremitting labour of about two years — labour involving a far greater strain on eyes and brain than his imaginative work ever caused him — sold for 18,000*l.* Had Sir Walter's health lasted, he would have redeemed his obligations on behalf of Ballantyne and Co. within eight or nine years at most from the time of his failure. But what is more remarkable still, is that after his health failed he struggled on with little more than half a brain, but a whole will, to work while it was yet day, though the evening was dropping fast. *Count Robert of Paris* and *Castle Dangerous* were really the compositions of a paralytic patient.

It was in September, 1830, that the first of these tales was begun. As early as the 15th February of that year he had had his first true paralytic seizure. He had been discharging his duties as clerk of session as usual, and received in the afternoon a visit from a lady friend of his, Miss Young, who was submitting to him some manuscript memoirs of her father, when the stroke came. It was but slight. He struggled against it with his usual iron power of will, and actually managed to stagger out of the room where the lady was sitting with him, into the drawingroom where his daughter was, but there he fell his full length on the floor. He was cupped, and fully recovered his speech during the course of the day, but Mr. Lockhart thinks that never, after this attack, did his style recover its full lucidity and terseness. A cloudiness in words and a cloudiness of arrangement began to be visible. In the course of the year he retired from his duties of clerk of session, and his publishers hoped that, by engaging him on the new and complete edition of his works, they might detach him from the attempt at imaginative creation for which he was now so much less fit. But Sir

Walter's will survived his judgment. When, in the previous year, Ballantyne had been disabled from attending to business by his wife's illness (which ended in her death), Scott had written in his diary, "It is his (Ballantyne's) nature to indulge apprehensions of the worst which incapacitate him for labour. I cannot help regarding this amiable weakness of the mind with something too nearly allied to contempt," and assuredly he was guilty of no such weakness himself. Not only did he row much harder against the stream of fortune than he had ever rowed with it, but, what required still more resolution, he fought on against the growing conviction that his imagination would not kindle, as it used to do, to its old heat.

When he dictated to Laidlaw, — for at this time he could hardly write himself for rheumatism in the hand, — he would frequently pause and look round him, like a man "mocked with shadows." Then he bestirred himself with a great effort, rallied his force, and the style again flowed clear and bright, but not for long. The clouds would gather again, and the mental blank recur. This soon became visible to his publishers, who wrote discouragingly of the new novel — to Scott's own great distress and irritation. The oddest feature in the matter was that his letters to them were full of the old terseness, and force, and caustic turns. On business he was as clear and keen as in his best days. It was only at his highest task, the task of creative work, that his cunning began to fail him. Here, for instance, are a few sentences written to Cadell, his publisher, touching this very point — the discouragement which James Ballantyne had been pouring on the new novel. Ballantyne, he says, finds fault with the subject, when what he really should have found fault with was the failing power of the author: — "James is, with many other kindly critics, perhaps in the predicament of an honest drunkard, when crop-sick the next morning, who does not ascribe the malady to the wine he has drunk, but to having tasted some particular dish at dinner which disagreed with his stomach…. I have lost, it is plain, the power of interesting the country, and ought, injustice to all parties, to retire while I have some credit. But this is an important step, and I will not be obstinate about it if it be necessary…. Frankly, I cannot think of flinging aside the half-finished volume, as if it were a corked bottle of wine…. I may, perhaps, take a trip to the Continent for a year or two, if I find Othello's occupation gone, or rather Othello's *reputation*." And again, in a very able letter written on the 12th of December, 1830, to Cadell, he takes a view of the situation with as much calmness and imperturbability as if he

were an outside spectator. “There were many circumstances in the matter which you and J. B. (James Ballantyne) could not be aware of, and which, if you were aware of, might have influenced your judgment, which had, and yet have, a most powerful effect upon mine. The deaths of both my father and mother have been preceded by a paralytic shock. My father survived it for nearly two years — a melancholy respite, and not to be desired. I was alarmed with Miss Young’s morning visit, when, as you know, I lost my speech. The medical people said it was from the stomach, which might be, but while there is a doubt upon a point so alarming, you will not wonder that the subject, or to use Hare’s *lingo*, the *shot*, should be a little anxious.” He relates how he had followed all the strict medical *régime* prescribed to him with scrupulous regularity, and then begun his work again with as much attention as he could. “And having taken pains with my story, I find it is not relished, nor indeed tolerated, by those who have no interest in condemning it, but a strong interest in putting even a face” (? force) “upon their consciences. Was not this, in the circumstances, a damper to an invalid already afraid that the sharp edge might be taken off his intellect, though he was not himself sensible of that?” In fact, no more masterly discussion of the question whether his mind were failing or not, and what he ought to do in the interval of doubt, can be conceived, than these letters give us. At this time the debt of Ballantyne and Co. had been reduced by repeated dividends — all the fruits of Scott’s literary work — more than one half. On the 17th of December, 1830, the liabilities stood at 54,000*l.*, having been reduced 63,000*l.* within five years. And Sir Walter, encouraged by this great result of his labour, resumed the suspended novel.

But with the beginning of 1831 came new alarms. On January 5th Sir Walter enters in his diary, — ”Very indifferent, with more awkward feelings than I can well bear up against. My voice sunk and my head strangely confused.” Still he struggled on. On the 31st January he went alone to Edinburgh to sign his will, and stayed at his bookseller’s (Cadell’s) house in Athol Crescent. A great snowstorm set in which kept him in Edinburgh and in Mr. Cadell’s house till the 9th February. One day while the snow was still falling heavily, Ballantyne reminded him that a motto was wanting for one of the chapters of *Count Robert of Paris*. He went to the window, looked out for a moment, and then wrote, —

“The storm increases; ‘tis no sunny shower, Foster’d in the moist breast of March or April, Or such as parchèd summer cools his lips with. Heaven’s

windows are flung wide; the inmost deeps Call, in hoarse greeting, one upon another; On comes the flood, in all its foaming horrors, And where's the dike shall stop it?

The Deluge: a Poem."

Clearly this failing imagination of Sir Walter's was still a great deal more vivid than that of most men, with brains as sound as it ever pleased Providence to make them. But his troubles were not yet even numbered. The "storm increased," and it was, as he said, "no sunny shower." His lame leg became so painful that he had to get a mechanical apparatus to relieve him of some of the burden of supporting it. Then, on the 21st March, he was hissed at Jedburgh, as I have before said, for his vehement opposition to Reform. In April he had another stroke of paralysis which he now himself recognized as one. Still he struggled on at his novel. Under the date of May 6, 7, 8, he makes this entry in his diary: — "Here is a precious job. I have a formal remonstrance from those critical people, Ballantyne and Cadell, against the last volume of *Count Robert*, which is within a sheet of being finished. I suspect their opinion will be found to coincide with that of the public; at least it is not very different from my own. The blow is a stunning one, I suppose, for I scarcely feel it. It is singular, but it comes with as little surprise as if I had a remedy ready; yet God knows I am at sea in the dark, and the vessel leaky, I think, into the bargain. I cannot conceive that I have tied a knot with my tongue which my teeth cannot untie. We shall see. I have suffered terribly, that is the truth, rather in body than mind, and I often wish I could lie down and sleep without waking. But I will fight it out if I can." The medical men with one accord tried to make him give up his novel-writing. But he smiled and put them by. He took up *Count Robert of Paris* again, and tried to recast it. On the 18th May he insisted on attending the election for Roxburghshire, to be held at Jedburgh, and in spite of the unmannerly reception he had met with in March, no dissuasion would keep him at home. He was saluted in the town with groans and blasphemies, and Sir Walter had to escape from Jedburgh by a back way to avoid personal violence. The cries of "Burk Sir Walter," with which he was saluted on this occasion, haunted him throughout his illness and on his dying bed. At the Selkirk election it was Sir Walter's duty as Sheriff to preside, and his family therefore made no attempt to dissuade him from his attendance. There he was so well known and loved, that in spite of his Tory views, he was not insulted, and the only man who made any attempt to hustle the Tory

electors, was seized by Sir Walter with his own hand, as he got out of his carriage, and committed to prison without resistance till the election day was over.

A seton which had been ordered for his head, gave him some relief, and of course the first result was that he turned immediately to his novel-writing again, and began *Castle Dangerous* in July, 1831, — the last July but one which he was to see at all. He even made a little journey in company with Mr. Lockhart, in order to see the scene of the story he wished to tell, and on his return set to work with all his old vigour to finish his tale, and put the concluding touches to *Count Robert of Paris*. But his temper was no longer what it had been. He quarrelled with Ballantyne, partly for his depreciatory criticism of *Count Robert of Paris*, partly for his growing tendency to a mystic and strait-laced sort of dissent and his increasing Liberalism. Even Mr. Laidlaw and Scott's children had much to bear. But he struggled on even to the end, and did not consent to try the experiment of a voyage and visit to Italy till his immediate work was done. Well might Lord Chief Baron Shepherd apply to Scott Cicero's description of some contemporary of his own, who "had borne adversity wisely, who had not been broken by fortune, and who, amidst the buffets of fate, had maintained his dignity." There was in Sir Walter, I think, at least as much of the Stoic as the Christian. But Stoic or Christian, he was a hero of the old, indomitable type. Even the last fragments of his imaginative power were all turned to account by that unconquerable will, amidst the discouragement of friends, and the still more disheartening doubts of his own mind. Like the headland stemming a rough sea, he was gradually worn away, but never crushed.

Chapter XVI

The Last Year

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In the month of September, 1831, the disease of the brain which had long been in existence must have made a considerable step in advance. For the first time the illusion seemed to possess Sir Walter that he had paid off all the debt for which he was liable, and that he was once more free to give as his generosity prompted. Scott sent Mr. Lockhart 50*l.* to save his grandchildren some slight inconvenience, and told another of his correspondents that he had "put his decayed fortune into as good a condition as he could desire." It was well, therefore, that he had at last consented to try the effect of travel on his health, — not that he could hope to arrest by it such a disease as his, but that it diverted him from the most painful of all efforts, that of trying anew the spell which had at last failed him, and perceiving in the disappointed eyes of his old admirers that the magic of his imagination was a thing of the past. The last day of real enjoyment at Abbotsford — for when Sir Walter returned to it to die, it was but to catch once more the outlines of its walls, the rustle of its woods, and the gleam of its waters, through senses already darkened to all less familiar and less fascinating visions — was the 22nd September, 1831. On the 21st, Wordsworth had come to bid his old friend adieu, and on the 22nd — the last day at home — they spent the morning together in a visit to Newark. It was a day to deepen alike in Scott and in Wordsworth whatever of sympathy either of them had with the very different genius of the other, and that it had this result in Wordsworth's case, we know from the very beautiful poem, — "Yarrow Revisited," — and the sonnet which the occasion also produced. And even Scott, who was so little of a Wordsworthian, who enjoyed Johnson's stately but formal verse, and Crabbe's vivid Dutch painting, more than he enjoyed the poetry of the transcendental school, must have recurred that day with more than usual emotion to his favourite Wordsworthian poem. Soon after his wife's death, he had remarked in his diary how finely "the effect of grief upon persons who like myself are highly susceptible of humour" had been "touched by Wordsworth in the character of the merry village teacher, Matthew, whom

Jeffrey profanely calls a half-crazy, sentimental person." And long before this time, during the brightest period of his life, Scott had made the old Antiquary of his novel quote the same poem of Wordsworth's, in a passage where the period of life at which he had now arrived is anticipated with singular pathos and force. "It is at such moments as these," says Mr. Oldbuck, "that we feel the changes of time. The same objects are before us — those inanimate things which we have gazed on in wayward infancy and impetuous youth, in anxious and scheming manhood — they are permanent and the same; but when we look upon them in cold, unfeeling old age, can we, changed in our temper, our pursuits, our feelings, — changed in our form, our limbs, and our strength, — can we be ourselves called the same? or do we not rather look back with a sort of wonder upon our former selves as beings separate and distinct from what we now are? The philosopher who appealed from Philip inflamed with wine to Philip in his hours of sobriety, did not claim a judge so different as if he had appealed from Philip in his youth to Philip in his old age. I cannot but be touched with the feeling so beautifully expressed in a poem which I have heard repeated: —

'My eyes are dim with childish tears, My heart is idly stirr'd, For the same sound is in my ears Which in those days I heard. Thus fares it still in our decay, And yet the wiser mind Mourns less for what age takes away Than what it leaves behind.'"

Sir Walter's memory, which, in spite of the slight failure of brain and the mild illusions to which, on the subject of his own prospects, he was now liable, had as yet been little impaired — indeed, he could still quote whole pages from all his favourite authors — must have recurred to those favourite Wordsworthian lines of his with singular force, as, with Wordsworth for his companion, he gazed on the refuge of the last Minstrel of his imagination for the last time, and felt in himself how much of joy in the sight, age had taken away, and how much, too, of the habit of expecting it, it had unfortunately left behind. Whether Sir Walter recalled this poem of Wordsworth's on this occasion or not — and if he recalled it, his delight in giving pleasure would assuredly have led him to let Wordsworth know that he recalled it — the mood it paints was unquestionably that in which his last day at Abbotsford was passed. In the evening, referring to the journey which was to begin the next day, he remarked that Fielding and Smollett had been driven abroad by declining health, and that they had never returned; while Wordsworth — willing perhaps to bring out a brighter

feature in the present picture — regretted that the last days of those two great novelists had not been surrounded by due marks of respect. With Sir Walter, as he well knew, it was different. The Liberal Government that he had so bitterly opposed were pressing on him signs of the honour in which he was held, and a ship of his Majesty's navy had been placed at his disposal to take him to the Mediterranean. And Wordsworth himself added his own more durable token of reverence. As long as English poetry lives, Englishmen will know something of that last day of the last Minstrel at Newark: —

"Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day, Their dignity installing In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves Were on the bough or falling; But breezes play'd, and sunshine gleam'd The forest to embolden, Redden'd the fiery hues, and shot Transparence through the golden.

"For busy thoughts the stream flow'd on In foamy agitation; And slept in many a crystal pool For quiet contemplation: No public and no private care The freeborn mind enthralling, We made a day of happy hours, Our happy days recalling.

*

"And if, as Yarrow through the woods And down the meadow ranging, Did meet us with unalter'd face, Though we were changed and changing; If *then* some natural shadow spread Our inward prospect over, The soul's deep valley was not slow Its brightness to recover.

"Eternal blessings on the Muse And her divine employment, The blameless Muse who trains her sons For hope and calm enjoyment; Albeit sickness lingering yet Has o'er their pillow brooded, And care waylays their steps — a sprite Not easily eluded.

*

"Nor deem that localized Romance Plays false with our affections; Unsanctifies our tears — made sport For fanciful dejections: Ah, no! the visions of the past Sustain the heart in feeling Life as she is — our changeful Life With friends and kindred dealing.

"Bear witness ye, whose thoughts that day In Yarrow's groves were centred, Who through the silent portal arch Of mouldering Newark enter'd;

And clomb the winding stair that once Too timidly was mounted By the last Minstrel — not the last! — Ere he his tale recounted."

Thus did the meditative poetry, the day of which was not yet, do honour to itself in doing homage to the Minstrel of romantic energy and martial enterprise, who, with the school of poetry he loved, was passing away.

On the 23rd September Scott left Abbotsford, spending five days on his journey to London; nor would he allow any of the old objects of interest to be passed without getting out of the carriage to see them. He did not leave London for Portsmouth till the 23rd October, but spent the intervening time in London, where he took medical advice, and with his old shrewdness wheeled his chair into a dark corner during the physicians' absence from the room to consult, that he might read their faces clearly on their return without their being able to read his. They recognized traces of brain disease, but Sir Walter was relieved by their comparatively favourable opinion, for he admitted that he had feared insanity, and therefore had "feared *them*." On the 29th October he sailed for Malta, and on the 20th November Sir Walter insisted on being landed on a small volcanic island which had appeared four months previously, and which disappeared again in a few days, and on clambering about its crumbling lava, in spite of sinking at nearly every step almost up to his knees, in order that he might send a description of it to his old friend Mr. Skene. On the 22nd November he reached Malta, where he looked eagerly at the antiquities of the place, for he still hoped to write a novel — and, indeed, actually wrote one at Naples, which was never published, called *The Siege of Malta* — on the subject of the Knights of Malta, who had interested him so much in his youth. From Malta Scott went to Naples, which he reached on the 17th December, and where he found much pleasure in the society of Sir William Gell, an invalid like himself, but not one who, like himself, struggled against the admission of his infirmities, and refused to be carried when his own legs would not safely carry him. Sir William Gell's dog delighted the old man; he would pat it and call it "Poor boy!" and confide to Sir William how he had at home "two very fine favourite dogs, so large that I am always afraid they look too large and too feudal for my diminished income." In all his letters home he gave some injunction to Mr. Laidlaw about the poor people and the dogs.

On the 22nd of March, 1832, Goethe died, an event which made a great impression on Scott, who had intended to visit Weimar on his way back, on purpose to see Goethe, and this much increased his eager desire to return

home. Accordingly on the 16th of April, the last day on which he made any entry in his diary, he quitted Naples for Rome, where he stayed long enough only to let his daughter see something of the place, and hurried off homewards on the 21st of May. In Venice he was still strong enough to insist on scrambling down into the dungeons adjoining the Bridge of Sighs; and at Frankfort he entered a bookseller's shop, when the man brought out a lithograph of Abbotsford, and Scott remarking, "I know that already, sir," left the shop unrecognized, more than ever craving for home. At Nimeguen, on the 9th of June, while in a steamboat on the Rhine, he had his most serious attack of apoplexy, but would not discontinue his journey, was lifted into an English steamboat at Rotterdam on the 11th of June, and arrived in London on the 13th. There he recognized his children, and appeared to expect immediate death, as he gave them repeatedly his most solemn blessing, but for the most part he lay at the St. James's Hotel, in Jermyn Street, without any power to converse. There it was that Allan Cunningham, on walking home one night, found a group of working men at the corner of the street, who stopped him and asked, "as if there was but one deathbed in London, 'Do you know, sir, if this is the street where he is lying?'" According to the usual irony of destiny, it was while the working men were doing him this hearty and unconscious homage, that Sir Walter, whenever disturbed by the noises of the street, imagined himself at the polling-booth of Jedburgh, where the people had cried out, "Burk Sir Walter." And it was while lying here, — only now and then uttering a few words, — that Mr. Lockhart says of him, "He expressed his will as determinedly as ever, and expressed it with the same apt and goodnatured irony that he was wont to use."

Sir Walter's great and urgent desire was to return to Abbotsford, and at last his physicians yielded. On the 7th July he was lifted into his carriage, followed by his trembling and weeping daughters, and so taken to a steamboat, where the captain gave up his private cabin — a cabin on deck — for his use. He remained unconscious of any change till after his arrival in Edinburgh, when, on the 11th July, he was placed again in his carriage, and remained in it quite unconscious during the first two stages of the journey to Tweedside. But as the carriage entered the valley of the Gala, he began to look about him. Presently he murmured a name or two, "Gala water, surely, — Buckholm, — Torwoodlee." When the outline of the Eildon hills came in view, Scott's excitement was great, and when his eye

caught the towers of Abbotsford, he sprang up with a cry of delight, and while the towers remained in sight it took his physician, his son-in-law, and his servant, to keep him in the carriage. Mr. Laidlaw was waiting for him, and he met him with a cry, "Ha! Willie Laidlaw! O, man, how often I have thought of you!" His dogs came round his chair and began to fawn on him and lick his hands, while Sir Walter smiled or sobbed over them. The next morning he was wheeled about his garden, and on the following morning was out in this way for a couple of hours; within a day or two he fancied that he could write again, but on taking the pen into his hand, his fingers could not clasp it, and he sank back with tears rolling down his cheek. Later, when Laidlaw said in his hearing that Sir Walter had had a little repose, he replied, "No, Willie; no repose for Sir Walter but in the grave." As the tears rushed from his eyes, his old pride revived. "Friends," he said, "don't let me expose myself — get me to bed, — that is the only place."

After this Sir Walter never left his room. Occasionally he dropped off into delirium, and the old painful memory, — that cry of "Burk Sir Walter," — might be again heard on his lips. He lingered, however, till the 21st September, — more than two months from the day of his reaching home, and a year from the day of Wordsworth's arrival at Abbotsford before his departure for the Mediterranean, with only one clear interval of consciousness, on Monday, the 17th September. On that day Mr. Lockhart was called to Sir Walter's bedside with the news that he had awakened in a state of composure and consciousness, and wished to see him. "'Lockhart,' he said, 'I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man, — be virtuous, — be religious, — be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here.' He paused, and I said, 'Shall I send for Sophia and Anne?' 'No,' said he, 'don't disturb them. Poor souls! I know they were up all night. God bless you all!'" With this he sank into a very tranquil sleep, and, indeed, he scarcely afterwards gave any sign of consciousness except for an instant on the arrival of his sons. And so four days afterwards, on the day of the autumnal equinox in 1832, at halfpast one in the afternoon, on a glorious autumn day, with every window wide open, and the ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles distinctly audible in his room, he passed away, and "his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes." He died a month after completing his sixty-first year. Nearly seven years earlier, on the 7th December, 1825, he had in his diary taken a survey of his own health in relation to the age reached by his father and other members of

his family, and had stated as the result of his considerations, “Square the odds and good night, Sir Walter, about sixty. I care not if I leave my name unstained and my family property settled. *Sat est vixisse.*” Thus he lived just a year — but a year of gradual death — beyond his own calculation.

Chapter XVII

The End of the Struggle

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Sir Walter certainly left his “name unstained,” unless the serious mistakes natural to a sanguine temperament such as his, are to be counted as stains upon his name; and if they are, where among the sons of men would you find many unstained names as noble as his with such a stain upon it? He was not only sensitively honourable in motive, but, when he found what evil his sanguine temper had worked, he used his gigantic powers to repair it, as Samson used his great strength to repair the mischief he had inadvertently done to Israel. But with all his exertions he had not, when death came upon him, cleared off much more than half his obligations. There was still 54,000*l.* to pay. But of this, 22,000*l.* was secured in an insurance on his life, and there were besides a thousand pounds or two in the hands of the trustees, which had not been applied to the extinction of the debt. Mr. Cadell, his publisher, accordingly advanced the remaining 30,000*l.* on the security of Sir Walter’s copyrights, and on the 21st February, 1833, the general creditors were paid in full, and Mr. Cadell remained the only creditor of the estate. In February, 1847, Sir Walter’s son, the second baronet, died childless; and in May, 1847, Mr. Cadell gave a discharge in full of all claims, including the bond for 10,000*l.* executed by Sir Walter during the struggles of Constable and Co. to prevent a failure, on the transfer to him of all the copyrights of Sir Walter, including “the results of some literary exertions of the sole surviving executor,” which I conjecture to mean the copyright of the admirable biography of Sir Walter Scott in ten volumes, to which I have made such a host of references — probably the most perfect specimen of a biography rich in great materials, which our language contains. And thus, nearly fifteen years after Sir Walter’s death, the debt which, within six years, he had more than half discharged, was at last, through the value of the copyrights he had left behind him, finally extinguished, and the small estate of Abbotsford left cleared.

Sir Walter’s effort to found a new house was even less successful than the effort to endow it. His eldest son died childless. In 1839 he went to

Madras, as Lieutenant-Colonel of the 15th Hussars, and subsequently commanded that regiment. He was as much beloved by the officers of his regiment as his father had been by his own friends, and was in every sense an accomplished soldier, and one whose greatest anxiety it was to promote the welfare of the privates as well as of the officers of his regiment. He took great pains in founding a library for the soldiers of his corps, and his only legacy out of his own family was one of 100*l.* to this library. The cause of his death was his having exposed himself rashly to the sun in a tiger-hunt, in August, 1846; he never recovered from the fever which was the immediate consequence. Ordered home for his health, he died near the Cape of Good Hope, on the 8th of February, 1847. His brother Charles died before him. He was rising rapidly in the diplomatic service, and was taken to Persia by Sir John MacNeill, on a diplomatic mission, as attaché and private secretary. But the climate struck him down, and he died at Teheran, almost immediately on his arrival, on the 28th October, 1841. Both the sisters had died previously. Anne Scott, the younger of the two, whose health had suffered greatly during the prolonged anxiety of her father's illness, died on the Midsummer-day of the year following her father's death; and Sophia, Mrs. Lockhart, died on the 17th May, 1837. Sir Walter's eldest grandchild, John Hugh Lockhart, for whom the *Tales of a Grandfather* were written, died before his grandfather; indeed Sir Walter heard of the child's death at Naples. The second son, Walter Scott Lockhart Scott, a lieutenant in the army, died at Versailles, on the 10th January, 1853. Charlotte Harriet Jane Lockhart, who was married in 1847 to James Robert Hope-Scott, and succeeded to the Abbotsford estate, died at Edinburgh, on the 26th October, 1858, leaving three children, of whom only one survives. Walter Michael and Margaret Anne Hope-Scott both died in infancy. The only direct descendant, therefore, of Sir Walter Scott, is now Mary Monica Hope-Scott who was born on the 2nd October, 1852, the grandchild of Mrs. Lockhart, and the great-grandchild of the founder of Abbotsford.

There is something of irony in such a result of the Herculean labours of Scott to found and endow a new branch of the clan of Scott. When fifteen years after his death the estate was at length freed from debt, all his own children and the eldest of his grandchildren were dead; and now forty-six years have elapsed, and there only remains one girl of his descendants to borrow his name and live in the halls of which he was so proud. And yet this, and this only, was wanting to give something of the grandeur of

tragedy to the end of Scott's great enterprise. He valued his works little compared with the house and lands which they were to be the means of gaining for his descendants; yet every end for which he struggled so gallantly is all but lost, while his works have gained more of added lustre from the losing battle which he fought so long, than they could ever have gained from his success.

What there was in him of true grandeur could never have been seen, had the fifth act of his life been less tragic than it was. Generous, large-hearted, and magnanimous as Scott was, there was something in the days of his prosperity that fell short of what men need for their highest ideal of a strong man. Unbroken success, unrivalled popularity, imaginative effort flowing almost as steadily as the current of a stream, — these are characteristics, which, even when enhanced as they were in his case, by the power to defy physical pain, and to live in his imaginative world when his body was writhing in torture, fail to touch the heroic point. And there was nothing in Scott, while he remained prosperous, to relieve adequately the glare of triumphant prosperity. His religious and moral feeling, though strong and sound, was purely regulative, and not always even regulative, where his inward principle was not reflected in the opinions of the society in which he lived. The finer spiritual element in Scott was relatively deficient, and so the strength of the natural man was almost too equal, complete, and glaring. Something that should "tame the glaring white" of that broad sunshine, was needed; and in the years of reverse, when one gift after another was taken away, till at length what he called even his "magic wand" was broken, and the old man struggled on to the last, without bitterness, without defiance, without murmuring, but not without such sudden flashes of subduing sweetness as melted away the anger of the teacher of his childhood, — that something seemed to be supplied. Till calamity came, Scott appeared to be a nearly complete natural man, and no more. Then first was perceived in him something above nature, something which could endure though every end in life for which he had fought so boldly should be defeated, — something which could endure and more than endure, which could shoot a soft transparence of its own through his years of darkness and decay. That there was nothing very elevated in Scott's personal or moral, or political or literary ends, — that he never for a moment thought of himself as one who was bound to leave the earth better than he found it, — that he never seems to have so much as contemplated a social or political reform for which he

ought to contend, — that he lived to some extent like a child blowing soap-bubbles, the brightest and most gorgeous of which — the Abbotsford bubble — vanished before his eyes, is not a take-off from the charm of his career, but adds to it the very speciality of its fascination. For it was his entire unconsciousness of moral or spiritual efforts, the simple straightforward way in which he laboured for ends of the most ordinary kind, which made it clear how much greater the man was than his ends, how great was the mind and character which prosperity failed to display, but which became visible at once so soon as the storm came down and the night fell. Few men who battle avowedly for the right, battle for it with the calm fortitude, the cheerful equanimity, with which Scott battled to fulfil his engagements and to save his family from ruin. He stood high amongst those —

"Who ever with a frolic welcome took The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed Free hearts, free foreheads,"

among those who have been able to display —

"One equal temper of heroic hearts Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will, To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

And it was because the man was so much greater than the ends for which he strove, that there is a sort of grandeur in the tragic fate which denied them to him, and yet exhibited to all the world the infinite superiority of the striver himself to the toy he was thus passionately craving.

THE END

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT by J. G. Lockhart

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London, December 20, 1836.

In obedience to the instructions of Sir Walter Scott's last will, I had made some progress in a narrative of his personal history, before there was discovered, in an old cabinet at Abbotsford, an autobiographical fragment, composed by him in 1808—shortly after the publication of his Marmion.

This fortunate accident rendered it necessary that I should altogether remodel the work which I had commenced. The first chapter of the following Memoirs consists of the Ashestiel fragment; which gives a clear outline of his early life down to the period of his call to the Bar—July, 1792. All the notes appended to this chapter are also by himself. They are in a handwriting very different from the text, and seem, from various circumstances, to have been added in 1826.

It appeared to me, however, that the author's modesty had prevented him from telling the story of his youth with that fulness of detail which would now satisfy the public. I have therefore recast my own collections as to the period in question, and presented the substance of them, in five succeeding chapters, as *illustrations* of his too brief autobiography. This procedure has been attended with many obvious disadvantages; but I greatly preferred it to printing the precious fragment in an Appendix.

I foresee that some readers may be apt to accuse me of trenching upon delicacy in certain details of the sixth and seventh chapters in this volume. Though the circumstances there treated of had no trivial influence on Sir Walter Scott's history and character, I should have been inclined, for many reasons, to omit them; but the choice was, in fact, not left to me,—for they had been mentioned, and misrepresented, in various preceding sketches of the Life which I had undertaken to illustrate. Such being the case, I considered it as my duty to tell the story truly and intelligibly; but I trust I have avoided unnecessary disclosures; and, after all, there was nothing to disclose that could have attached blame to any of the parties concerned.

For the copious materials which the friends of Sir Walter have placed at my disposal I feel just gratitude. Several of them are named in the course of the present volume; but I must take this opportunity of expressing my sense

of the deep obligations under which I have been laid by the frank communications, in particular, of William Clerk, Esq., of Eldin,—John Irving, Esq., W. S.,—Sir Adam Ferguson,—James Skene, Esq., of Rubislaw, —Patrick Murray, Esq., of Simprim,—J. B. S. Morritt, Esq., of Rokeby,— William Wordsworth, Esq.,—Robert Southey, Esq., Poet Laureate,— Samuel Rogers, Esq.,—William Stewart Rose, Esq.,—Sir Alexander Wood, —the Right Hon. the Lord Chief Commissioner Adam,—the Right Hon. Sir William Rae, Bart.,—the late Right Hon. Sir William Knighton, Bart.,—the Right Hon. J. W. Croker,—Lord Jeffrey,—Sir Henry Halford, Bart., G. C. H.,—the late Major-General Sir John Malcolm, G. C. B.,—Sir Francis Chantrey, R. A.,—Sir David Wilkie, R. A.,—Thomas Thomson, Esq., P. C. S.,—Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq.,—William Scott, of Raeburn, Esq.,— John Scott, of Gala, Esq.,—Alexander Pringle, of Whytbank, Esq., M. P.,— John Swinton, of Inverleith-Place, Esq.,—John Richardson, Esq., of Fludyer Street,—John Murray, Esq., of Albemarle Street,—Robert Bruce, Esq., Sheriff of Argyle,—Robert Fergusson, Esq., M. D.,—G. P. R. James, Esq.,—William Laidlaw, Esq.,—Robert Cadell, Esq.,—John Elliot Shortreed, Esq.,—Allan Cunningham, Esq.,—Claud Russell, Esq.,—James Clarkson, Esq., of Melrose,—the late James Ballantyne, Esq.,—Joseph Train, Esq.,—Adolphus Ross, Esq., M. D.,—William Allan, Esq., R. A.,— Charles Dumergue, Esq.,—Stephen Nicholson Barber, Esq.,—James Slade, Esq.,—Mrs. Joanna Baillie,—Mrs. George Ellis,—Mrs. Thomas Scott,— Mrs. Charles Carpenter,—Miss Russell of Ashestiel,—Mrs. Sarah Nicholson,—Mrs. Duncan, Mertoun-Manse,—the Right Hon. the Lady Polwarth, and her sons, Henry, Master of Polwarth, the Hon. and Rev. William, and the Hon. Francis Scott.

I beg leave to acknowledge with equal thankfulness the courtesy of the Rev. Dr. Harwood, Thomas White, Esq., Mrs. Thomson, and the Rev. Richard Garnett, all of Lichfield, and the Rev. Thomas Henry White, of Glasgow, in forwarding to me Sir Walter Scott's early letters to Miss Seward: that of the Lord Seaford, in entrusting me with those addressed to his late cousin, George Ellis, Esq.: and the kind readiness with which whatever papers in their possession could be serviceable to my undertaking were supplied by the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch, and the Lord Montagu;—the Duchess-Countess of Sutherland, and the Lord Francis Egerton;—the Lord Viscount Sidmouth,—the Lord Bishop of Llandaff,— the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart.,—the Lady Louisa Stuart,—the Hon.

Mrs. Warrender, and the Hon. Catharine Arden,—Lady Davy,—Miss Edgeworth,—Mrs. Maclean Clephane, of Torloisk,—Mrs. Hughes, of Uffington,—Mrs. Terry now (Richardson),—Mrs. Bartley,—Sir George Mackenzie of Coul, Bart.,—the late Sir Francis Freeling, Bart.,—Captain Sir Hugh Pigott, R. N.,—the late Sir William Gell,—Sir Cuthbert Sharp,—the Very Rev. Principal Baird,—the Rev. William Steven of Rotterdam,—the late Rev. James Mitchell, of Wooler—Robert William Hay, Esq., lately Under Secretary of State for the Colonial Department,—John Borthwick, of Crookstone, Esq.,—John Cay, Esq., Sheriff of Linlithgow,—Captain Basil Hall, R. N.,—Thomas Crofton Croker, Esq.,—Edward Cheney, Esq.,—Alexander Young, Esq., of Harburn,—A. J. Valpy, Esq.,—James Maidment, Esq., Advocate,—the late Donald Gregory, Esq.,—Robert Johnston, Esq., of Edinburgh,—J. J. Masquerier, Esq., of Brighton,—Owen Rees, Esq., of Paternoster Row,—William Miller, Esq., formerly of Albemarle Street,—David Laing, Esq., of Edinburgh—and John Smith the Youngest, Esq., of Glasgow.

J. G. Lockhart

TO
JOHN BACON SAWREY MORRITT
OF ROKEBY PARK, Esq.
THESE MEMOIRS OF HIS FRIEND
ARE RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY
INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR

Chapter I

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memoir of the early life of sir walter scott,
written by himself

Ashestiel, April 26,
1808.

The present age has discovered a desire, or rather a rage, for literary anecdote and private history, that may be well permitted to alarm one who has engaged in a certain degree the attention of the public. That I have had more than my own share of popularity, my contemporaries will be as ready to admit as I am to confess that its measure has exceeded not only my hopes, but my merits, and even wishes. I may be therefore permitted, without an extraordinary degree of vanity, to take the precaution of recording a few leading circumstances (they do not merit the name of events) of a very quiet and uniform life—that, should my literary reputation survive my temporal existence, the public may know from good authority all that they are entitled to know of an individual who has contributed to their amusement.

From the lives of some poets a most important moral lesson may doubtless be derived, and few sermons can be read with so much profit as the Memoirs of Burns, of Chatterton, or of Savage. Were I conscious of anything peculiar in my own moral character which could render such development necessary or useful, I would as readily consent to it as I would bequeath my body to dissection, if the operation could tend to point out the nature and the means of curing any peculiar malady. But as my habits of thinking and acting, as well as my rank in society, were fixed long before I had attained, or even pretended to, any poetical reputation, and as it produced, when acquired, no remarkable change upon either, it is hardly to be expected that much information can be derived from minutely investigating frailties, follies, or vices, not very different in number or degree from those of other men in my situation. As I have not been blessed with the talents of Burns or Chatterton, I have been happily exempted from

the influence of their violent passions, exasperated by the struggle of feelings which rose up against the unjust decrees of fortune. Yet, although I cannot tell of difficulties vanquished, and distance of rank annihilated by the strength of genius, those who shall hereafter read this little Memoir may find in it some hints to be improved, for the regulation of their own minds, or the training those of others.

Every Scottishman has a pedigree. It is a national prerogative as unalienable as his pride and his poverty. My birth was neither distinguished nor sordid. According to the prejudices of my country, it was esteemed *gentle*, as I was connected, though remotely, with ancient families both by my father's and mother's side. My father's grandfather was Walter Scott, well known in Teviotdale by the surname of *Beardie*. He was the second son of Walter Scott, first Laird of Raeburn, who was third son of Sir William Scott, and the grandson of Walter Scott, commonly called in tradition *Auld Watt*, of Harden. I am therefore lineally descended from that ancient chieftain, whose name I have made to ring in many a ditty, and from his fair dame, the Flower of Yarrow—no bad genealogy for a Border minstrel. *Beardie*, my great-grandfather aforesaid, derived his cognomen from a venerable beard, which he wore unblemished by razor or scissors, in token of his regret for the banished dynasty of Stuart. It would have been well that his zeal had stopped there. But he took arms, and intrigued in their cause, until he lost all he had in the world, and, as I have heard, run a narrow risk of being hanged, had it not been for the interference of Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth. Beardie's elder brother, William Scott of Raeburn, my great-grand-uncle, was killed about the age of twenty-one, in a duel with Pringle of Crichton, grandfather of the present Mark Pringle of Clifton. They fought with swords, as was the fashion of the time, in a field near Selkirk, called from the catastrophe the *Raeburn Meadow-spot*. Pringle fled from Scotland to Spain, and was long a captive and slave in Barbary. *Beardie* became, of course, *Tutor of Raeburn*, as the old Scottish phrase called him—that is, guardian to his infant nephew, father of the present Walter Scott of Raeburn. He also managed the estates of Makerstoun, being nearly related to that family by his mother, Isobel MacDougal. I suppose he had some allowance for his care in either case, and subsisted upon that and the fortune which he had by his wife, a Miss Campbell of Silvercraigs, in the west, through which connection my father used to *call cousin*, as they say, with the Campbells of Blythswood. Beardie

was a man of some learning, and a friend of Dr. Pitcairn, to whom his politics probably made him acceptable. They had a Tory or Jacobite club in Edinburgh, in which the conversation is said to have been maintained in Latin. Old Beardie died in a house, still standing, at the northeast entrance to the Churchyard of Kelso, about ... [November 3, 1729.]

He left three sons. The eldest, Walter, had a family, of which any that now remain have been long settled in America:—the male heirs are long since extinct. The third was William, father of James Scott, well known in India as one of the original settlers of Prince of Wales Island:—he had, besides, a numerous family both of sons and daughters, and died at Lasswade, in Mid-Lothian, about....

The second, Robert Scott, was my grandfather. He was originally bred to the sea; but, being shipwrecked near Dundee in his trial voyage, he took such a sincere dislike to that element, that he could not be persuaded to a second attempt. This occasioned a quarrel between him and his father, who left him to shift for himself. Robert was one of those active spirits to whom this was no misfortune. He turned Whig upon the spot, and fairly abjured his father's politics and his learned poverty. His chief and relative, Mr. Scott of Harden, gave him a lease of the farm of Sandy-Knowe, comprehending the rocks in the centre of which Smailholm or Sandy-Knowe Tower is situated. He took for his shepherd an old man called Hogg, who willingly lent him, out of respect to his family, his whole savings, about £30, to stock the new farm. With this sum, which it seems was at the time sufficient for the purpose, the master and servant set off to purchase a stock of sheep at Whitsun-Tryste, a fair held on a hill near Wooler in Northumberland. The old shepherd went carefully from drove to drove, till he found a *hirsel* likely to answer their purpose, and then returned to tell his master to come up and conclude the bargain. But what was his surprise to see him galloping a mettled hunter about the racecourse, and to find he had expended the whole stock in this extraordinary purchase!—Moses's bargain of green spectacles did not strike more dismay into the Vicar of Wakefield's family than my grandfather's rashness into the poor old shepherd. The thing, however, was irretrievable, and they returned without the sheep. In the course of a few days, however, my grandfather, who was one of the best horsemen of his time, attended John Scott of Harden's hounds on this same horse, and displayed him to such advantage that he sold him for double the original price. The farm was now stocked in earnest; and the rest of my

grandfather's career was that of successful industry. He was one of the first who were active in the cattle trade, afterwards carried to such extent between the Highlands of Scotland and the leading counties in England, and by his droving transactions acquired a considerable sum of money. He was a man of middle stature, extremely active, quick, keen, and fiery in his temper, stubbornly honest, and so distinguished for his skill in country matters that he was the general referee in all points of dispute which occurred in the neighborhood. His birth being admitted as *gentle* gave him access to the best society in the county, and his dexterity in country sports, particularly hunting, made him an acceptable companion in the field as well as at the table.

Robert Scott of Sandy-Knowe married, in 1728, Barbara Haliburton, daughter of Thomas Haliburton of Newmains, an ancient and respectable family in Berwickshire. Among other patrimonial possessions, they enjoyed the part of Dryburgh, now the property of the Earl of Buchan, comprehending the ruins of the Abbey. My grand-uncle, Robert Haliburton, having no male heirs, this estate, as well as the representation of the family, would have devolved upon my father, and indeed old Newmains had settled it upon him; but this was prevented by the misfortunes of my grand-uncle, a weak, silly man, who engaged in trade, for which he had neither stock nor talents, and became bankrupt. The ancient patrimony was sold for a trifle (about £3000), and my father, who might have purchased it with ease, was dissuaded by my grandfather, who at that time believed a more advantageous purchase might have been made of some lands which Raeburn thought of selling. And thus we have nothing left of Dryburgh, although my father's maternal inheritance, but the right of stretching our bones where mine may perhaps be laid ere any eye but my own glances over these pages.

Walter Scott, my father, was born in 1729, and educated to the profession of a Writer to the Signet. He was the eldest of a large family, several of whom I shall have occasion to mention with a tribute of sincere gratitude. My father was a singular instance of a man rising to eminence in a profession for which nature had in some degree unfitted him. He had indeed a turn for labor, and a pleasure in analyzing the abstruse feudal doctrines connected with conveyancing, which would probably have rendered him unrivalled in the line of a special pleader, had there been such a profession in Scotland; but in the actual business of the profession which

he embraced, in that sharp and intuitive perception which is necessary in driving bargains for himself and others, in availing himself of the wants, necessities, caprices, and follies of some, and guarding against the knavery and malice of others, Uncle Toby himself could not have conducted himself with more simplicity than my father. Most attorneys have been suspected, more or less justly, of making their own fortune at the expense of their clients—my father's fate was to vindicate his calling from the stain in one instance, for in many cases his clients contrived to ease him of considerable sums. Many worshipful and be-knighted names occur to my memory, who did him the honor to run in his debt to the amount of thousands, and to pay him with a lawsuit, or a commission of bankruptcy, as the case happened. But they are gone to a different accounting, and it would be ungenerous to visit their disgrace upon their descendants. My father was wont also to give openings, to those who were pleased to take them, to pick a quarrel with him. He had a zeal for his clients which was almost ludicrous: far from coldly discharging the duties of his employment towards them, he thought for them, felt for their honor as for his own, and rather risked disobliging them than neglecting anything to which he conceived their duty bound them. If there was an old mother or aunt to be maintained, he was, I am afraid, too apt to administer to their necessities from what the young heir had destined exclusively to his pleasures. This ready discharge of obligations which the Civilians tell us are only natural and not legal, did not, I fear, recommend him to his employers. Yet his practice was, at one period of his life, very extensive. He understood his business theoretically, and was early introduced to it by a partnership with George Chalmers, Writer to the Signet, under whom he had served his apprenticeship.

His person and face were uncommonly handsome, with an expression of sweetness of temper, which was not fallacious; his manners were rather formal, but full of genuine kindness, especially when exercising the duties of hospitality. His general habits were not only temperate, but severely abstemious; but upon a festival occasion, there were few whom a moderate glass of wine exhilarated to such a lively degree. His religion, in which he was devoutly sincere, was Calvinism of the strictest kind, and his favorite study related to church history. I suspect the good old man was often engaged with Knox and Spottiswoode's folios, when, immured in his solitary room, he was supposed to be immersed in professional researches. In his political principles he was a steady friend to freedom, with a bias,

however, to the monarchical part of our constitution, which he considered as peculiarly exposed to danger during the later years of his life. He had much of ancient Scottish prejudice respecting the forms of marriages, funerals, christenings, and so forth, and was always vexed at any neglect of etiquette upon such occasions. As his education had not been upon an enlarged plan, it could not be expected that he should be an enlightened scholar, but he had not passed through a busy life without observation; and his remarks upon times and manners often exhibited strong traits of practical though untaught philosophy. Let me conclude this sketch, which I am unconscious of having overcharged, with a few lines written by the late Mrs. Cockburn upon the subject. They made one among a set of poetical characters which were given as toasts among a few friends; and we must hold them to contain a striking likeness, since the original was recognized so soon as they were read aloud:—

> "To a thing that's uncommon—
> A youth of discretion,
> Who, though vastly handsome,
> Despises flirtation:
> To the friend in affliction,
> The heart of affection,
> Who may hear the last trump
> Without dread of detection."

In [April, 1758] my father married Anne Rutherford, eldest daughter of Dr. John Rutherford, professor of medicine in the University of Edinburgh. He was one of those pupils of Boerhaave, to whom the school of medicine in our northern metropolis owes its rise, and a man distinguished for professional talent, for lively wit, and for literary acquirements. Dr. Rutherford was twice married. His first wife, of whom my mother is the sole surviving child, was a daughter of Sir John Swinton of Swinton, a family which produced many distinguished warriors during the Middle Ages, and which, for antiquity and honorable alliances, may rank with any in Britain. My grandfather's second wife was Miss Mackay, by whom he had a second family, of whom are now (1808) alive, Dr. Daniel Rutherford, professor of botany in the University of Edinburgh, and Misses Janet and Christian Rutherford, amiable and accomplished women.

My father and mother had a very numerous family, no fewer, I believe, than twelve children, of whom many were highly promising, though only five survived very early youth. My eldest brother (that is, the eldest whom I remember to have seen) was Robert Scott, so called after my uncle, of whom I shall have much to say hereafter. He was bred in the King's service, under Admiral, then Captain William Dickson, and was in most of Rodney's battles. His temper was bold and haughty, and to me was often checkered with what I felt to be capricious tyranny. In other respects I loved him much, for he had a strong turn for literature, read poetry with taste and judgment, and composed verses himself, which had gained him great applause among his messmates. Witness the following elegy upon the supposed loss of the vessel, composed the night before Rodney's celebrated battle of April the 12th, 1782. It alludes to the various amusements of his mess:—

> "No more the geese shall cackle on the poop,
> No more the bagpipe through the orlop sound,
> No more the midshipmen, a jovial group,
> Shall toast the girls, and push the bottle round.
> In death's dark road at anchor fast they stay,
> Till Heaven's loud signal shall in thunder roar;
> Then starting up, all hands shall quick obey,
> Sheet home the topsail, and with speed unmoor."

Robert sung agreeably—(a virtue which was never seen in me)—understood the mechanical arts, and when in good humor, could regale us with many a tale of bold adventure and narrow escapes. When in bad humor, however, he gave us a practical taste of what was then man-of-war's discipline, and kicked and cuffed without mercy. I have often thought how he might have distinguished himself, had he continued in the navy until the present times, so glorious for nautical exploit. But the Peace of Paris [Versailles, 1783] cut off all hopes of promotion for those who had not great interest; and some disgust which his proud spirit had taken at harsh usage from a superior officer, combined to throw poor Robert into the East India Company's service, for which his habits were ill adapted. He made two voyages to the East, and died a victim to the climate in....

John Scott, my second brother, is about three years older than me. He addicted himself to the military service, and is now brevet-major in the 73rd

regiment.

I had an only sister, Anne Scott, who seemed to be from her cradle the butt for mischance to shoot arrows at. Her childhood was marked by perilous escapes from the most extraordinary accidents. Among others, I remember an iron-railed door leading into the area in the centre of George's Square being closed by the wind, while her fingers were betwixt the hasp and staple. Her hand was thus locked in, and must have been smashed to pieces, had not the bones of her fingers been remarkably slight and thin. As it was, the hand was cruelly mangled. On another occasion she was nearly drowned in a pond, or old quarry hole, in what was then called Brown's Park, on the south side of the square. But the most unfortunate accident, and which, though it happened while she was only six years old, proved the remote cause of her death, was her cap accidentally taking fire. The child was alone in the room, and before assistance could be obtained, her head was dreadfully scorched. After a lingering and dangerous illness, she recovered—but never to enjoy perfect health. The slightest cold occasioned swellings in her face, and other indications of a delicate constitution. At length, in [1801], poor Anne was taken ill, and died after a very short interval. Her temper, like that of her brothers, was peculiar, and in her, perhaps, it showed more odd, from the habits of indulgence which her nervous illnesses had formed. But she was at heart an affectionate and kind girl, neither void of talent nor of feeling, though living in an ideal world which she had framed to herself by the force of imagination. Anne was my junior by about a year.

A year lower in the list was my brother Thomas Scott, who is still alive.

Last, and most unfortunate of our family, was my youngest brother, Daniel. With the same aversion to labor, or rather, I should say, the same determined indolence that marked us all, he had neither the vivacity of intellect which supplies the want of diligence, nor the pride which renders the most detested labor better than dependence or contempt. His career was as unfortunate as might be augured from such an unhappy combination; and after various unsuccessful attempts to establish himself in life, he died on his return from the West Indies, in [July, 1806].

Having premised so much of my family, I return to my own story. I was born, as I believe, on the 15th August, 1771, in a house belonging to my father, at the head of the College Wynd. It was pulled down, with others, to make room for the northern front of the new College. I was an uncommonly

healthy child, but had nearly died in consequence of my first nurse being ill of a consumption, a circumstance which she chose to conceal, though to do so was murder to both herself and me. She went privately to consult Dr. Black, the celebrated professor of chemistry, who put my father on his guard. The woman was dismissed, and I was consigned to a healthy peasant, who is still alive to boast of her *laddie* being what she calls *a grand gentleman*. I showed every sign of health and strength until I was about eighteen months old. One night, I have been often told, I showed great reluctance to be caught and put to bed; and, after being chased about the room, was apprehended, and consigned to my dormitory with some difficulty. It was the last time I was to show such personal agility. In the morning I was discovered to be affected with the fever which often accompanies the cutting of large teeth. It held me three days. On the fourth, when they went to bathe me as usual, they discovered that I had lost the power of my right leg. My grandfather, an excellent anatomist as well as physician, the late worthy Alexander Wood, and many others of the most respectable of the faculty, were consulted. There appeared to be no dislocation or sprain; blisters and other topical remedies were applied in vain. When the efforts of regular physicians had been exhausted without the slightest success, my anxious parents, during the course of many years, eagerly grasped at every prospect of cure which was held out by the promise of empirics, or of ancient ladies or gentlemen who conceived themselves entitled to recommend various remedies, some of which were of a nature sufficiently singular. But the advice of my grandfather, Dr. Rutherford, that I should be sent to reside in the country, to give the chance of natural exertion, excited by free air and liberty, was first resorted to; and before I have the recollection of the slightest event, I was, agreeably to this friendly counsel, an inmate in the farmhouse of Sandy-Knowe.

An odd incident is worth recording. It seems my mother had sent a maid to take charge of me, that I might be no inconvenience in the family. But the damsel sent on that important mission had left her heart behind her, in the keeping of some wild fellow, it is likely, who had done and said more to her than he was like to make good. She became extremely desirous to return to Edinburgh, and as my mother made a point of her remaining where she was, she contracted a sort of hatred at poor me, as the cause of her being detained at Sandy-Knowe. This rose, I suppose, to a sort of delirious affection, for she confessed to old Alison Wilson, the housekeeper, that she

had carried me up to the Craigs, meaning, under a strong temptation of the Devil, to cut my throat with her scissors, and bury me in the moss. Alison instantly took possession of my person, and took care that her confidant should not be subject to any farther temptation so far as I was concerned. She was dismissed, of course, and I have heard became afterwards a lunatic.

It is here at Sandy-Knowe, in the residence of my paternal grandfather, already mentioned, that I have the first consciousness of existence; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. Among the odd remedies recurred to to aid my lameness, some one had recommended that so often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family, I should be stripped, and swathed up in the skin, warm as it was flayed from the carcase of the animal. In this Tartar-like habiliment I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlor in the farmhouse, while my grandfather, a venerable old man with white hair, used every excitement to make me try to crawl. I also distinctly remember the late Sir George MacDougal of Makerstoun, father of the present Sir Henry Hay MacDougal, joining in this kindly attempt. He was, God knows how, a relation of ours, and I still recollect him in his old-fashioned military habit (he had been colonel of the Greys), with a small cocked hat, deeply laced, an embroidered scarlet waistcoat, and a light-colored coat, with milk-white locks tied in a military fashion, kneeling on the ground before me, and dragging his watch along the carpet to induce me to follow it. The benevolent old soldier and the infant wrapped in his sheepskin would have afforded an odd group to uninterested spectators. This must have happened about my third year, for Sir George MacDougal and my grandfather both died shortly after that period.

My grandmother continued for some years to take charge of the farm, assisted by my father's second brother, Mr. Thomas Scott, who resided at Crailing, as factor or land steward for Mr. Scott of Danesfield, then proprietor of that estate. This was during the heat of the American war, and I remember being as anxious on my uncle's weekly visits (for we heard news at no other time) to hear of the defeat of Washington, as if I had had some deep and personal cause of antipathy to him. I know not how this was combined with a very strong prejudice in favor of the Stuart family, which I had originally imbibed from the songs and tales of the Jacobites. This latter political propensity was deeply confirmed by the stories told in my hearing of the cruelties exercised in the executions at Carlisle, and in the Highlands,

after the battle of Culloden. One or two of our own distant relations had fallen on that occasion, and I remember of detesting the name of Cumberland with more than infant hatred. Mr. Curle, farmer at Yetbyre, husband of one of my aunts, had been present at their execution; and it was probably from him that I first heard these tragic tales which made so great an impression on me. The local information, which I conceive had some share in forming my future taste and pursuits, I derived from the old songs and tales which then formed the amusement of a retired country family. My grandmother, in whose youth the old Border depredations were matter of recent tradition, used to tell me many a tale of Watt of Harden, Wight Willie of Aikwood, Jamie Telfer of the fair Dodhead, and other heroes—merry men all, of the persuasion and calling of Robin Hood and Little John. A more recent hero, but not of less note, was the celebrated *Diel of Littledean*, whom she well remembered, as he had married her mother's sister. Of this extraordinary person I learned many a story, grave and gay, comic and warlike. Two or three old books which lay in the window seat were explored for my amusement in the tedious winter days. Automathes and Ramsay's Tea-Table Miscellany were my favorites, although at a later period an odd volume of Josephus's Wars of the Jews divided my partiality.

My kind and affectionate aunt, Miss Janet Scott, whose memory will ever be dear to me, used to read these works to me with admirable patience, until I could repeat long passages by heart. The ballad of Hardyknute I was early master of, to the great annoyance of almost our only visitor, the worthy clergyman of the parish, Dr. Duncan, who had not patience to have a sober chat interrupted by my shouting forth this ditty. Methinks I now see his tall, thin, emaciated figure, his legs cased in clasped gambadoes, and his face of a length that would have rivalled the Knight of La Mancha's, and hear him exclaiming, "One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as where that child is." With this little acidity, which was natural to him, he was a most excellent and benevolent man, a gentleman in every feeling, and altogether different from those of his order who cringe at the tables of the gentry, or domineer and riot at those of the yeomanry. In his youth he had been chaplain in the family of Lord Marchmont—had seen Pope—and could talk familiarly of many characters who had survived the Augustan age of Queen Anne. Though valetudinary, he lived to be nearly ninety, and to welcome to Scotland his son, Colonel William Duncan, who, with the highest character for military and civil merit, had made a considerable

fortune in India. In [1795], a few days before his death, I paid him a visit, to inquire after his health. I found him emaciated to the last degree, wrapped in a tartan night-gown, and employed with all the activity of health and youth in correcting a history of the Revolution, which he intended should be given to the public when he was no more. He read me several passages with a voice naturally strong, and which the feelings of an author then raised above the depression of age and declining health. I begged him to spare this fatigue, which could not but injure his health. His answer was remarkable. "I know," he said, "that I cannot survive a fortnight—and what signifies an exertion that can at worst only accelerate my death a few days?" I marvelled at the composure of this reply, for his appearance sufficiently vouched the truth of his prophecy, and rode home to my uncle's (then my abode), musing what there could be in the spirit of authorship that could inspire its votaries with the courage of martyrs. He died within less than the period he assigned —with which event I close my digression.

I was in my fourth year when my father was advised that the Bath waters might be of some advantage to my lameness. My affectionate aunt, although such a journey promised to a person of her retired habits anything but pleasure or amusement, undertook as readily to accompany me to the wells of Bladud as if she had expected all the delight that ever the prospect of a watering-place held out to its most impatient visitants. My health was by this time a good deal confirmed by the country air, and the influence of that imperceptible and unfatiguing exercise to which the good sense of my grandfather had subjected me; for when the day was fine, I was usually carried out and laid down beside the old shepherd, among the crags or rocks round which he fed his sheep. The impatience of a child soon inclined me to struggle with my infirmity, and I began by degrees to stand, to walk, and to run. Although the limb affected was much shrunk and contracted, my general health, which was of more importance, was much strengthened by being frequently in the open air, and, in a word, I, who in a city had probably been condemned to hopeless and helpless decrepitude, was now a healthy, high-spirited, and, my lameness apart, a sturdy child—*non sine diis animosus infans*.

We went to London by sea, and it may gratify the curiosity of minute biographers to learn that our voyage was performed in the Duchess of Buccleuch, Captain Beatson, master. At London we made a short stay, and saw some of the common shows exhibited to strangers. When, twenty-five

years afterwards, I visited the Tower of London and Westminster Abbey, I was astonished to find how accurate my recollections of these celebrated places of visitation proved to be, and I have ever since trusted more implicitly to my juvenile reminiscences. At Bath, where I lived about a year, I went through all the usual discipline of the pump-room and baths, but I believe without the least advantage to my lameness. During my residence at Bath, I acquired the rudiments of reading at a day-school, kept by an old dame near our lodgings, and I had never a more regular teacher, although I think I did not attend her a quarter of a year. An occasional lesson from my aunt supplied the rest. Afterwards, when grown a big boy, I had a few lessons from Mr. Stalker of Edinburgh, and finally from the Rev. Mr. Cleeve. But I never acquired a just pronunciation, nor could I read with much propriety.

In other respects my residence at Bath is marked by very pleasing recollections. The venerable John Home, author of Douglas, was then at the watering-place, and paid much attention to my aunt and to me. His wife, who has survived him, was then an invalid, and used to take the air in her carriage on the Downs, when I was often invited to accompany her. But the most delightful recollections of Bath are dated after the arrival of my uncle, Captain Robert Scott, who introduced me to all the little amusements which suited my age, and above all, to the theatre. The play was As You Like It; and the witchery of the whole scene is alive in my mind at this moment. I made, I believe, noise more than enough, and remember being so much scandalized at the quarrel between Orlando and his brother in the first scene, that I screamed out, "A'n't they brothers?" A few weeks' residence at home convinced me, who had till then been an only child in the house of my grandfather, that a quarrel between brothers was a very natural event.

The other circumstances I recollect of my residence in Bath are but trifling, yet I never recall them without a feeling of pleasure. The beauties of the parade (which of them I know not), with the river Avon winding around it, and the lowing of the cattle from the opposite hills, are warm in my recollection, and are only rivalled by the splendors of a toy-shop somewhere near the Orange Grove. I had acquired, I know not by what means, a kind of superstitious terror for statuary of all kinds. No ancient Iconoclast or modern Calvinist could have looked on the outside of the Abbey church (if I mistake not, the principal church at Bath is so called) with more horror than the image of Jacob's Ladder, with all its angels,

presented to my infant eye. My uncle effectually combated my terrors, and formally introduced me to a statue of Neptune, which perhaps still keeps guard at the side of the Avon, where a pleasure boat crosses to Spring Gardens.

After being a year at Bath, I returned first to Edinburgh, and afterwards for a season to Sandy-Knowe;—and thus the time whiled away till about my eighth year, when it was thought sea bathing might be of service to my lameness.

For this purpose, still under my aunt's protection, I remained some weeks at Prestonpans, a circumstance not worth mentioning, excepting to record my juvenile intimacy with an old military veteran, Dalgetty by name, who had pitched his tent in that little village, after all his campaigns, subsisting upon an ensign's half-pay, though called by courtesy a Captain. As this old gentleman, who had been in all the German wars, found very few to listen to his tales of military feats, he formed a sort of alliance with me, and I used invariably to attend him for the pleasure of hearing those communications. Sometimes our conversation turned on the American war, which was then raging. It was about the time of Burgoyne's unfortunate expedition, to which my Captain and I augured different conclusions. Somebody had showed me a map of North America, and, struck with the rugged appearance of the country, and the quantity of lakes, I expressed some doubts on the subject of the General's arriving safely at the end of his journey, which, were very indignantly refuted by the Captain. The news of the Saratoga disaster, while it gave me a little triumph, rather shook my intimacy with the veteran.

From Prestonpans I was transported back to my father's house in George's Square, which continued to be my most established place of residence, until my marriage in 1797. I felt the change from being a single indulged brat, to becoming a member of a large family, very severely; for under the gentle government of my kind grandmother, who was meekness itself, and of my aunt, who, though of an higher temper, was exceedingly attached to me, I had acquired a degree of license which could not be permitted in a large family. I had sense enough, however, to bend my temper to my new circumstances; but such was the agony which I internally experienced, that I have guarded against nothing more in the education of my own family, than against their acquiring habits of self-willed caprice and domination. I found much consolation during this period of

mortification in the partiality of my mother. She joined to a light and happy temper of mind a strong turn to study poetry and works of imagination. She was sincerely devout, but her religion was, as became her sex, of a cast less austere than my father's. Still, the discipline of the Presbyterian Sabbath was severely strict, and I think injudiciously so. Although Bunyan's Pilgrim, Gessner's Death of Abel, Rowe's Letters, and one or two other books, which, for that reason, I still have a favor for, were admitted to relieve the gloom of one dull sermon succeeding to another—there was far too much tedium annexed to the duties of the day; and in the end it did none of us any good.

My week-day tasks were more agreeable. My lameness and my solitary habits had made me a tolerable reader, and my hours of leisure were usually spent in reading aloud to my mother Pope's translation of Homer, which, excepting a few traditionary ballads, and the songs in Allan Ramsay's Evergreen, was the first poetry which I perused. My mother had good natural taste and great feeling: she used to make me pause upon those passages which expressed generous and worthy sentiments, and if she could not divert me from those which were descriptive of battle and tumult, she contrived at least to divide my attention between them. My own enthusiasm, however, was chiefly awakened by the wonderful and the terrible—the common taste of children, but in which I have remained a child even unto this day. I got by heart, not as a task, but almost without intending it, the passages with which I was most pleased, and used to recite them aloud, both when alone and to others—more willingly, however, in my hours of solitude, for I had observed some auditors smile, and I dreaded ridicule at that time of life more than I have ever done since.

In [1778] I was sent to the second class of the Grammar School, or High School of Edinburgh, then taught by Mr. Luke Fraser, a good Latin scholar and a very worthy man. Though I had received, with my brothers, in private, lessons of Latin from Mr. James French, now a minister of the Kirk of Scotland, I was nevertheless rather behind the class in which I was placed both in years and in progress. This was a real disadvantage, and one to which a boy of lively temper and talents ought to be as little exposed as one who might be less expected to make up his leeway, as it is called. The situation has the unfortunate effect of reconciling a boy of the former character (which in a posthumous work I may claim for my own) to holding a subordinate station among his class-fellows—to which he would

otherwise affix disgrace. There is, also, from the constitution of the High School, a certain danger not sufficiently attended to. The boys take precedence in their *places*, as they are called, according to their merit, and it requires a long while, in general, before even a clever boy, if he falls behind the class, or is put into one for which he is not quite ready, can force his way to the situation which his abilities really entitle him to hold. But, in the mean while, he is necessarily led to be the associate and companion of those inferior spirits with whom he is placed; for the system of precedence, though it does not limit the general intercourse among the boys, has nevertheless the effect of throwing them into clubs and coteries, according to the vicinity of the seats they hold. A boy of good talents, therefore, placed even for a time among his inferiors, especially if they be also his elders, learns to participate in their pursuits and objects of ambition, which are usually very distinct from the acquisition of learning; and it will be well if he does not also imitate them in that indifference which is contented with bustling over a lesson so as to avoid punishment, without affecting superiority or aiming at reward. It was probably owing to this circumstance that, although at a more advanced period of life I have enjoyed considerable facility in acquiring languages, I did not make any great figure at the High School—or, at least, any exertions which I made were desultory and little to be depended on.

Our class contained some very excellent scholars. The first *Dux* was James Buchan, who retained his honored place, almost without a day's interval, all the while we were at the High School. He was afterwards at the head of the medical staff in Egypt, and in exposing himself to the plague infection, by attending the hospitals there, displayed the same well-regulated and gentle, yet determined, perseverance which placed him most worthily at the head of his schoolfellows, while many lads of livelier parts and dispositions held an inferior station. The next best scholars (*sed longo intervallo*) were my friend David Douglas, the heir and *élève* of the celebrated Adam Smith, and James Hope, now a Writer to the Signet, both since well known and distinguished in their departments of the law. As for myself, I glanced like a meteor from one end of the class to the other, and commonly disgusted my kind master as much by negligence and frivolity, as I occasionally pleased him by flashes of intellect and talent. Among my companions my good-nature and a flow of ready imagination rendered me very popular. Boys are uncommonly just in their feelings, and at least

equally generous. My lameness, and the efforts which I made to supply that disadvantage, by making up in address what I wanted in activity, engaged the latter principle in my favor; and in the winter play hours, when hard exercise was impossible, my tales used to assemble an admiring audience round Lucky Brown's fireside, and happy was he that could sit next to the inexhaustible narrator. I was also, though often negligent of my own task, always ready to assist my friends, and hence I had a little party of stanch partisans and adherents, stout of hand and heart, though somewhat dull of head—the very tools for raising a hero to eminence. So, on the whole, I made a brighter figure in the *yards* than in the *class*

My father did not trust our education solely to our High School lessons. We had a tutor at home, a young man of an excellent disposition, and a laborious student. He was bred to the Kirk, but unfortunately took such a very strong turn to fanaticism, that he afterwards resigned an excellent living in a seaport town, merely because he could not persuade the mariners of the guilt of setting sail of a Sabbath,—in which, by the bye, he was less likely to be successful, as, *cæteris paribus*, sailors, from an opinion that it is a fortunate omen, always choose to weigh anchor on that day. The calibre of this young man's understanding may be judged of by this anecdote; but in other respects he was a faithful and active instructor; and from him chiefly I learned writing and arithmetic. I repeated to him my French lessons, and studied with him my themes in the classics, but not classically. I also acquired, by disputing with him (for this he readily permitted), some knowledge of school divinity and church history, and a great acquaintance in particular with the old books describing the early history of the Church of Scotland, the wars and sufferings of the Covenanters, and so forth. I, with a head on fire for chivalry, was a Cavalier; my friend was a Roundhead: I was a Tory, and he was a Whig. I hated Presbyterians, and admired Montrose with his victorious Highlanders; he liked the Presbyterian Ulysses, the dark and politic Argyle: so that we never wanted subjects of dispute; but our disputes were always amicable. In all these tenets there was no real conviction on my part, arising out of acquaintance with the views or principles of either party; nor had my antagonist address enough to turn the debate on such topics. I took up my politics at that period, as King Charles II. did his religion, from an idea that the Cavalier creed was the more gentlemanlike persuasion of the two.

After having been three years under Mr. Fraser, our class was, in the usual routine of the school, turned over to Dr. Adam, the Rector. It was from this respectable man that I first learned the value of the knowledge I had hitherto considered only as a burdensome task. It was the fashion to remain two years at his class, where we read Cæsar, and Livy, and Sallust, in prose; Virgil, Horace, and Terence, in verse. I had by this time mastered, in some degree, the difficulties of the language, and began to be sensible of its beauties. This was really gathering grapes from thistles; nor shall I soon forget the swelling of my little pride when the Rector pronounced, that though many of my schoolfellows understood the Latin better, *Gualterus Scott* was behind few in following and enjoying the author's meaning. Thus encouraged, I distinguished myself by some attempts at poetical versions from Horace and Virgil. Dr. Adam used to invite his scholars to such essays, but never made them tasks. I gained some distinction upon these occasions, and the Rector in future took much notice of me; and his judicious mixture of censure and praise went far to counterbalance my habits of indolence and inattention. I saw I was expected to do well, and I was piqued in honor to vindicate my master's favorable opinion. I climbed, therefore, to the first form; and, though I never made a first-rate Latinist, my schoolfellows, and what was of more consequence, I myself, considered that I had a character for learning to maintain. Dr. Adam, to whom I owed so much, never failed to remind me of my obligations when I had made some figure in the literary world. He was, indeed, deeply imbued with that fortunate vanity which alone could induce a man who has arms to pare and burn a muir, to submit to the yet more toilsome task of cultivating youth. As Catholics confide in the imputed righteousness of their saints, so did the good old Doctor plume himself upon the success of his scholars in life, all of which he never failed (and often justly) to claim as the creation, or at least the fruits, of his early instructions. He remembered the fate of every boy at his school during the fifty years he had superintended it, and always traced their success or misfortunes entirely to their attention or negligence when under his care. His "noisy mansion," which to others would have been a melancholy bedlam, was the pride of his heart; and the only fatigues he felt, amidst din and tumult, and the necessity of reading themes, hearing lessons, and maintaining some degree of order at the same time, were relieved by comparing himself to Cæsar, who could dictate to three secretaries at once; —so ready is vanity to lighten the labors of duty.

It is a pity that a man so learned, so admirably adapted for his station, so useful, so simple, so easily contented, should have had other subjects of mortification. But the magistrates of Edinburgh, not knowing the treasure they possessed in Dr. Adam, encouraged a savage fellow, called Nicol, one of the undermasters, in insulting his person and authority. This man was an excellent classical scholar, and an admirable convivial humorist (which latter quality recommended him to the friendship of Burns); but worthless, drunken, and inhumanly cruel to the boys under his charge. He carried his feud against the Rector within an inch of assassination, for he waylaid and knocked him down in the dark. The favor which this worthless rival obtained in the town council led to other consequences, which for some time clouded poor Adam's happiness and fair fame. When the French Revolution broke out, and parties ran high in approving or condemning it, the Doctor incautiously joined the former. This was very natural, for as all his ideas of existing governments were derived from his experience of the town council of Edinburgh, it must be admitted they scarce brooked comparison with the free states of Rome and Greece, from which he borrowed his opinions concerning republics. His want of caution in speaking on the political topics of the day lost him the respect of the boys, most of whom were accustomed to hear very different opinions on those matters in the bosom of their families. This, however (which was long after my time), passed away with other heats of the period, and the Doctor continued his labors till about a year since, when he was struck with palsy while teaching his class. He survived a few days, but becoming delirious before his dissolution, conceived he was still in school, and after some expressions of applause or censure, he said, "But it grows dark—the boys may dismiss,"—and instantly expired.

From Dr. Adam's class I should, according to the usual routine, have proceeded immediately to college. But, fortunately, I was not yet to lose, by a total dismission from constraint, the acquaintance with the Latin which I had acquired. My health had become rather delicate from rapid growth, and my father was easily persuaded to allow me to spend half a year at Kelso with my kind aunt, Miss Janet Scott, whose inmate I again became. It was hardly worth mentioning that I had frequently visited her during our short vacations.

At this time she resided in a small house, situated very pleasantly in a large garden, to the eastward of the churchyard of Kelso, which extended

down to the Tweed. It was then my father's property, from whom it was afterwards purchased by my uncle. My grandmother was now dead, and my aunt's only companion, besides an old maid-servant, was my cousin, Miss Barbara Scott, now Mrs. Meik. My time was here left entirely to my own disposal, excepting for about four hours in the day, when I was expected to attend the Grammar School of the village. The teacher at that time was Mr. Lancelot Whale, an excellent classical scholar, a humorist, and a worthy man. He had a supreme antipathy to the puns which his very uncommon name frequently gave rise to; insomuch, that he made his son spell the word *Wale*, which only occasioned the young man being nicknamed *the Prince of Wales* by the military mess to which he belonged. As for Whale, senior, the least allusion to Jonah, or the terming him an odd fish, or any similar quibble, was sure to put him beside himself. In point of knowledge and taste he was far too good for the situation he held, which only required that he should give his scholars a rough foundation in the Latin language. My time with him, though short, was spent greatly to my advantage and his gratification. He was glad to escape to Persius and Tacitus from the eternal Rudiments and Cornelius Nepos; and as perusing these authors with one who began to understand them was to him a labor of love, I made considerable progress under his instructions. I suspect, indeed, that some of the time dedicated to me was withdrawn from the instruction of his more regular scholars; but I was as grateful as I could be. I acted as usher, and heard the inferior classes, and I spouted the speech of Galgacus at the public examination, which did not make the less impression on the audience that few of them probably understood one word of it.

In the mean while my acquaintance with English literature was gradually extending itself. In the intervals of my school hours I had always perused with avidity such books of history or poetry or voyages and travels as chance presented to me—not forgetting the usual, or rather ten times the usual, quantity of fairy tales, Eastern stories, romances, etc. These studies were totally unregulated and undirected. My tutor thought it almost a sin to open a profane play or poem; and my mother, besides that she might be in some degree trammelled by the religious scruples which he suggested, had no longer the opportunity to hear me read poetry as formerly. I found, however, in her dressing-room (where I slept at one time) some odd volumes of Shakespeare, nor can I easily forget the rapture with which I sat up in my shirt reading them by the light of a fire in her apartment, until the

bustle of the family rising from supper warned me it was time to creep back to my bed, where I was supposed to have been safely deposited since nine o'clock. Chance, however, threw in my way a poetical preceptor. This was no other than the excellent and benevolent Dr. Blacklock, well known at that time as a literary character. I know not how I attracted his attention, and that of some of the young men who boarded in his family; but so it was that I became a frequent and favored guest. The kind old man opened to me the stores of his library, and through his recommendation I became intimate with Ossian and Spenser. I was delighted with both, yet I think chiefly with the latter poet. The tawdry repetitions of the Ossianic phraseology disgusted me rather sooner than might have been expected from my age. But Spenser I could have read forever. Too young to trouble myself about the allegory, I considered all the knights and ladies and dragons and giants in their outward and exoteric sense, and God only knows how delighted I was to find myself in such society. As I had always a wonderful facility in retaining in my memory whatever verses pleased me, the quantity of Spenser's stanzas which I could repeat was really marvellous. But this memory of mine was a very fickle ally, and has through my whole life acted merely upon its own capricious motion, and might have enabled me to adopt old Beattie of Meikledale's answer, when complimented by a certain reverend divine on the strength of the same faculty:—"No, sir," answered the old Borderer, "I have no command of my memory. It only retains what hits my fancy; and probably, sir, if you were to preach to me for two hours, I would not be able when you finished to remember a word you had been saying." My memory was precisely of the same kind: it seldom failed to preserve most tenaciously a favorite passage of poetry, a playhouse ditty, or, above all, a Border-raid ballad; but names, dates, and the other technicalities of history, escaped me in a most melancholy degree. The philosophy of history, a much more important subject, was also a sealed book at this period of my life; but I gradually assembled much of what was striking and picturesque in historical narrative; and when, in riper years, I attended more to the deduction of general principles, I was furnished with a powerful host of examples in illustration of them. I was, in short, like an ignorant gamester, who kept a good hand until he knew how to play it.

I left the High School, therefore, with a great quantity of general information, ill arranged, indeed, and collected without system, yet deeply impressed upon my mind; readily assorted by my power of connection and

memory, and gilded, if I may be permitted to say so, by a vivid and active imagination. If my studies were not under any direction at Edinburgh, in the country, it may be well imagined, they were less so. A respectable subscription library, a circulating library of ancient standing, and some private book-shelves, were open to my random perusal, and I waded into the stream like a blind man into a ford, without the power of searching my way, unless by groping for it. My appetite for books was as ample and indiscriminating as it was indefatigable, and I since have had too frequently reason to repent that few ever read so much, and to so little purpose.

Among the valuable acquisitions I made about this time was an acquaintance with Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered, through the flat medium of Mr. Hoole's translation. But above all, I then first became acquainted with Bishop Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry. As I had been from infancy devoted to legendary lore of this nature, and only reluctantly withdrew my attention, from the scarcity of materials and the rudeness of those which I possessed, it may be imagined, but cannot be described, with what delight I saw pieces of the same kind which had amused my childhood, and still continued in secret the Delilahs of my imagination, considered as the subject of sober research, grave commentary, and apt illustration, by an editor who showed his poetical genius was capable of emulating the best qualities of what his pious labor preserved. I remember well the spot where I read these volumes for the first time. It was beneath a huge platanus-tree, in the ruins of what had been intended for an old-fashioned arbor in the *garden* I have mentioned. The summer day sped onward so fast that, notwithstanding the sharp appetite of thirteen, I forgot the hour of dinner, was sought for with anxiety, and was still found entranced in my intellectual banquet. To read and to remember was in this instance the same thing, and henceforth I overwhelmed my schoolfellows, and all who would hearken to me, with tragical recitations from the ballads of Bishop Percy. The first time, too, I could scrape a few shillings together, which were not common occurrences with me, I bought unto myself a copy of these beloved volumes; nor do I believe I ever read a book half so frequently, or with half the enthusiasm. About this period, also, I became acquainted with the works of Richardson, and those of Mackenzie—(whom in later years I became entitled to call my friend)—with Fielding, Smollett, and some others of our best novelists.

To this period, also, I can trace distinctly the awaking of that delightful feeling for the beauties of natural objects which has never since deserted me. The neighborhood of Kelso, the most beautiful, if not the most romantic village in Scotland, is eminently calculated to awaken these ideas. It presents objects, not only grand in themselves, but venerable from their association. The meeting of two superb rivers, the Tweed and the Teviot, both renowned in song—the ruins of an ancient abbey—the more distant vestiges of Roxburgh Castle—the modern mansion of Fleurs, which is so situated as to combine the ideas of ancient baronial grandeur with those of modern taste—are in themselves objects of the first class; yet are so mixed, united, and melted among a thousand other beauties of a less prominent description, that they harmonize into one general picture, and please rather by unison than by concord. I believe I have written unintelligibly upon this subject, but it is fitter for the pencil than the pen. The romantic feelings which I have described as predominating in my mind, naturally rested upon and associated themselves with these grand features of the landscape around me; and the historical incidents, or traditional legends connected with many of them, gave to my admiration a sort of intense impression of reverence, which at times made my heart feel too big for its bosom. From this time the love of natural beauty, more especially when combined with ancient ruins, or remains of our fathers' piety or splendor, became with me an insatiable passion, which, if circumstances had permitted, I would willingly have gratified by travelling over half the globe.

I was recalled to Edinburgh about the time when the College meets, and put at once to the Humanity class, under Mr. Hill, and the first Greek class, taught by Mr. Dalzell. The former held the reins of discipline very loosely, and though beloved by his students, for he was a good-natured man as well as a good scholar, he had not the art of exciting our attention as well as liking. This was a dangerous character with whom to trust one who relished labor as little as I did, and amid the riot of his class I speedily lost much of what I had learned under Adam and Whale. At the Greek class, I might have made a better figure, for Professor Dalzell maintained a great deal of authority, and was not only himself an admirable scholar, but was always deeply interested in the progress of his students. But here lay the villainy. Almost all my companions who had left the High School at the same time with myself had acquired a smattering of Greek before they came to College. I, alas, had none; and finding myself far inferior to all my fellow-

students, I could hit upon no better mode of vindicating my equality than by professing my contempt for the language, and my resolution not to learn it. A youth who died early, himself an excellent Greek scholar, saw my negligence and folly with pain, instead of contempt. He came to call on me in George's Square, and pointed out in the strongest terms the silliness of the conduct I had adopted, told me I was distinguished by the name of the *Greek Blockhead*, and exhorted me to redeem my reputation while it was called to-day. My stubborn pride received this advice with sulky civility; the birth of my Mentor (whose name was Archibald, the son of an innkeeper) did not, as I thought in my folly, authorize him to intrude upon me his advice. The other was not sharp-sighted, or his consciousness of a generous intention overcame his resentment. He offered me his daily and nightly assistance, and pledged himself to bring me forward with the foremost of my class. I felt some twinges of conscience, but they were unable to prevail over my pride and self-conceit. The poor lad left me more in sorrow than in anger, nor did we ever meet again. All hopes of my progress in the Greek were now over; insomuch that when we were required to write essays on the authors we had studied, I had the audacity to produce a composition in which I weighed Homer against Ariosto, and pronounced him wanting in the balance. I supported this heresy by a profusion of bad reading and flimsy argument. The wrath of the Professor was extreme, while at the same time he could not suppress his surprise at the quantity of out-of-the-way knowledge which I displayed. He pronounced upon me the severe sentence—that dunce I was, and dunce was to remain—which, however, my excellent and learned friend lived to revoke over a bottle of Burgundy, at our literary Club at Fortune's, of which he was a distinguished member.

Meanwhile, as if to eradicate my slightest tincture of Greek, I fell ill during the middle of Mr. Dalzell's second class, and migrated a second time to Kelso—where I again continued a long time reading what and how I pleased, and of course reading nothing but what afforded me immediate entertainment. The only thing which saved my mind from utter dissipation was that turn for historical pursuit, which never abandoned me even at the idlest period. I had forsworn the Latin classics for no reason I know of, unless because they were akin to the Greek; but the occasional perusal of Buchanan's history, that of Matthew Paris, and other monkish chronicles, kept up a kind of familiarity with the language even in its rudest state. But I

forgot the very letters of the Greek alphabet; a loss never to be repaired, considering what that language is, and who they were who employed it in their compositions.

About this period—or soon afterwards—my father judged it proper I should study mathematics, a study upon which I entered with all the ardor of novelty. My tutor was an aged person, Dr. MacFait, who had in his time been distinguished as a teacher of this science. Age, however, and some domestic inconveniences, had diminished his pupils, and lessened his authority amongst the few who remained. I think that, had I been more fortunately placed for instruction, or had I had the spur of emulation, I might have made some progress in this science, of which, under the circumstances I have mentioned, I only acquired a very superficial smattering.

In other studies I was rather more fortunate. I made some progress in Ethics under Professor John Bruce, and was selected, as one of his students whose progress he approved, to read an essay before Principal Robertson. I was farther instructed in Moral Philosophy at the class of Mr. Dugald Stewart, whose striking and impressive eloquence riveted the attention even of the most volatile student. To sum up my academical studies, I attended the class of History, then taught by the present Lord Woodhouselee, and, as far as I remember, no others, excepting those of the Civil and Municipal Law. So that, if my learning be flimsy and inaccurate, the reader must have some compassion even for an idle workman, who had so narrow a foundation to build upon. If, however, it should ever fall to the lot of youth to peruse these pages—let such a reader remember that it is with the deepest regret that I recollect in my manhood the opportunities of learning which I neglected in my youth; that through every part of my literary career I have felt pinched and hampered by my own ignorance; and that I would at this moment give half the reputation I have had the good fortune to acquire, if by doing so I could rest the remaining part upon a sound foundation of learning and science.

I imagine my father's reason for sending me to so few classes in the College was a desire that I should apply myself particularly to my legal studies. He had not determined whether I should fill the situation of an Advocate or a Writer; but judiciously considering the technical knowledge of the latter to be useful at least, if not essential, to a barrister, he resolved I should serve the ordinary apprenticeship of five years to his own

profession. I accordingly entered into indentures with my father about 1785-86, and entered upon the dry and barren wilderness of forms and conveyances.

I cannot reproach myself with being entirely an idle apprentice—far less, as the reader might reasonably have expected,

"A clerk foredoom'd my father's soul to cross."

The drudgery, indeed, of the office I disliked, and the confinement I altogether detested; but I loved my father, and I felt the rational pride and pleasure of rendering myself useful to him. I was ambitious also; and among my companions in labor, the only way to gratify ambition was to labor hard and well. Other circumstances reconciled me in some measure to the confinement. The allowance for copy-money furnished a little fund for the *menus plaisirs* of the circulating library and the theatre; and this was no trifling incentive to labor. When actually at the oar, no man could pull it harder than I, and I remember writing upwards of 120 folio pages with no interval either for food or rest. Again, the hours of attendance on the office were lightened by the power of choosing my own books, and reading them in my own way, which often consisted in beginning at the middle or the end of a volume. A deceased friend, who was a fellow-apprentice with me, used often to express his surprise that, after such a hop-step-and-jump perusal, I knew as much of the book as he had been able to acquire from reading it in the usual manner. My desk usually contained a store of most miscellaneous volumes, especially works of fiction of every kind, which were my supreme delight. I might except novels, unless those of the better and higher class; for though I read many of them, yet it was with more selection than might have been expected. The whole Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy tribe I abhorred, and it required the art of Burney, or the feeling of Mackenzie, to fix my attention upon a domestic tale. But all that was adventurous and romantic I devoured without much discrimination, and I really believe I have read as much nonsense of this class as any man now living. Everything which touched on knight-errantry was particularly acceptable to me, and I soon attempted to imitate what I so greatly admired. My efforts, however, were in the manner of the tale-teller, not of the bard.

My greatest intimate, from the days of my school-tide, was Mr. John Irving, now a Writer to the Signet. We lived near each other, and by joint agreement were wont, each of us, to compose a romance for the other's amusement. These legends, in which the martial and the miraculous always

predominated, we rehearsed to each other during our walks, which were usually directed to the most solitary spots about Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags. We naturally sought seclusion, for we were conscious no small degree of ridicule would have attended our amusement, if the nature of it had become known. Whole holidays were spent in this singular pastime, which continued for two or three years, and had, I believe, no small effect in directing the turn of my imagination to the chivalrous and romantic in poetry and prose.

Meanwhile, the translations of Mr. Hoole having made me acquainted with Tasso and Ariosto, I learned from his notes on the latter, that the Italian language contained a fund of romantic lore. A part of my earnings was dedicated to an Italian class which I attended twice a week, and rapidly acquired some proficiency. I had previously renewed and extended my knowledge of the French language, from the same principle of romantic research. Tressan's romances, the Bibliothèque Bleue, and Bibliothèque de Romans, were already familiar to me, and I now acquired similar intimacy with the works of Dante, Boiardo, Pulci, and other eminent Italian authors. I fastened also, like a tiger, upon every collection of old songs or romances which chance threw in my way, or which my scrutiny was able to discover on the dusty shelves of James Sibbald's circulating library in the Parliament Square. This collection, now dismantled and dispersed, contained at that time many rare and curious works, seldom found in such a collection. Mr. Sibbald himself, a man of rough manners but of some taste and judgment, cultivated music and poetry, and in his shop I had a distant view of some literary characters, besides the privilege of ransacking the stores of old French and Italian books, which were in little demand among the bulk of his subscribers. Here I saw the unfortunate Andrew Macdonald, author of Vimonda; and here, too, I saw at a distance the boast of Scotland, Robert Burns. Of the latter I shall presently have occasion to speak more fully.

I am inadvertently led to confound dates while I talk of this remote period, for, as I have no notes, it is impossible for me to remember with accuracy the progress of studies, if they deserve the name, so irregular and miscellaneous. But about the second year of my apprenticeship my health, which, from rapid growth and other causes, had been hitherto rather uncertain and delicate, was affected by the breaking of a blood-vessel. The regimen I had to undergo on this occasion was far from agreeable. It was spring, and the weather raw and cold, yet I was confined to bed with a

single blanket, and bled and blistered till I scarcely had a pulse left. I had all the appetite of a growing boy, but was prohibited any sustenance beyond what was absolutely necessary for the support of nature, and that in vegetables alone. Above all, with a considerable disposition to talk, I was not permitted to open my lips without one or two old ladies who watched my couch being ready at once to souse upon me,

"imposing silence with a stilly sound."

My only refuge was reading and playing at chess. To the romances and poetry, which I chiefly delighted in, I had always added the study of history, especially as connected with military events. I was encouraged in this latter study by a tolerable acquaintance with geography, and by the opportunities I had enjoyed while with Mr. MacFait to learn the meaning of the more ordinary terms of fortification. While, therefore, I lay in this dreary and silent solitude, I fell upon the resource of illustrating the battles I read of by the childish expedient of arranging shells, and seeds, and pebbles, so as to represent encountering armies. Diminutive cross-bows were contrived to mimic artillery, and with the assistance of a friendly carpenter I contrived to model a fortress, which, like that of Uncle Toby, represented whatever place happened to be uppermost in my imagination. I fought my way thus through Vertot's Knights of Malta—a book which, as it hovered between history and romance, was exceedingly dear to me; and Orme's interesting and beautiful History of Indostan, whose copious plans, aided by the clear and luminous explanations of the author, rendered my imitative amusement peculiarly easy. Other moments of these weary weeks were spent in looking at the Meadow Walks, by assistance of a combination of mirrors so arranged that, while lying in bed, I could see the troops march out to exercise, or any other incident which occurred on that promenade.

After one or two relapses, my constitution recovered the injury it had sustained, though for several months afterwards I was restricted to a severe vegetable diet. And I must say, in passing, that though I gained health under this necessary restriction, yet it was far from being agreeable to me, and I was affected whilst under its influence with a nervousness which I never felt before or since. A disposition to start upon slight alarms—a want of decision in feeling and acting, which has not usually been my failing—an acute sensibility to trifling inconveniences—and an unnecessary apprehension of contingent misfortunes, rise to my memory as connected with my vegetable diet, although they may very possibly have been entirely

the result of the disorder and not of the cure. Be this as it may, with this illness I bade farewell both to disease and medicine; for since that time, till the hour I am now writing, I have enjoyed a state of the most robust health, having only had to complain of occasional headaches or stomachic affections when I have been long without taking exercise, or have lived too convivially—the latter having been occasionally, though, not habitually, the error of my youth, as the former has been of my advanced life.

My frame gradually became hardened with my constitution, and being both tall and muscular, I was rather disfigured than disabled by my lameness. This personal disadvantage did not prevent me from taking much exercise on horseback, and making long journeys on foot, in the course of which I often walked from twenty to thirty miles a day. A distinct instance occurs to me. I remember walking with poor James Ramsay, my fellow-apprentice, now no more, and two other friends, to breakfast at Prestonpans. We spent the forenoon in visiting the ruins at Seton, and the field of battle at Preston—dined at Prestonpans on *tiled haddocks* very sumptuously—drank half a bottle of port each, and returned in the evening. This could not be less than thirty miles, nor do I remember being at all fatigued upon the occasion.

These excursions on foot or horseback formed by far my most favorite amusement. I have all my life delighted in travelling, though I have never enjoyed that pleasure upon a large scale. It was a propensity which I sometimes indulged so unduly as to alarm and vex my parents. Wood, water, wilderness itself, had an inexpressible charm for me, and I had a dreamy way of going much farther than I intended, so that unconsciously my return was protracted, and my parents had sometimes serious cause of uneasiness. For example, I once set out with Mr. George Abercromby (the son of the immortal General), Mr. William Clerk, and some others, to fish in the lake above Howgate, and the stream which descends from it into the Esk. We breakfasted at Howgate, and fished the whole day; and while we were on our return next morning, I was easily seduced by William Clerk, then a great intimate, to visit Pennycuik-house, the seat of his family. Here he and John Irving, and I for their sake, were overwhelmed with kindness by the late Sir John Clerk and his lady, the present Dowager Lady Clerk. The pleasure of looking at fine pictures, the beauty of the place, and the flattering hospitality of the owners, drowned all recollection of home for a day or two. Meanwhile our companions, who had walked on without being aware of our digression, returned to Edinburgh without us, and excited no

small alarm in my father's household. At length, however, they became accustomed to my escapades. My father used to protest to me on such occasions that he thought I was born to be a strolling pedlar; and though the prediction was intended to mortify my conceit, I am not sure that I altogether disliked it. I was now familiar with Shakespeare, and thought of Autolycus's song—

> "Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,
> And merrily hent the stile-a:
> A merry heart goes all the day,
> Your sad tires in a mile-a."

My principal object in these excursions was the pleasure of seeing romantic scenery, or what afforded me at least equal pleasure, the places which had been distinguished by remarkable historical events. The delight with which I regarded the former, of course had general approbation, but I often found it difficult to procure sympathy with the interest I felt in the latter. Yet to me, the wandering over the field of Bannockburn was the source of more exquisite pleasure than gazing upon the celebrated landscape from the battlements of Stirling castle. I do not by any means infer that I was dead to the feeling of picturesque scenery; on the contrary, few delighted more in its general effect. But I was unable with the eye of a painter to dissect the various parts of the scene, to comprehend how the one bore upon the other, to estimate the effect which various features of the view had in producing its leading and general effect. I have never, indeed, been capable of doing this with precision or nicety, though my latter studies have led me to amend and arrange my original ideas upon the subject. Even the humble ambition, which I long cherished, of making sketches of those places which interested me, from a defect of eye or of hand was totally ineffectual. After long study and many efforts, I was unable to apply the elements of perspective or of shade to the scene before me, and was obliged to relinquish in despair an art which I was most anxious to practise. But show me an old castle or a field of battle, and I was at home at once, filled it with its combatants in their proper costume, and overwhelmed my hearers by the enthusiasm of my description. In crossing Magus Moor, near St. Andrews, the spirit moved me to give a picture of the assassination of the Archbishop of St. Andrews to some fellow-travellers with whom I was accidentally associated, and one of them, though well acquainted with the story, protested my narrative had

frightened away his night's sleep. I mention this to show the distinction between a sense of the picturesque in action and in scenery. If I have since been able in poetry to trace with some success the principles of the latter, it has always been with reference to its general and leading features, or under some alliance with moral feeling; and even this proficiency has cost me study.—Meanwhile I endeavored to make amends for my ignorance of drawing, by adopting a sort of technical memory respecting the scenes I visited: Wherever I went, I cut a piece of a branch from a tree—these constituted what I called my log-book; and I intended to have a set of chessmen out of them, each having reference to the place where it was cut —as the kings from Falkland and Holy-Rood; the queens from Queen Mary's yew-tree at Crookston; the bishops from abbeys or episcopal palaces; the knights from baronial residences; the rooks from royal fortresses; and the pawns generally from places worthy of historical note. But this whimsical design I never carried into execution.

With music it was even worse than with painting. My mother was anxious we should at least learn Psalmody; but the incurable defects of my voice and ear soon drove my teacher to despair. It is only by long practice that I have acquired the power of selecting or distinguishing melodies; and although now few things delight or affect me more than a simple tune sung with feeling, yet I am sensible that even this pitch of musical taste has only been gained by attention and habit, and, as it were, by my feeling of the words being associated with the tune. I have, therefore, been usually unsuccessful in composing words to a tune, although my friend, Dr. Clarke, and other musical composers, have sometimes been able to make a happy union between their music and my poetry.

In other points, however, I began to make some amends for the irregularity of my education. It is well known that in Edinburgh one great spur to emulation among youthful students is in those associations called *literary societies*, formed not only for the purpose of debate, but of composition. These undoubtedly have some disadvantages, where a bold, petulant, and disputatious temper happens to be combined with considerable information and talent. Still, however, in order to such a person being actually spoiled by his mixing in such debates, his talents must be of a very rare nature, or his effrontery must be proof to every species of assault; for there is generally, in a well-selected society of this nature, talent sufficient to meet the forwardest, and satire enough to penetrate the most

undaunted. I am particularly obliged to this sort of club for introducing me about my seventeenth year into the society which at one time I had entirely dropped; for, from the time of my illness at college, I had had little or no intercourse with any of my class-companions, one or two only excepted. Now, however, about 1788, I began to feel and take my ground in society. A ready wit, a good deal of enthusiasm, and a perception that soon ripened into tact and observation of character, rendered me an acceptable companion to many young men whose acquisitions in philosophy and science were infinitely superior to anything I could boast.

In the business of these societies—for I was a member of more than one successively—I cannot boast of having made any great figure. I never was a good speaker unless upon some subject which strongly animated my feelings; and, as I was totally unaccustomed to composition, as well as to the art of generalizing my ideas upon any subject, my literary essays were but very poor work. I never attempted them unless when compelled to do so by the regulations of the society, and then I was like the Lord of Castle Rackrent, who was obliged to cut down a tree to get a few fagots to boil the kettle; for the quantity of ponderous and miscellaneous knowledge, which I really possessed on many subjects, was not easily condensed, or brought to bear upon the object I wished particularly to become master of. Yet there occurred opportunities when this odd lumber of my brain, especially that which was connected with the recondite parts of history, did me, as Hamlet says, "yeoman's service." My memory of events was like one of the large, old-fashioned stone-cannons of the Turks—very difficult to load well and discharge, but making a powerful effect when by good chance any object did come within range of its shot. Such fortunate opportunities of exploding with effect maintained my literary character among my companions, with whom I soon met with great indulgence and regard. The persons with whom I chiefly lived at this period of my youth were William Clerk, already mentioned; James Edmonstoune, of Newton; George Abercromby; Adam Ferguson, son of the celebrated Professor Ferguson, and who combined the lightest and most airy temper with the best and kindest disposition; John Irving, already mentioned; the Honorable Thomas Douglas, now Earl of Selkirk; David Boyle,—and two or three others, who sometimes plunged deeply into politics and metaphysics, and not unfrequently "doffed the world aside, and bid it pass."

Looking back on these times, I cannot applaud in all respects the way in which our days were spent. There was too much idleness, and sometimes too much conviviality: but our hearts were warm, our minds honorably bent on knowledge and literary distinction; and if I, certainly the least informed of the party, may be permitted to bear witness, we were not without the fair and creditable means of attaining the distinction to which we aspired. In this society I was naturally led to correct my former useless course of reading; for—feeling myself greatly inferior to my companions in metaphysical philosophy and other branches of regular study—I labored, not without some success, to acquire at least such a portion of knowledge as might enable me to maintain my rank in conversation. In this I succeeded pretty well; but unfortunately then, as often since through my life, I incurred the deserved ridicule of my friends from the superficial nature of my acquisitions, which being, in the mercantile phrase, *got up* for society, very often proved flimsy in the texture; and thus the gifts of an uncommonly retentive memory and acute powers of perception were sometimes detrimental to their possessor by encouraging him to a presumptuous reliance upon them.

Amidst these studies, and in this society, the time of my apprenticeship elapsed; and in 1790, or thereabouts, it became necessary that I should seriously consider to which department of the law I was to attach myself. My father behaved with the most parental kindness. He offered, if I preferred his own profession, immediately to take me into partnership with him, which, though his business was much diminished, still afforded me an immediate prospect of a handsome independence. But he did not disguise his wish that I should relinquish this situation to my younger brother, and embrace the more ambitious profession of the Bar. I had little hesitation in making my choice—for I was never very fond of money; and in no other particular do the professions admit of a comparison. Besides, I knew and felt the inconveniences attached to that of a Writer; and I thought (like a young man) many of them were "ingenio non subeunda meo." The appearance of personal dependence which that profession requires was disagreeable to me; the sort of connection between the client and the attorney seemed to render the latter more subservient than was quite agreeable to my nature; and, besides, I had seen many sad examples, while overlooking my father's business, that the utmost exertions, and the best meant services, do not secure the *man of business*, as he is called, from

great loss, and most ungracious treatment on the part of his employers. The Bar, though I was conscious of my deficiencies as a public speaker, was the line of ambition and liberty; it was that also for which most of my contemporary friends were destined. And, lastly, although I would willingly have relieved my father of the labors of his business, yet I saw plainly we could not have agreed on some particulars if we had attempted to conduct it together, and that I should disappoint his expectations if I did not turn to the Bar. So to that object my studies were directed with great ardor and perseverance during the years 1789, 1790, 1791, 1792.

In the usual course of study, the Roman or Civil Law was the first object of my attention—the second, the Municipal Law of Scotland. In the course of reading on both subjects, I had the advantage of studying in conjunction with my friend William Clerk, a man of the most acute intellects and powerful apprehension, and who, should he ever shake loose the fetters of indolence by which he has been hitherto trammelled, cannot fail to be distinguished in the highest degree. We attended the regular classes of both laws in the University of Edinburgh. The Civil Law chair, now worthily filled by Mr. Alexander Irving, might at that time be considered as in *abeyance*, since the person by whom it was occupied had never been fit for the situation, and was then almost in a state of dotage. But the Scotch Law lectures were those of Mr. David Hume, who still continues to occupy that situation with as much honor to himself as advantage to his country. I copied over his lectures twice with my own hand, from notes taken in the class; and when I have had occasion to consult them, I can never sufficiently admire the penetration and clearness of conception which were necessary to the arrangement of the fabric of law, formed originally under the strictest influence of feudal principles, and innovated, altered, and broken in upon by the change of times, of habits, and of manners, until it resembles some ancient castle, partly entire, partly ruinous, partly dilapidated, patched and altered during the succession of ages by a thousand additions and combinations, yet still exhibiting, with the marks of its antiquity, symptoms of the skill and wisdom of its founders, and capable of being analyzed and made the subject of a methodical plan by an architect who can understand the various styles of the different ages in which it was subjected to alteration. Such an architect has Mr. Hume been to the law of Scotland, neither wandering into fanciful and abstruse disquisitions, which are the more proper subject of the antiquary, nor satisfied with presenting to

his pupils a dry and undigested detail of the laws in their present state, but combining the past state of our legal enactments with the present, and tracing clearly and judiciously the changes which took place, and the causes which led to them.

Under these auspices I commenced my legal studies. A little parlor was assigned me in my father's house, which was spacious and convenient, and I took the exclusive possession of my new realms with all the feelings of novelty and liberty. Let me do justice to the only years of my life in which I applied to learning with stern, steady, and undeviating industry. The rule of my friend Clerk and myself was that we should mutually qualify ourselves for undergoing an examination upon certain points of law every morning in the week, Sundays excepted. This was at first to have taken place alternately at each other's houses, but we soon discovered that my friend's resolution was inadequate to severing him from his couch at the early hour fixed for this exercitation. Accordingly I agreed to go every morning to his house, which, being at the extremity of Prince's Street, New Town, was a walk of two miles. With great punctuality, however, I beat him up to his task every morning before seven o'clock, and in the course of two summers, we went, by way of question and answer, through the whole of Heineccius's Analysis of the Institutes and Pandects, as well as through the smaller copy of Erskine's Institutes of the Law of Scotland. This course of study enabled us to pass with credit the usual trials, which, by the regulations of the Faculty of Advocates, must be undergone by every candidate for admission into their body. My friend William Clerk and I passed these ordeals on the same days—namely, the Civil Law trial on the [30th June, 1791], and the Scots Law trial on the [6th July, 1792]. On the [11th July, 1792], we both assumed the gown with all its duties and honors.

My progress in life during these two or three years had been gradually enlarging my acquaintance, and facilitating my entrance into good company. My father and mother, already advanced in life, saw little society at home, excepting that of near relations, or upon particular occasions, so that I was left to form connections in a great measure for myself. It is not difficult for a youth with a real desire to please and be pleased, to make his way into good society in Edinburgh—or indeed anywhere; and my family connections, if they did not greatly further, had nothing to embarrass my progress. I was a gentleman, and so welcome anywhere, if so be I could behave myself, as Tony Lumpkin says, "in a concatenation accordingly."

Chapter II

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Illustrations of the Autobiographical Fragment. — Edinburgh. — Sandy-Knowe. — Bath. — Prestonpans

1771-1778

Sir Walter Scott opens his brief account of his ancestry with a playful allusion to a trait of national character, which has, time out of mind, furnished merriment to the neighbors of the Scotch; but the zeal of pedigree was deeply rooted in himself, and he would have been the last to treat it with serious disparagement. It has often been exhibited under circumstances sufficiently grotesque; but it has lent strength to many a good impulse, sustained hope and self-respect under many a difficulty and distress, armed heart and nerve to many a bold and resolute struggle for independence; and prompted also many a generous act of assistance, which under its influence alone could have been accepted without any feeling of degradation.

He speaks modestly of his own descent; for, while none of his predecessors had ever sunk below the situation and character of a gentleman, he had but to go three or four generations back, and thence, as far as they could be followed, either on the paternal or maternal side, they were to be found moving in the highest ranks of our baronage. When he fitted up, in his later years, the beautiful hall of Abbotsford, he was careful to have the armorial bearings of his forefathers blazoned in due order on the compartments of its roof; and there are few in Scotland, under the titled nobility, who could trace their blood to so many stocks of historical distinction.

In the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, and Notes to The Lay of the Last Minstrel, the reader will find sundry notices of the "Bauld Rutherfords that were sae stout," and the Swintons of Swinton in Berwickshire, the two nearest houses on the maternal side. An illustrious old warrior of the latter family, Sir John Swinton, extolled by Froissart, is the hero of the dramatic sketch, Halidon Hill; and it is not to be omitted, that through the Swintons Sir Walter Scott could trace himself to William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, the poet and dramatist. His respect for the worthy barons of Newmains and

Dryburgh, of whom, in right of his father's mother, he was the representative, and in whose venerable sepulchre his remains now rest, was testified by his Memorials of the Haliburtons, a small volume printed (for private circulation only) in the year 1820. His own male ancestors of the family of Harden, whose lineage is traced by Douglas in his Baronage of Scotland back to the middle of the fourteenth century, when they branched off from the great blood of Buccleuch, have been so largely celebrated in his various writings, that I might perhaps content myself with a general reference to those pages, their only imperishable monument. The antique splendor of the ducal house itself has been dignified to all Europe by the pen of its remote descendant; but it may be doubted whether his genius could have been adequately developed, had he not attracted, at an early and critical period, the kindly recognition and support of the Buccleuchs.

The race had been celebrated, however, long before his day, by a minstrel of its own; nor did he conceal his belief that he owed much to the influence exerted over his juvenile mind by the rude but enthusiastic clan-poetry of old *Satchells* who describes himself *on his title-page* as

> "Captain Walter Scot, an old Souldier and no Scholler,
> And one that can write nane,
> But just the Letters of his Name."

His True History of several honourable Families of the Right Honourable Name of Scot, in the Shires of Roxburgh and Selkirk, and others adjacent, gathered out of Ancient Chronicles, Histories, and Traditions of our Fathers, includes, among other things, a string of complimentary rhymes addressed to the first Laird of Raeburn; and the copy which had belonged to that gentleman was in all likelihood about the first book of verses that fell into the poet's hand. How continually its wild and uncouth doggerel was on his lips to his latest day all his familiars can testify; and the passages which he quoted with the greatest zest were those commemorative of two ancient worthies, both of whom had had to contend against physical misfortune similar to his own. The former of these, according to Satchells, was the immediate founder of the branch originally designed of Sinton, afterwards of Harden:—

> "It is four hundred winters past in order
> Since that Buccleuch was Warden in the Border;

A son he had at that same tide,
Which was so lame could neither run nor ride.
John, this lame son, if my author speaks true,
He sent him to St. Mungo's in Glasgu,
Where he remained a scholar's time,
Then married a wife according to his mind....
And betwixt them twa was procreat
Headshaw, Askirk, Sinton, and Glack."

But, if the scholarship of *John the Lamiter* furnished his descendant with many a mirthful allusion, a far greater favorite was the memory of *William the Boltfoot*, who followed him in the sixth generation:—

"The Laird and Lady of Harden
Betwixt them procreat was a son
Called William Boltfoot of Harden."

The emphasis with which this next line was quoted I can never forget:—

"*He did survive to be* A MAN."

He was, in fact, one of the "prowest knights" of the whole genealogy—a fearless horseman and expert spearman, renowned and dreaded; and I suppose I have heard Sir Walter repeat a dozen times, as he was dashing into the Tweed or Ettrick, "rolling red from brae to brae," a stanza from what he called an old ballad, though it was most likely one of his own early imitations:—

"To tak the foord he aye was first,
Unless the English loons were near;
Plunge vassal than, plunge horse and man,
Auld Boltfoot rides into the rear."

"From childhood's earliest hour," says the poet in one of his last Journals, "I have rebelled against external circumstances." How largely the traditional famousness of the stalwart *Boltfoot* may have helped to develop this element of his character, I do not pretend to say; but I cannot avoid regretting that Lord Byron had not discovered such another "Deformed Transformed" among his own chivalrous progenitors.

So long as Sir Walter retained his vigorous habits, he used to make an autumnal excursion, with whatever friend happened to be his guest at the

time, to the tower of Harden, the *incunabula* of his race. A more picturesque scene for the fastness of a lineage of Border marauders could not be conceived; and so much did he delight in it, remote and inaccessible as its situation is, that, in the earlier part of his life, he had nearly availed himself of his kinsman's permission to fit up the dilapidated *peel* for his summer residence. Harden (the ravine of hares) is a deep, dark, and narrow glen, along which a little mountain brook flows to join the river Borthwick, itself a tributary of the Teviot. The castle is perched on the brink of the precipitous bank, and from the ruinous windows you look down into the crows' nests on the summits of the old mouldering elms, that have their roots on the margin of the stream far below:—

> "Where Bortha hoarse, that loads the meads with sand,
> Rolls her red tide to Teviot's western strand,
> Through slaty hills, whose sides are shagged with thorn,
> Where springs in scattered tufts the dark-green corn,
> Towers wood-girt Harden far above the vale,
> And clouds of ravens o'er the turrets sail.
> A hardy race who never shrunk from war,
> The Scott, to rival realms a mighty bar,
> Here fixed his mountain home;—a wide domain,
> And rich the soil, had purple heath been grain;
> But what the niggard ground of wealth denied,
> From fields more bless'd his fearless arm supplied."

It was to this wild retreat that the Harden of The Lay of the Last Minstrel, the Auld Wat of a hundred Border ditties, brought home, in 1567, his beautiful bride, Mary Scott, "the Flower of Yarrow," whose grace and gentleness have lived in song along with the stern virtues of her lord. She is said to have chiefly owed her celebrity to the gratitude of an English captive, a beautiful child, whom she rescued from the tender mercies of Wat's moss-troopers, on their return from a foray into Cumberland. The youth grew up under her protection, and is believed to have been the composer both of the words and the music of many of the best old songs of the Border. As Leyden says,

> "His are the strains whose wandering echoes thrill
> The shepherd lingering on the twilight hill,

When evening brings the merry folding hours,
And sun-eyed daisies close their winking flowers.
He lived o'er Yarrow's Flower to shed the tear,
To strew the holly leaves o'er Harden's bier;
But none was found above the minstrel's tomb,
Emblem of peace, to bid the daisy bloom.
He, nameless as the race from which he sprung,
Saved other names, and left his own unsung."

We are told that when the last bullock which Auld Wat had provided from the English pastures was consumed, the Flower of Yarrow placed on her table a dish containing a pair of clean spurs; a hint to the company that they must bestir themselves for their next dinner. Sir Walter adds, in a note to the Minstrelsy, "Upon one occasion when the village herd was driving out the cattle to pasture, the old laird heard him call loudly to drive out Harden's cow. 'Harden's *cow*!' echoed the affronted chief; 'is it come to that pass? By my faith they shall soon say Harden's *kye*' (cows). Accordingly, he sounded his bugle, set out with his followers, and next day returned with *a bow of kye, and a bassen'd* (brindled) *bull*. On his return with this gallant prey, he passed a very large haystack. It occurred to the provident laird that this would be extremely convenient to fodder his new stock of cattle; but as no means of transporting it were obvious, he was fain to take leave of it with the apostrophe, now become proverbial—'*By my saul, had ye but four feet, ye should not stand lang there.*' In short, as Froissart says of a similar class of feudal robbers, nothing came amiss to them that was not *too heavy or too hot*."

Another striking chapter in the genealogical history belongs to the marriage of Auld Wat's son and heir, afterwards Sir William Scott of Harden, distinguished by the early favor of James VI., and severely fined for his loyalty under the usurpation of Cromwell. The period of this gentleman's youth was a very wild one in that district. The Border clans still made war on each other occasionally, much in the fashion of their forefathers; and the young and handsome heir of Harden, engaging in a foray upon the lands of Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank, treasurer-depute of Scotland, was overpowered by that baron's retainers, and carried in shackles to his castle, now a heap of ruins, on the banks of the Tweed. Elibank's "doomtree" extended its broad arms close to the gates of his fortress, and

the indignant laird was on the point of desiring his prisoner to say a last prayer, when his more considerate dame interposed milder counsels, suggesting that the culprit was born to a good estate, and that they had three unmarried daughters. Young Harden, not, it is said, without hesitation, agreed to save his life by taking the plainest of the three off their hands, and the contract of marriage, executed instantly on the parchment of a drum, is still in the charter-chest of his noble representative.

Walter Scott, the third son of this couple, was the first Laird of Raeburn, already alluded to as one of the patrons of Satchells. He married Isabel Macdougal, daughter of Macdougal of Makerstoun—a family of great antiquity and distinction in Roxburghshire, of whose blood, through various alliances, the poet had a large share in his veins. Raeburn, though the son and brother of two steady Cavaliers, and married into a family of the same political creed, became a Whig, and at last a Quaker; and the reader will find, in one of the notes to The Heart of Mid-Lothian, a singular account of the persecution to which this backsliding exposed him at the hands of both his own and his wife's relations. He was incarcerated (A. D. 1665), first at Edinburgh and then at Jedburgh, by order of the Privy Council—his children were forcibly taken from him, and a heavy sum was levied on his estate yearly, for the purposes of their education beyond the reach of his perilous influence. "It appears," says Sir Walter, in a MS. memorandum now before me, "that the Laird of Makerstoun, his brother-in-law, joined with Raeburn's own elder brother, Harden, in this singular persecution, as it will now be termed by Christians of all persuasions. It was observed by the people that the male line of the second Sir William of Harden became extinct in 1710, and that the representation of Makerstoun soon passed into the female line. They assigned as a cause, that when the wife of Raeburn found herself deprived of her husband, and refused permission even to see her children, she pronounced a malediction on her husband's brother as well as on her own, and prayed that a male of their body might not inherit their property."

The MS. adds, "of the first Raeburn's two sons it may be observed that, thanks to the discipline of the Privy Council, they were both good scholars." Of these sons, Walter, the second, was the poet's great-grandfather, the enthusiastic Jacobite of the autobiographical fragment,—who is introduced,

"With amber beard and flaxen hair,
And reverend apostolic air,"

in the epistle prefixed to the sixth canto of Marmion. A good portrait of Bearded Wat, painted for his friend Pitcairn, was presented by the Doctor's grandson, the Earl of Kellie, to the father of Sir Walter. It is now at Abbotsford; and shows a considerable resemblance to the poet. Some verses addressed to the original by his kinsman Walter Scott of Harden are given in one of the Notes to Marmion. The old gentleman himself is said to have written verses occasionally, both English and Latin; but I never heard more than the burden of a drinking-song—

"Barba crescat, barba crescat,
Donec carduus revirescat."

Scantily as the worthy Jacobite seems to have been provided with this world's goods, he married the daughter of a gentleman of good condition, "through whom," says the MS. memorandum already quoted, "his descendants have inherited a connection with some honorable branches of the *Slioch nan Diarmid*, or Clan of Campbell." To this connection Sir Walter owed, as we shall see hereafter, many of those early opportunities for studying the manners of the Highlanders, to which the world are indebted for Waverley, Rob Roy, and The Lady of the Lake.

Robert Scott, the son of Beardie, formed also an honorable alliance. His father-in-law, Thomas Haliburton, the last but one of the "good lairds of Newmains," entered his marriage as follows in the domestic record, which Sir Walter's pious respect induced him to have printed nearly a century afterwards:—"My second daughter Barbara is married to Robert Scott, son to Walter Scott, uncle to Raeburn, upon this sixteen day of July, 1728, at my house of Dryburgh, by Mr. James Innes, minister of Mertoun, their mothers being cousings; may the blessing of the Lord rest upon them, and make them comforts to each other and to all their relations;" to which the editor of the Memorials adds this note—"May God grant that the prayers of the excellent persons who have passed away may avail for the benefit of those who succeed them!—*Abbotsford*, Nov., 1824."

I need scarcely remind the reader of the exquisite description of the poet's grandfather, in the Introduction to the third canto of Marmion—

——"the thatched mansion's gray-hair'd sire,
Wise without learning, plain and good,
And sprang of Scotland's gentler blood;
Whose eye, in age quick, clear, and keen,
Showed what in youth its glance had been;
Whose doom discording neighbors sought,
Content with equity unbought."

In the Preface to Guy Mannering, we have an anecdote of Robert Scott in his earlier days: "My grandfather, while riding over Charterhouse Moor, then a very extensive common, fell suddenly among a large band of gypsies, who were carousing in a hollow surrounded by bushes. They instantly seized on his bridle with shouts of welcome, exclaiming that they had often dined at his expense, and he must now stay and share their cheer. My ancestor was a little alarmed, for he had more money about his person than he cared to risk in such society. However, being naturally a bold, lively spirited man, he entered into the humor of the thing, and sat down to the feast, which consisted of all the varieties of game, poultry, pigs, and so forth, that could be collected by a wide and indiscriminate system of plunder. The dinner was a very merry one, but my relative got a hint from some of the older gypsies, just when 'the mirth and fun grew fast and furious,' and mounting his horse accordingly, he took a French leave of his entertainers." His grandson might have reported more than one scene of the like sort in which he was himself engaged, while hunting the same district, not in quest of foxes or of cattle sales, like the Goodman of Sandy-Knowe, but of ballads for the Minstrelsy. Gypsy stories, as we are told in the same Preface, were frequently in the mouth of the old man when his face "brightened at the evening fire," in the days of the poet's childhood. And he adds that, "as Dr. Johnson had a shadowy recollection of Queen Anne as a stately lady in black, adorned with diamonds," so his own memory was haunted with "a solemn remembrance of a woman of more than female height, dressed in a long red cloak, who once made her appearance beneath the thatched roof of Sandy-Knowe, commenced acquaintance by giving him an apple, and whom he looked on, nevertheless, with as much awe as the future doctor, High Church and Tory as he was doomed to be, could look upon the Queen." This was Madge Gordon, granddaughter of Jean Gordon, the prototype of Meg Merrilies.

Of Robert of Sandy-Knowe, also, there is a very tolerable portrait at Abbotsford, and the likeness of the poet to his grandfather must have forcibly struck every one who has seen it. Indeed, but for its wanting some inches in elevation of forehead—(a considerable want, it must be allowed)—the picture might be mistaken for one of Sir Walter Scott. The keen, shrewd expression of the eye, and the remarkable length and compression of the upper lip, bring him exactly before me as he appeared when entering with all the zeal of a professional agriculturist into the merits of a pit of marle discovered at Abbotsford. Had the old man been represented with his cap on his head, the resemblance to one particular phasis of the most changeful of countenances would have been perfect.

Robert Scott had a numerous progeny, and Sir Walter has intimated his intention of recording several of them "with a sincere tribute of gratitude" in the contemplated prosecution of his autobiography. Two of the younger sons were bred to the naval service of the East India Company; one of whom died early and unmarried; the other was the excellent Captain Robert Scott, of whose kindness to his nephew some particulars are given in the Ashestiel fragment, and more will occur hereafter. Another son, Thomas, followed the profession of his father with ability, and retired in old age upon a handsome independence, acquired by his industrious exertions. He was twice married,—first to his near relation, a daughter of Raeburn; and secondly to Miss Rutherford of Know-South, the estate of which respectable family is now possessed by his son Charles Scott, an amiable and high-spirited gentleman, who was always a special favorite with his eminent kinsman. The death of Thomas Scott is thus recorded in one of the MS. notes on his nephew's own copy of the Haliburton Memorials:—"The said Thomas Scott died at Monklaw, near Jedburgh, at two of the clock, 27th January, 1823, in the 90th year of his life, and fully possessed of all his faculties. He read till nearly the year before his death; and being a great musician on the Scotch pipes, had, when on his deathbed, a favorite tune played over to him by his son James, that he might be sure he left him in full possession of it. After hearing it, he hummed it over himself, and corrected it in several of the notes. The air was that called Sour Plums in Galashiels. When barks and other tonics were given him during his last illness, he privately spat them into his handkerchief, saying, as he had lived all his life without taking doctor's drugs, he wished to die without doing so."

I visited this old man two years before his death, in company with Sir Walter, and thought him about the most venerable figure I had ever set my eyes on—tall and erect, with long flowing tresses of the most silvery whiteness, and stockings rolled up over his knees, after the fashion of three generations back. He sat reading his Bible without spectacles, and did not, for a moment, perceive that any one had entered his room, but on recognizing his nephew he rose, with cordial alacrity, kissing him on both cheeks, and exclaiming, "God bless thee, Walter, my man! thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good." His remarks were lively and sagacious, and delivered with a touch of that humor which seems to have been shared by most of the family. He had the air and manner of an ancient gentleman, and must in his day have been eminently handsome. I saw more than once, about the same period, this respectable man's sister, who had married her cousin Walter, Laird of Raeburn—thus adding a new link to the closeness of the family connection. She also must have been, in her youth, remarkable for personal attractions; as it was, she dwells on my memory as the perfect picture of an old Scotch lady, with a great deal of simple dignity in her bearing, but with the softest eye, and the sweetest voice, and a charm of meekness and gentleness about every look and expression; all which contrasted strikingly enough with the stern dry aspect and manners of her husband, a right descendant of the moss-troopers of Harden, who never seemed at his ease but on horseback, and continued to be the boldest fox-hunter of the district, even to the verge of eighty. The poet's aunt spoke her native language pure and undiluted, but without the slightest tincture of that vulgarity which now seems almost unavoidable in the oral use of a dialect so long banished from courts, and which has not been avoided by any modern writer who has ventured to introduce it, with the exception of Scott, and I may add, speaking generally, of Burns. Lady Raeburn, as she was universally styled, may be numbered with those friends of early days whom her nephew has alluded to in one of his prefaces, as preserving what we may fancy to have been the old Scotch of Holyrood.

The particulars which I have been setting down may help English readers to form some notion of the structure of society in those southern districts of Scotland. When Satchells wrote, he boasted that Buccleuch could summon to his banner one hundred lairds, all of his own name, with ten thousand more—landless men, but still of the same blood. The younger sons of these various lairds were, through many successive generations,

portioned off with fragments of the inheritance, until such subdivision could be carried no farther, and then the cadet, of necessity, either adopted the profession of arms, in some foreign service very frequently, or became a cultivator on the estate of his own elder brother, of the chieftain of his branch, or of the great chief and patriarchal protector of the whole clan. Until the commerce of England and, above all, the military and civil services of the English colonies were thrown open to the enterprise of the Scotch, this system of things continued entire. It still remained in force to a considerable extent at the time when the Goodman of Sandy-Knowe was establishing his children in the world—and I am happy to say, that it is far from being abolished even at the present day. It was a system which bound together the various classes of the rural population in bonds of mutual love and confidence: the original community of lineage was equally remembered on all sides; the landlord could count for more than his rent on the tenant, who regarded him rather as a father or an elder brother, than as one who owed his superiority to mere wealth; and the farmer who, on fit occasions, partook on equal terms of the chase and the hospitality of his landlord, went back with content and satisfaction to the daily labors of a vocation which he found no one disposed to consider as derogating from his gentle blood. Such delusions, if delusions they were, held the natural arrogance of riches in check, taught the poor man to believe that in virtuous poverty he had nothing to blush for, and spread over the whole being of the community the gracious spirit of a primitive humanity.

Walter Scott, the eldest son of Robert of Sandy-Knowe, appears to have been the first of the family that ever adopted a town life, or anything claiming to be classed among the learned professions. His branch of the law, however, could not in those days be advantageously prosecuted without extensive connections in the country; his own were too respectable not to be of much service to him in his calling, and they were cultivated accordingly. His professional visits to Roxburghshire and Ettrick Forest were, in his vigorous life, very frequent; and though he was never supposed to have any tincture either of romance or poetry in his composition, he retained to the last a warm affection for his native district, with a certain reluctant flavor of the old feelings and prejudices of the Borderer. I have little to add to Sir Walter's short and respectful notice of his father, except that I have heard it confirmed by the testimony of many less partial observers. According to every account, he was a most just, honorable,

conscientious man; only too high of spirit for some parts of his business. "He passed from the cradle to the grave," says a surviving relation, "without making an enemy or losing a friend. He was a most affectionate parent, and if he discouraged, rather than otherwise, his son's early devotion to the pursuits which led him to the height of literary eminence, it was only because he did not understand what such things meant, and considered it his duty to keep his young man to that path in which good sense and industry might, humanly speaking, be thought sure of success."

Sir Walter's mother was short of stature, and by no means comely, at least after the days of her early youth. She had received, as became the daughter of an eminently learned physician, the best sort of education then bestowed on young gentlewomen in Scotland. The poet, speaking of Mrs. Euphemia Sinclair, the mistress of the school at which his mother was reared, to the ingenious local antiquary, Mr. Robert Chambers, said that "she must have been possessed of uncommon talents for education, as all her young ladies were, in after-life, fond of reading, wrote and spelled admirably, were well acquainted with history and the belles-lettres, without neglecting the more homely duties of the needle and accompt book; and perfectly well-bred in society." Mr. Chambers adds: "Sir W. further communicated that his mother, and many others of Mrs. Sinclair's pupils, were sent afterwards *to be finished off* by the Honorable Mrs. Ogilvie, a lady who trained her young friends to a style of manners which would now be considered intolerably stiff. Such was the effect of this early training upon the mind of Mrs. Scott, that even when she approached her eightieth year, she took as much care to avoid touching her chair with her back as if she had still been under the stern eye of Mrs. Ogilvie." The physiognomy of the poet bore, if their portraits may be trusted, no resemblance to either of his parents.

Mr. Scott was nearly thirty years of age when he married, and six children, born to him between 1759 and 1766, all perished in infancy. A suspicion that the close situation of the College Wynd had been unfavorable to the health of his family was the motive that induced him to remove to the house which he ever afterwards occupied in George's Square. This removal took place shortly after the poet's birth; and the children born subsequently were in general healthy. Of a family of twelve, of whom six lived to maturity, not one now survives; nor have any of them left descendants, except Sir Walter himself, and his next and dearest brother, Thomas Scott.

He says that his consciousness of existence dated from Sandy-Knowe; and how deep and indelible was the impression which its romantic localities had left on his imagination, I need not remind the readers of Marmion and The Eve of St. John. On the summit of the Crags which overhang the farmhouse stands the ruined tower of Smailholme, the scene of that fine ballad; and the view from thence takes in a wide expanse of the district in which, as has been truly said, every field has its battle, and every rivulet its song:—

> "That lady sat in mournful mood,
> Looked over hill and vale,
> O'er Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
> And all down Teviotdale."—

Mertoun, the principal seat of the Harden family, with its noble groves; nearly in front of it, across the Tweed, Lessudden, the comparatively small but still venerable and stately abode of the Lairds of Raeburn; and the hoary Abbey of Dryburgh, surrounded with yew-trees as ancient as itself, seem to lie almost below the feet of the spectator. Opposite him rise the purple peaks of Eildon, the traditional scene of Thomas the Rhymer's interview with the Queen of Faerie; behind are the blasted peel which the seer of Ercildoune himself inhabited, "the Broom of the Cowdenknowes," the pastoral valley of the Leader, and the bleak wilderness of Lammermoor. To the eastward, the desolate grandeur of Hume Castle breaks the horizon, as the eye travels towards the range of the Cheviot. A few miles westward, Melrose, "like some tall rock with lichens grey," appears clasped amidst the windings of the Tweed; and the distance presents the serrated mountains of the Gala, the Ettrick, and the Yarrow, all famous in song. Such were the objects that had painted the earliest images on the eye of the last and greatest of the Border Minstrels.

As his memory reached to an earlier period of childhood than that of almost any other person, so assuredly no poet has given to the world a picture of the dawning feelings of life and genius, at once so simple, so beautiful, and so complete, as that of his epistle to William Erskine, the chief literary confidant and counsellor of his prime of manhood.

> "Whether an impulse that has birth
> Soon as the infant wakes on earth,

One with our feelings and our powers,
And rather part of us than ours;
Or whether fitlier term'd the sway
Of habit, formed in early day,
Howe'er derived, its force confest
Rules with despotic sway the breast.
And drags us on by viewless chain,
While taste and reason plead in vain....
Thus, while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charm'd me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time,
And feelings rous'd in life's first day,
Glow in the line and prompt the lay.
Then rise those crags, that mountain tower
Which charm'd my fancy's wakening hour.
It was a barren scene and wild
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wall-flower grew,
And honey-suckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruin'd wall.
I deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all its round surveyed;
And still I thought that shattered tower
The mightiest work of human power,
And marvelled as the aged hind,
With some strange tale bewitch'd my mind,
Of forayers who, with headlong force,
Down from that strength had spurr'd their horse,
Their southern rapine to renew,
Far in the distant Cheviots blue,
And home returning, fill'd the hall
With revel, wassail-rout, and brawl.
Methought that still with trump and clang

The gateway's broken arches rang;
Methought grim features, seam'd with scars,
Glared through the windows' rusty bars;
And ever, by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
Of lovers' slights, of ladies' charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors' arms—
Of patriot battles won of old
By Wallace Wight and Bruce the Bold—
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When, pouring from their Highland height,
The Scottish clans, in headlong sway,
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While stretched at length upon the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war displayed,
And onward still the Scottish Lion bore,
And still the scattered Southron fled before."

There are still living in that neighborhood two old women who were in the domestic service of Sandy-Knowe when the lame child was brought thither in the third year of his age. One of them, Tibby Hunter, remembers his coming well; and that "he was a sweet-tempered bairn, a darling with all about the house." The young ewe-milkers delighted, she says, to carry him about on their backs among the crags; and he was "very gleg (quick) at the uptake, and soon kenned every sheep and lamb by headmark as well as any of them." His great pleasure, however, was in the society of the "aged hind," recorded in the epistle to Erskine. "Auld Sandy Ormistoun," called, from the most dignified part of his function, "the Cow-bailie," had the chief superintendence of the flocks that browsed upon "the velvet tufts of loveliest green." If the child saw him in the morning, he could not be satisfied unless the old man would set him astride on his shoulder, and take him to keep him company as he lay watching his charge.

"Here was poetic impulse given
By the green hill and clear blue heaven."

The Cow-bailie blew a particular note on his whistle, which signified to the maid-servants in the house below when the little boy wished to be carried home again. He told his friend, Mr. Skene of Rubislaw, when spending a summer day in his old age among these well-remembered crags, that he delighted to roll about on the grass all day long in the midst of the flock, and that "the sort of fellowship he thus formed with the sheep and lambs had impressed his mind with a degree of affectionate feeling towards them which had lasted throughout life." There is a story of his having been forgotten one day among the knolls when a thunderstorm came on; and his aunt, suddenly recollecting his situation, and running out to bring him home, is said to have found him lying on his back, clapping his hands at the lightning, and crying out, "Bonny! bonny!" at every flash.

I find the following marginal note on his copy of Allan Ramsay's Tea-Table Miscellany (edition 1724): "This book belonged to my grandfather, Robert Scott, and out of it I was taught Hardiknute by heart before I could read the ballad myself. It was the first poem I ever learnt—the last I shall ever forget." According to Tibby Hunter, he was not particularly fond of his book, embracing every pretext for joining his friend the Cow-bailie out of doors; but "Miss Jenny was a grand hand at keeping him to the bit, and by degrees he came to read brawly." An early acquaintance of a higher class, Mrs. Duncan, the wife of the present excellent minister of Mertoun, informs me, that though she was younger than Sir Walter, she has a dim remembrance of the interior of Sandy-Knowe—"Old Mrs. Scott sitting, with her spinning-wheel, at one side of the fire, in a *clean clean* parlor; the grandfather, a good deal failed, in his elbow-chair opposite; and the little boy lying on the carpet, at the old man's feet, listening to the Bible, or whatever good book Miss Jenny was reading to them."

Robert Scott died before his grandson was four years of age; and I heard him mention when he was an old man that he distinctly remembered the writing and sealing of the funeral letters, and all the ceremonial of the melancholy procession as it left Sandy-Knowe. I shall conclude my notices of the residence at Sandy-Knowe with observing that in Sir Walter's account of the friendly clergyman who so often sat at his grandfather's fireside, we cannot fail to trace many features of the secluded divine in the novel of St. Ronan's Well.

I have nothing to add to what he has told us of that excursion to England which interrupted his residence at Sandy-Knowe for about a twelvemonth,

except that I had often been astonished, long before I read his autobiographic fragment, with the minute recollection he seemed to possess of all the striking features of the city of Bath, which he had never seen again since he quitted it before he was six years of age. He has himself alluded, in his Memoir, to the lively recollection he retained of his first visit to the theatre, to which his Uncle Robert carried him to witness a representation of As You Like It. In his reviewal of the Life of John Kemble, written in 1826, he has recorded that impression more fully, and in terms so striking, that I must copy them in this place:—

> "There are few things which those gifted with any degree of imagination recollect with a sense of more anxious and mysterious delight than the first dramatic representation which they have witnessed. The unusual form of the house, filled with such groups of crowded spectators, themselves forming an extraordinary spectacle to the eye which has never witnessed it before, yet all intent upon that wide and mystic curtain, whose dusky undulations permit us now and then to discern the momentary glitter of some gaudy form, or the spangles of some sandalled foot, which trips lightly within: Then the light, brilliant as that of day; then the music, which, in itself a treat sufficient in every other situation, our inexperience mistakes for the very play we came to witness; then the slow rise of the shadowy curtain, disclosing, as if by actual magic, a new land, with woods, and mountains, and lakes, lighted, it seems to us, by another sun, and inhabited by a race of beings different from ourselves, whose language is poetry,—whose dress, demeanor, and sentiments seem something supernatural,—and whose whole actions and discourse are calculated not for the ordinary tone of every-day life, but to excite the stronger and more powerful faculties—to melt with sorrow, overpower with terror, astonish with the marvellous, or convulse with irresistible laughter:—all these wonders stamp indelible impressions on the memory. Those mixed feelings, also, which perplex us between a sense that the scene is but a plaything, and an interest which ever and anon surprises us into a transient belief that that which so strongly affects us cannot be fictitious; those

> mixed and puzzling feelings, also, are exciting in the highest degree. Then there are the bursts of applause, like distant thunder, and the permission afforded to clap our little hands, and add our own scream of delight to a sound so commanding. All this, and much, much more, is fresh in our memory, although, when we felt these sensations, we looked on the stage which Garrick had not yet left. It is now a long while since; yet we have not passed many hours of such unmixed delight, and we still remember the sinking lights, the dispersing crowd, with the vain longings which we felt that the music would again sound, the magic curtain once more arise, and the enchanting dream recommence; and the astonishment with which we looked upon the apathy of the elder part of our company, who, having the means, did not spend every evening in the theatre."

Probably it was this performance that first tempted him to open the page of Shakespeare. Before he returned to Sandy-Knowe, assuredly, notwithstanding the modest language of his autobiography, the progress which had been made in his intellectual education was extraordinary; and it is impossible to doubt that his hitherto almost sole tutoress, Miss Jenny Scott, must have been a woman of tastes and acquirements very far above what could have been often found among Scotch ladies, of any but the highest class at least, in that day. In the winter of 1777, she and her charge spent some few weeks—not happy weeks, the Memoir hints them to have been—in George's Square, Edinburgh; and it so happened, that during this little interval, Mr. and Mrs. Scott received in their domestic circle a guest capable of appreciating, and, fortunately for us, of recording in a very striking manner the remarkable development of young Walter's faculties. Mrs. Cockburn, mentioned by him in his Memoir as the authoress of the modern Flowers of the Forest, born a Rutherford, of Fairnalie, in Selkirkshire, was distantly related to the poet's mother, with whom she had through life been in habits of intimate friendship. This accomplished woman was staying at Ravelston, in the vicinity of Edinburgh, a seat of the Keiths of Dunnottar, nearly related to Mrs. Scott, and to herself. With some of that family she spent an evening in George's Square. She chanced to be writing next day to Dr. Douglas, the well-known and much respected

minister of her native parish, Galashiels; and her letter, of which the Doctor's son has kindly given me a copy, contains the following passage:—

"Edinburgh, Saturday night, 15th of 'the gloomy month when the people of England hang and drown themselves.'

... "I last night supped in Mr. Walter Scott's. He has the most extraordinary genius of a boy I ever saw. He was reading a poem to his mother when I went in. I made him read on; it was the description of a shipwreck. His passion rose with the storm. He lifted his eyes and hands. 'There's the mast gone,' says he; 'crash it goes!—they will all perish!' After his agitation, he turns to me. 'That is too melancholy,' says he; 'I had better read you something more amusing.' I preferred a little chat, and asked his opinion of Milton and other books he was reading, which he gave me wonderfully. One of his observations was, 'How strange it is that Adam, just new come into the world, should know everything—that must be the poet's fancy,' says he. But when he was told he was created perfect by God, he instantly yielded. When taken to bed last night, he told his aunt he liked that lady. 'What lady?' says she. 'Why, Mrs. Cockburn; for I think she is a virtuoso like myself.' 'Dear Walter,' says Aunt Jenny, 'what is a virtuoso?' 'Don't ye know? Why, it's one who wishes and will know everything.'—Now, sir, you will think this a very silly story. Pray, what age do you suppose this boy to be? Name it now, before I tell you. Why, twelve or fourteen. No such thing; he is not quite six years old. He has a lame leg, for which he was a year at Bath, and has acquired the perfect English accent, which he has not lost since he came, and he reads like a Garrick. You will allow this an uncommon exotic."

Some particulars in Mrs. Cockburn's account appear considerably at variance with what Sir Walter has told us respecting his own boyish proficiency—especially in the article of pronunciation. On that last head, however, Mrs. Cockburn was not, probably, a very accurate judge; all that can be said is, that if at this early period he had acquired anything which could be justly described as an English accent, he soon lost, and never again recovered, what he had thus gained from his short residence at Bath. In after-life his pronunciation of words, considered separately, was seldom much different from that of a well-educated Englishman of his time; but he used many words in a sense which belonged to Scotland, not to England,

and the tone and accent remained broadly Scotch, though, unless in the *burr*, which no doubt smacked of the country bordering on Northumberland, there was no *provincial* peculiarity about his utterance. He had strong powers of mimicry—could talk with a peasant quite in his own style, and frequently in general society introduced rustic *patois*, northern, southern, or midland, with great truth and effect; but these things were inlaid dramatically, or playfully, upon his narrative. His exquisite taste in this matter was not less remarkable in his conversation than in the prose of his Scotch novels.

Another lady, nearly connected with the Keiths of Ravelston, has a lively recollection of young Walter, when paying a visit much about the same period to his kind relation, the mistress of that picturesque old mansion, which furnished him in after-days with many of the features of his Tully-Veolan, and whose venerable gardens, with their massive hedges of yew and holly, he always considered as the ideal of the art. The lady, whose letter I have now before me, says she distinctly remembers the sickly boy sitting at the gate of the house with his attendant, when a poor mendicant approached, old and woe-begone, to claim the charity which none asked for in vain at Ravelston. When the man was retiring, the servant remarked to Walter that he ought to be thankful to Providence for having placed him above the want and misery he had been contemplating. The child looked up with a half-wistful, half-incredulous expression, and said, "*Homer was a beggar*!" "How do you know that?" said the other. "Why, don't you remember," answered the little virtuoso, "that

> 'Seven *Roman* cities strove for Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread?'"

The lady smiled at the "*Roman* cities,"—but already

> "Each blank in faithless memory void
> The poet's glowing thought supplied."

It was in this same year, 1777, that he spent some time at Prestonpans; made his first acquaintance with George Constable, the original of his Monkbarns; explored the field where Colonel Gardiner received his death-wound, under the learned guidance of Dalgetty; and marked the spot "where

the grass long grew rank and green, distinguishing it from the rest of the field," above the grave of poor Balmawhapple.

His Uncle Thomas, whom I have described as I saw him in extreme old age at Monklaw, had the management of the farm affairs at Sandy-Knowe, when Walter returned thither from Prestonpans; he was a kind-hearted man, and very fond of the child. Appearing on his return somewhat strengthened, his uncle promoted him from the Cow-bailie's shoulder to a dwarf of the Shetland race, not so large as many a Newfoundland dog. This creature walked freely into the house, and was regularly fed from the boy's hand. He soon learned to sit her well, and often alarmed Aunt Jenny, by cantering over the rough places about the tower. In the evening of his life, when he had a grandchild afflicted with an infirmity akin to his own, he provided him with a little mare of the same breed, and gave her the name of *Marion*, in memory of this early favorite.

Chapter III

Table of Contents

Illustrations of the Autobiography Continued. — High School of Edinburgh. — Residence at Kelso

1778-1783

The report of Walter's progress in horsemanship probably reminded his father that it was time he should be learning other things beyond the department either of Aunt Jenny or Uncle Thomas, and after a few months he was recalled to Edinburgh. But extraordinary as was the progress he had by this time made in that self-education which alone is of primary consequence to spirits of his order, he was found too deficient in lesser matters to be at once entered in the High School. Probably his mother dreaded, and deferred as long as she could, the day when he should be exposed to the rude collision of a crowd of boys. At all events he was placed first in a little private school kept by one Leechman in Bristo Port; and then, that experiment not answering expectation, under the domestic tutorage of Mr. James French, afterwards minister of East Kilbride in Lanarkshire. This respectable man considered him fit to join Luke Fraser's class in October, 1778.

His own account of his progress at this excellent seminary is, on the whole, very similar to what I have received from some of his surviving schoolfellows. His quick apprehension and powerful memory enabled him, at little cost of labor, to perform the usual routine of tasks, in such a manner as to keep him generally "in a decent place" (so he once expressed it to Mr. Skene) "about the middle of the class; with which," he continued, "I was the better contented, that it chanced to be near the fire." Mr. Fraser was, I believe, more zealous in enforcing attention to the technicalities of grammar, than to excite curiosity about historical facts, or imagination to strain after the flights of a poet. There is no evidence that Scott, though he speaks of him as his "kind master," in remembrance probably of sympathy for his physical infirmities, ever attracted his special notice with reference to scholarship; but Adam, the Rector, into whose class he passed in October, 1782, was, as his situation demanded, a teacher of a more liberal caste; and

though never, even under his guidance, did Walter fix and concentrate his ambition so as to maintain an eminent place, still the vivacity of his talents was observed, and the readiness of his memory in particular was so often displayed, that (as Mr. Irving, his chosen friend of that day, informs me) the Doctor "would constantly refer to him for dates, the particulars of battles, and other remarkable events alluded to in Horace, or whatever author the boys were reading, and used to call him the historian of the class." No one who has read, as few have not, Dr. Adam's interesting work on Roman Antiquities will doubt the author's capacity for stimulating such a mind as young Scott's.

He speaks of himself as occasionally "glancing like a meteor from the bottom to the top of the form." His schoolfellow, Mr. Claud Russell, remembers that he once made a great leap in consequence of the stupidity of some laggard on what is called the *dult's* (dolt's) bench, who being asked, on boggling at *cum*, "what part of speech is *with*?" answered, "*a substantive*." The Rector, after a moment's pause, thought it worth while to ask his *dux*—"Is *with* ever a substantive?" but all were silent until the query reached Scott, then near the bottom of the class, who instantly responded by quoting a verse of the book of Judges:—"And Samson said unto Delilah, If they bind me with seven green *withs* that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and as another man." Another upward movement, accomplished in a less laudable manner, but still one strikingly illustrative of his ingenious resources, I am enabled to preserve through the kindness of a brother poet and esteemed friend, to whom Sir Walter himself communicated it in the melancholy twilight of his bright day.

Mr. Rogers says—"Sitting one day alone with him in your house, in the Regent's Park—(it was the day but one before he left it to embark at Portsmouth for Malta)—I led him, among other things, to tell me once again a story of himself, which he had formerly told me, and which I had often wished to recover. When I returned home, I wrote it down, as nearly as I could, in his own words; and here they are. The subject is an achievement worthy of Ulysses himself, and such as many of his schoolfellows could, no doubt, have related of him; but I fear I have done it no justice, though the story is so very characteristic that it should not be lost. The inimitable manner in which he told it—the glance of the eye, the turn of the head, and the light that played over his faded features, as, one by one, the circumstances came back to him, accompanied by a thousand

boyish feelings, that had slept perhaps for years—there is no language, not even his own, could convey to you; but you can supply them. Would that others could do so, who had not the good fortune to know him!—The memorandum (Friday, October 21, 1831) is as follows:—

"There was a boy in my class at school, who stood always at the top, nor could I with all my efforts supplant him. Day came after day, and still he kept his place, do what I would; till at length I observed that, when a question was asked him, he always fumbled with his fingers at a particular button in the lower part of his waistcoat. To remove it, therefore, became expedient in my eyes; and in an evil moment it was removed with a knife. Great was my anxiety to know the success of my measure; and it succeeded too well. When the boy was again questioned, his fingers sought again for the button, but it was not to be found. In his distress he looked down for it; it was to be seen no more than to be felt. He stood confounded, and I took possession of his place; nor did he ever recover it, or ever, I believe, suspect who was the author of his wrong. Often in after-life has the sight of him smote me as I passed by him; and often have I resolved to make him some reparation; but it ended in good resolutions. Though I never renewed my acquaintance with him, I often saw him, for he filled some inferior office in one of the courts of law at Edinburgh. Poor fellow! I believe he is dead; he took early to drinking."

The autobiography tells us that his translations in verse from Horace and Virgil were often approved by Dr. Adam. One of these little pieces, written in a weak boyish scrawl, within pencilled marks still visible, had been carefully preserved by his mother; it was found folded up in a cover inscribed by the old lady—"*My Walter's first lines*, 1782."

> "In awful ruins Ætna thunders nigh,
> And sends in pitchy whirlwinds to the sky
> Black clouds of smoke, which, still as they aspire,
> From their dark sides there bursts the glowing fire;
> At other times huge balls of fire are toss'd,
> That lick the stars, and in the smoke are lost:
> Sometimes the mount, with vast convulsions torn,
> Emits huge rocks, which instantly are borne
> With loud explosions to the starry skies,
> The stones made liquid as the huge mass flies,

Then back again with greater weight recoils,
While Ætna thundering from the bottom boils."

I gather from Mr. Irving that these lines were considered as the second best set of those produced on the occasion—Colin Mackenzie of Portmore, through life Scott's dear friend, carrying off the premium.

In his Introduction to the Lay, he alludes to an original effusion of these "schoolboy days," prompted by a thunderstorm, which he says "was much approved of, until a malevolent critic sprung up in the shape of an apothecary's blue-buskined wife, who affirmed that my most sweet poetry was copied from an old magazine. I never" (he continues) "forgave the imputation, and even now I acknowledge some resentment against the poor woman's memory. She indeed accused me unjustly when she said I had stolen my poem ready made; but as I had, like most premature poets, copied all the words and ideas of which my verses consisted, she was so far right. I made one or two faint attempts at verse after I had undergone this sort of daw-plucking at the hands of the apothecary's wife, but some friend or other always advised me to put my verses into the fire; and, like Dorax in the play, I submitted, thought with a swelling heart." These lines, and another short piece "On the Setting Sun," were lately found wrapped up in a cover, inscribed by Dr. Adam, "Walter Scott, July, 1783," and have been kindly transmitted to me by the gentleman who discovered them.

ON A THUNDERSTORM.

"Loud o'er my head though awful thunders roll,
And vivid lightnings flash from pole to pole,
Yet 't is thy voice, my God, that bids them fly,
Thy arm directs those lightnings through the sky.
Then let the good thy mighty name revere,
And hardened sinners thy just vengeance fear."

ON THE SETTING SUN.

"Those evening clouds, that setting ray
And beauteous tints, serve to display
Their great Creator's praise;
Then let the short-lived thing call'd man,

Whose life's comprised within a span,
To Him his homage raise.

"We often praise the evening clouds,
And tints so gay and bold,
But seldom think upon our God,
Who tinged these clouds with gold!"

It must, I think, be allowed that these lines, though of the class to which the poet himself modestly ascribes them, and not to be compared with the efforts of Pope, still less of Cowley at the same period, show, nevertheless, praiseworthy dexterity for a boy of twelve.

The fragment tells us that on the whole he was "more distinguished in *the yards* (as the High School playground was called) than in *the class*;" and this, not less than the intellectual advancement which years before had excited the admiration of Mrs. Cockburn, was the natural result of his lifelong "rebellion against external circumstances." He might now with very slender exertion have been the *dux* of his form; but if there was more difficulty, there was also more to whet his ambition, in the attempt to overcome the disadvantages of his physical misfortune, and in spite of them assert equality with the best of his compeers on the ground which they considered as the true arena of honor. He told me, in walking through these same *yards* forty years afterwards, that he had scarcely made his first appearance there, before some dispute arising, his opponent remarked that "there was no use to hargle-bargle with a cripple;" upon which he replied, that if he might fight *mounted*, he would try his hand with any one of his inches. "An elder boy," said he, "who had perhaps been chuckling over our friend Roderick Random when his mother supposed him to be in full cry after Pyrrhus or Porus, suggested that the two little tinklers might be lashed front to front upon a deal board—and—'O gran bonta de' cavalier antichi'—the proposal being forthwith agreed to, I received my first bloody nose in an attitude which would have entitled me, in the blessed days of personal cognizances, to assume that of a *lioncel seiant gules*. My pugilistic trophies here," he continued, "were all the results of such *sittings in banco*." Considering his utter ignorance of fear, the strength of his chest and upper limbs, and that the scientific part of pugilism never flourished in Scotland, I dare say these trophies were not few.

The mettle of the High School boys, however, was principally displayed elsewhere than in their own *yards*; and Sir Walter has furnished us with ample indications of the delight with which he found himself at length capable of rivalling others in such achievements as required the exertion of active locomotive powers. Speaking of some scene of his infancy in one of his latest tales, he says—"Every step of the way after I have passed through the green already mentioned" (probably the *Meadows* behind George's Square) "has for me something of an early remembrance. There is the stile at which I can recollect a cross child's-maid upbraiding me with my infirmity as she lifted me coarsely and carelessly over the flinty steps which my brothers traversed with shout and bound. I remember the *suppressed bitterness* of the moment, and, conscious of my own infirmity, the envy with which I regarded the easy movements and elastic steps of my more happily formed brethren. Alas!" he adds, "these goodly barks have all perished in life's wide ocean, and only that which seemed, as the naval phrase goes, so little seaworthy, has reached the port when the tempest is over." How touching to compare with this passage that in which he records his pride in being found before he left the High School one of the boldest and nimblest climbers of "the kittle nine stanes," a passage of difficulty which might puzzle a chamois-hunter of the Alps, its steps, "few and far between," projected high in air from the precipitous black granite of the Castle rock. But climbing and fighting could sometimes be combined, and he has in almost the same page dwelt upon perhaps the most favorite of all these juvenile exploits—namely, "the manning of the Cowgate Port,"—in the season when snowballs could be employed by the young scorners of discipline for the annoyance of the Town-guard. To understand fully the feelings of a High School boy of that day with regard to those ancient Highlanders, who then formed the only police of the city of Edinburgh, the reader must consult the poetry of the scapegrace Fergusson. It was in defiance of their Lochaber axes that the Cowgate Port was manned—and many were the occasions on which its defence presented a formidable mimicry of warfare. "The gateway," Sir Walter adds, "is now demolished, and probably most of its garrison lie as low as the fortress! To recollect that I, however naturally disqualified, was one of these juvenile dreadnoughts, is a sad reflection for one who cannot now step over a brook without assistance."

I am unwilling to swell this narrative by extracts from Scott's published works, but there is one juvenile exploit told in the General Preface to the Waverley Novels, which I must crave leave to introduce here in his own language, because it is essentially necessary to complete our notion of his schoolboy life and character. "It is well known," he says, "that there is little boxing at the Scottish schools. About forty or fifty years ago, however, a far more dangerous mode of fighting, in parties or factions, was permitted in the streets of Edinburgh, to the great disgrace of the police, and danger of the parties concerned. These parties were generally formed from the quarters of the town in which the combatants resided, those of a particular square or district fighting against those of an adjoining one. Hence it happened that the children of the higher classes were often pitted against those of the lower, each taking their side according to the residence of their friends. So far as I recollect, however, it was unmingled either with feelings of democracy or aristocracy, or indeed with malice or ill-will of any kind towards the opposite party. In fact, it was only a rough mode of play. Such contests were, however, maintained with great vigor with stones, and sticks, and fisticuffs, when one party dared to charge, and the other stood their ground. Of course, mischief sometimes happened; boys are said to have been killed at these *bickers*, as they were called, and serious accidents certainly took place, as many contemporaries can bear witness.

"The author's father residing in George's Square, in the southern side of Edinburgh, the boys belonging to that family, with others in the square, were arranged into a sort of company, to which a lady of distinction presented a handsome set of colors. Now, this company or regiment, as a matter of course, was engaged in weekly warfare with the boys inhabiting the Cross-causeway, Bristo-Street, the Potterrow—in short, the neighboring suburbs. These last were chiefly of the lower rank, but hardy loons, who threw stones to a hair's-breadth, and were very rugged antagonists at close quarters. The skirmish sometimes lasted for a whole evening, until one party or the other was victorious, when, if ours were successful, we drove the enemy to their quarters, and were usually chased back by the reinforcement of bigger lads who came to their assistance. If, on the contrary, we were pursued, as was often the case, into the precincts of our square, we were in our turn supported by our elder brothers, domestic servants, and similar auxiliaries. It followed, from our frequent opposition to each other, that, though not knowing the names of our enemies, we were

yet well acquainted with their appearance, and had nicknames for the most remarkable of them. One very active and spirited boy might be considered as the principal leader in the cohort of the suburbs. He was, I suppose, thirteen or fourteen years old, finely made, tall, blue-eyed, with long fair hair, the very picture of a youthful Goth. This lad was always first in the charge, and last in the retreat—the Achilles at once and Ajax of the Cross-causeway. He was too formidable to us not to have a cognomen, and, like that of a knight of old, it was taken from the most remarkable part of his dress, being a pair of old green livery breeches, which was the principal part of his clothing; for, like Pentapolin, according to Don Quixote's account, Green-breeks, as we called him, always entered the battle with bare arms, legs, and feet.

"It fell, that once upon a time when the combat was at its thickest, this plebeian champion headed a charge so rapid and furious, that all fled before him. He was several paces before his comrades, and had actually laid his hands upon the patrician standard, when one of our party, whom some misjudging friend had entrusted with a *couteau de chasse*, or hanger, inspired with a zeal for the honor of the corps, worthy of Major Sturgeon himself, struck poor Green-breeks over the head, with strength sufficient to cut him down. When this was seen, the casualty was so far beyond what had ever taken place before, that both parties fled different ways, leaving poor Green-breeks, with his bright hair plentifully dabbled in blood, to the care of the watchman, who (honest man) took care not to know who had done the mischief. The bloody hanger was thrown into one of the Meadow ditches, and solemn secrecy was sworn on all hands; but the remorse and terror of the actor were beyond all bounds, and his apprehensions of the most dreadful character. The wounded hero was for a few days in the Infirmary, the case being only a trifling one. But though inquiry was strongly pressed on him, no argument could make him indicate the person from whom he had received the wound, though he must have been perfectly well known to him. When he recovered and was dismissed, the author and his brothers opened a communication with him, through the medium of a popular gingerbread baker, of whom both parties were customers, in order to tender a subsidy in the name of smart-money. The sum would excite ridicule were I to name it; but sure I am that the pockets of the noted Green-breeks never held as much money of his own. He declined the remittance, saying that he would not sell his blood; but at the same time reprobated the

idea of being an informer, which he said was *clam*, that is, base or mean. With much urgency, he accepted a pound of snuff for the use of some old woman—aunt, grandmother, or the like—with whom he lived. We did not become friends, for the *bickers* were more agreeable to both parties than any more pacific amusement; but we conducted them ever after under mutual assurances of the highest consideration for each other." Sir Walter adds—"Of five brothers, all healthy and promising in a degree far beyond one whose infancy was visited by personal infirmity, and whose health after this period seemed long very precarious, I am, nevertheless, the only survivor. The best loved, and the best deserving to be loved, who had destined this incident to be the foundation of a literary composition, died 'before his day,' in a distant and foreign land; and trifles assume an importance not their own when connected with those who have been loved and lost."

During some part of his attendance on the High School, young Walter spent one hour daily at a small separate seminary of writing and arithmetic, kept by one Morton, where, as was, and I suppose continues to be, the custom of Edinburgh, young girls came for instruction as well as boys; and one of Mr. Morton's female pupils has been kind enough to set down some little reminiscences of Scott, who happened to sit at the same desk with herself. They appear to me the more interesting, because the lady had no acquaintance with him in the course of his subsequent life. Her nephew, Mr. James (the accomplished author of Richelieu), to whose friendship I owe her communication, assures me, too, that he had constantly heard her tell the same things in the very same way, as far back as his own memory reaches, many years before he had ever seen Sir Walter, or his aunt could have dreamt of surviving to assist in the biography of his early days.

"He attracted," Mrs. Churnside says, "the regard and fondness of all his companions, for he was ever rational, fanciful, lively, and possessed of that urbane gentleness of manner which makes its way to the heart. His imagination was constantly at work, and he often so engrossed the attention of those who learnt with him, that little could be done—Mr. Morton himself being forced to laugh as much as the little scholars at the odd turns and devices he fell upon; for he did nothing in the ordinary way, but, for example, even when he wanted ink to his pen, would get up some ludicrous story about sending his doggie to the mill again. He used also to interest us in a more serious way, by telling us the *visions*, as he called them, which he

had lying alone on the floor or sofa, when kept from going to church on a Sunday by ill health. Child as I was, I could not help being highly delighted with his description of the glories he had seen—his misty and sublime sketches of the regions above, which he had visited in his trance. Recollecting these descriptions, radiant and not gloomy as they were, I have often thought since that there must have been a bias in his mind to superstition—the marvellous seemed to have such power over him, though the mere offspring of his own imagination, that the expression of his face, habitually that of genuine benevolence, mingled with a shrewd innocent humor, changed greatly while he was speaking of these things, and showed a deep intenseness of feeling, as if he were awed even by his own recital.... I may add, that in walking he used always to keep his eyes turned downwards as if thinking, but with a pleasing expression of countenance, as if enjoying his thoughts. Having once known him, it was impossible ever to forget him. In this manner, after all the changes of a long life, he constantly appears as fresh as yesterday to my mind's eye."

This beautiful extract needs no commentary. I may as well, however, bear witness, that exactly as the schoolboy still walks before her "mind's eye," his image rises familiarly to mine, who never saw him until he was past the middle of life: that I trace in every feature of her delineation the same gentleness of aspect and demeanor which the presence of the female sex, whether in silk or in russet, ever commanded in the man; and that her description of the change on his countenance when passing from the "doggie of the mill" to the dream of Paradise is a perfect picture of what no one that has heard him recite a fragment of high poetry, in the course of table talk, can ever forget. Strangers may catch some notion of what fondly dwells on the memory of every friend, by glancing from the conversational bust of Chantrey to the first portrait by Raeburn, which represents the Last Minstrel as musing in his prime within sight of Hermitage.

I believe it was about this time that, as he expresses it in one of his latest works, "the first images of horror from the scenes of real life were stamped upon his mind," by the tragical death of his great-aunt, Mrs. Margaret Swinton. This old lady, whose extraordinary nerve of character he illustrates largely in the introduction to the story of Aunt Margaret's Mirror, was now living with one female attendant, in a small house not far from Mr. Scott's residence in George's Square. The maid-servant, in a sudden access of insanity, struck her mistress to death with a coal-axe, and then rushed

furiously into the street with the bloody weapon in her hand, proclaiming aloud the horror she had perpetrated. I need not dwell on the effects which must have been produced in a virtuous and affectionate circle by this shocking incident. The old lady had been tenderly attached to her nephew, "She was," he says, "our constant resource in sickness, or when we tired of noisy play, and closed round her to listen to her tales."

It was at this same period that Mr. and Mrs. Scott received into their house, as tutor for their children, Mr. James Mitchell, of whom the Ashestiel Memoir gives us a description, such as I could not have presented had he been still alive. Mr. Mitchell was living, however, at the time of his pupil's death, and I am now not only at liberty to present Scott's unmutilated account of their intercourse, but enabled to give also the most simple and characteristic narrative of the other party. I am sure no one, however nearly related to Mr. Mitchell, will now complain of seeing his keen-sighted pupil's sketch placed by the side, as it were, of the fuller portraiture drawn by the unconscious hand of the amiable and worthy man himself. The following is an extract from Mr. Mitchell's MS., entitled "Memorials of the most remarkable occurrences and transactions of my life, drawn up in the hope that, when I shall be no more, they may be read with profit and pleasure by my children." The good man was so kind as to copy out one chapter for my use, as soon as he heard of Sir Walter Scott's death. He was then, and had for many years been, minister of a Presbyterian chapel at Wooler, in Northumberland, to which situation he had retired on losing his benefice at Montrose, in consequence of the Sabbatarian scruples alluded to in Scott's Autobiography.

"In 1782," says Mr. Mitchell, "I became a tutor in Mr. Walter Scott's family. He was a Writer to the Signet in George's Square, Edinburgh. Mr. Scott was a fine-looking man, then a little past the meridian of life, of dignified, yet agreeable manners. His business was extensive. He was a man of tried integrity, of strict morals, and had a respect for religion and its ordinances. The church the family attended was the Old Greyfriars, of which the celebrated Doctors Robertson and Erskine were the ministers. Thither went Mr. and Mrs. Scott every Sabbath, when well and at home, attended by their fine young family of children, and their domestic servants—a sight so amiable and exemplary as often to excite in my breast a glow of heartfelt satisfaction. According to an established and laudable practice in the family,

the heads of it, the children, and servants, were assembled on Sunday evenings in the drawing-room, and examined on the Church Catechism and sermons they had heard delivered during the course of the day; on which occasions I had to perform the part of chaplain, and conclude with prayer. From Mrs. Scott I learned that Mr. Scott was one that had not been seduced from the paths of virtue; but had been enabled to venerate good morals from his youth. When he first came to Edinburgh to follow out his profession, some of his schoolfellows, who, like him, had come to reside in Edinburgh, attempted to unhinge his principles, and corrupt his morals; but when they found him resolute, and unshaken in his virtuous dispositions, they gave up the attempt; but, instead of abandoning him altogether, they thought the more of him, and honored him with their confidence and patronage; which is certainly a great inducement to young men in the outset of life to act a similar part.

"After having heard of his inflexible adherence to the cause of virtue in his youth, and his regular attendance on the ordinances of religion in after-life, we will not be surprised to be told that he bore a sacred regard for the Sabbath, nor at the following anecdote illustrative of it. An opulent farmer of East Lothian had employed Mr. Scott as his agent, in a cause depending before the Court of Session. Having a curiosity to see something in the papers relative to the process, which were deposited in Mr. Scott's hands, this worldly man came into Edinburgh on a Sunday to have an inspection of them. As there was no immediate necessity for this measure, Mr. Scott asked the farmer if an ordinary week-day would not answer equally well. The farmer was not willing to take this advice, but insisted on the production of his papers. Mr. Scott then delivered them to him, saying, it was not his practice to engage in secular business on the Sabbath, and that he would have no difficulty in Edinburgh to find some of his profession who would have none of his scruples. No wonder such a man was confided in, and greatly honored in his professional line.—All the poor services I did to his family were more than repaid by the comfort and honor I had by being in the family, the pecuniary remuneration I received, and particularly by his recommendation of me, some time afterwards, to the Magistrates and Town Council of Montrose, when there was a vacancy, and this brought me on the carpet, which, as he said, was all he could do, as the settlement would ultimately hinge on a popular election.

"Mrs. Scott was a wife in every respect worthy of such a husband. Like her partner, she was then a little past the meridian of life, of a prepossessing appearance, amiable manners, of a cultivated understanding, affectionate disposition, and fine taste. She was both able and disposed to soothe her husband's mind under the asperities of business, and to be a rich blessing to her numerous progeny. But what constituted her distinguishing ornament was that she was sincerely religious. Some years previous to my entrance into the family, I understood from one of the servants she had been under deep religious concern about her soul's salvation, which had ultimately issued in a conviction of the truth of Christianity, and in the enjoyment of its divine consolations. She liked Dr. Erskine's sermons; but was not fond of the Principal's, however rational, eloquent, and well composed, and would, if other things had answered, have gone, when he preached, to have heard Dr. Davidson. Mrs. Scott was a descendant of Dr. Daniel Rutherford, a professor in the Medical School of Edinburgh, and one of those eminent men, who, by learning and professional skill, brought it to the high pitch of celebrity to which it has attained. He was an excellent linguist, and, according to the custom of the times, delivered his prelections to the students in Latin. Mrs. Scott told me, that, when prescribing to his patients, it was his custom to offer up at the same time a prayer for the accompanying blessing of heaven; a laudable practice, in which, I fear, he has not been generally imitated by those of his profession.

"Mr. Scott's family consisted of six children, all of which were at home except the eldest, who was an officer in the army; and as they were of an age fit for instruction, they were all committed to my superintendence, which, in dependence on God, I exercised with an earnest and faithful regard to their temporal and spiritual good. As the most of them were under public teachers, the duty assigned me was mainly to assist them in the prosecution of their studies. In all the excellencies, whether as to temper, conduct, talents natural or acquired, which any of the children individually possessed, to Master Walter, since the celebrated Sir Walter, must a decided preference be ascribed. Though, like the rest of the children, placed under my tuition, the conducting of his education comparatively cost me but little trouble, being, by the quickness of his intellect, tenacity of memory, and diligent application to his studies, generally equal of himself to the acquisition of those tasks I or others prescribed to him. So that Master

Walter might be regarded not so much as a pupil of mine, but as a friend and companion, and, I may add, as an assistant also; for, by his example and admonitions, he greatly strengthened my hands, and stimulated my other pupils to industry and good behavior. I seldom had occasion all the time I was in the family to find fault with him even for trifles, and only once to threaten serious castigation, of which he was no sooner aware than he suddenly sprung up, threw his arms about my neck, and kissed me. It is hardly needful to state, that now the intended castigation was no longer thought of. By such generous and noble conduct, my displeasure was in a moment converted into esteem and admiration; my soul melted into tenderness, and I was ready to mingle my tears with his. Some incidents in reference to him in that early period, and some interesting and useful conversations I had with him, then deeply impressed on my mind, and which the lapse of near half a century has not yet obliterated, afforded no doubtful presage of his future greatness and celebrity. On my going into the family, as far as I can judge, he might be in his twelfth or thirteenth year, a boy in the rector's class. However elevated above the other boys in genius, though generally in the list of the duxes, he was seldom, as far as I recollect, the leader of the school: nor need this be deemed surprising, as it has often been observed that boys of original genius have been outstripped, by those that were far inferior to themselves, in the acquisition of the dead languages. Dr. Adam, the rector, celebrated for his knowledge of the Latin language, was deservedly held by Mr. Walter in high admiration and regard; of which the following anecdote may be adduced as a proof. In the High School, as is well known, there are four masters and a rector. The classes of those masters the rector in rotation inspects, and in the mean time the master, whose school is examined, goes in to take care of the rector's. One of the masters, on account of some grudge, had rudely assaulted and injured the venerable rector one night in the High School Wynd. The rector's scholars, exasperated at the outrage, at the instigation of Master Walter, determined on revenge, and which was to be executed when this obnoxious master should again come to teach the class. When this occurred, the task the class had prescribed to them was that passage in the *Æneid* of Virgil, where the Queen of Carthage interrogates the court as to the stranger that had come to her habitation—

'Quis novus hic hospes successit sedibus nostris?'

Master Walter, having taken a piece of paper, inscribed upon it these words, substituting *vanus* for *novus*, and pinned it to the tail of the master's coat, and turned him into ridicule by raising the laugh of the whole school against him. Though this juvenile action could not be justified on the footing of Christian principles, yet certainly it was so far honorable that it was not a dictate of personal revenge, but that it originated in respect for a worthy and injured man, and detestation of one whom he looked upon as a bad character.

"One forenoon, on coming from the High School, he said he wished to know my opinion as to his conduct in a matter he should state to me. When passing through the High School Yards, he found a half-guinea piece on the ground. Instead of appropriating this to his own use, a sense of honesty led him to look around, and on doing so he espied a countryman, whom he suspected to be the proprietor. Having asked the man if he had lost anything, he searched his pockets, and then replied that he had lost half-a-guinea. Master Walter with pleasure presented him with his lost treasure. In this transaction, his ingenuity in finding out the proper owner, and his integrity in restoring the property, met my most cordial approbation.

"When in church, Master Walter had more of a soporific tendency than the rest of my young charge. This seemed to be constitutional. He needed one or other of the family to arouse him, and from this it might be inferred that he would cut a poor figure on the Sabbath evening when examined about the sermons. But what excited the admiration of the family was, that none of the children, however wakeful, could answer as he did. The only way that I could account for this was, that when he heard the text, and divisions of the subject, his good sense, memory, and genius, supplied the thoughts which would occur to the preacher.

"On one occasion, in the dining-room, when, according to custom, he was reading some author in the time of relaxation from study, I asked him how he accounted for the superiority of knowledge he possessed above the rest of the family. His reply was:—Some years ago he had been attacked by a swelling in one of his ankles, which confined him to the house, and prevented him taking amusement and exercise, and which was the cause of his lameness. As under this ailment he could not romp with his brothers and the other young people in the green in George's Square, he found himself

compelled to have recourse to some substitute for the juvenile amusements of his comrades, and this was reading. So that, to what he no doubt accounted a painful dispensation of Providence, he probably stood indebted for his future celebrity. When it was understood I was to leave the family, Master Walter told me that he had a small present to give me, to be kept as a memorandum of his friendship, and that it was of little value: 'But you know, Mr. Mitchell,' said he, 'that presents are not to be estimated according to their intrinsic value, but according to the intention of the donor.' This was his Adam's Grammar, which had seen hard service in its day, and had many animals and inscriptions on its margins. This, to my regret, is no longer to be found in my collection of books, nor do I know what has become of it.

"Since leaving the family, although no stranger to the widely spreading fame of Sir Walter, I have had few opportunities of personal intercourse with him. When minister in the second charge of the Established Church at Montrose, he paid me a visit, and spent a night with me—few visits have been more gratifying. He was then on his return from Aberdeen, where he, as an advocate, had attended the Court of Justiciary in its northern circuit. Nor was his attendance in this court his sole object: another, and perhaps the principal, was, as he stated to me, to collect in his excursion ancient ballads and traditional stories about fairies, witches, and ghosts. Such intelligence proved to me as an electrical shock; and as I then sincerely regretted, so do I still, that Sir Walter's precious time was so much devoted to the *dulce*, rather than the *utile* of composition, and that his great talent should have been wasted on such subjects. At the same time I feel happy to qualify this censure, as I am generally given to understand that his Novels are of a more pure and unexceptionable nature than characterizes writings of a similar description; while at the same time his pen has been occupied in the production of works of a better and nobler order. Impressed with the conviction that he would one day arrive at honor and influence in his native country, I endeavored to improve the occasion of his visit to secure his patronage in behalf of the strict and evangelical party in the Church of Scotland, in exerting himself to induce patrons to grant to the Christian people liberty to elect their own pastors in cases of vacancy. His answer struck me much: it was—"Nay, nay, Mr. Mitchell, I'll not do that; for if that were to be done, I and the like of me would have no life with such as you;" from which I inferred he thought that, were the evangelical clergy to obtain

the superiority, they would introduce such strictness of discipline as would not quadrate with the ideas of that party called *the moderate* in the Church of Scotland, whose views, I presume, Sir Walter had now adopted. Some, however, to whom I have mentioned Sir Walter's reply, have suggested that I had misunderstood his meaning, and that what he said was not in earnest, but in jocularity and good-humor. This may be true, and certainly is a candid interpretation. As to the ideal beings already mentioned as the subject of his inquiries, my materials were too scanty to afford him much information."

Notwithstanding the rigidly Presbyterian habits which this chronicle describes with so much more satisfaction than the corresponding page in the Ashestiel Memoir, I am reminded, by a communication already quoted from a lady of the Ravelston family, that Mrs. Scott, who had, she says, "a turn for literature quite uncommon among the ladies of the time," encouraged her son in his passion for Shakespeare; that his plays, and the Arabian Nights, were often read aloud in the family circle by Walter, "and served to spend many a happy evening hour;" nay, that, however good Mitchell may have frowned at such a suggestion, even Mr. Scott made little objection to his children, and some of their young friends, getting up private theatricals occasionally in the dining-room after the lessons of the day were over. The lady adds, that Walter was always the manager, and had the whole charge of the affair, and that the favorite piece used to be Jane Shore, in which he was the Hastings, his sister the Alicia. I have heard from another friend of the family that Richard III. also was attempted, and that Walter took the part of the Duke of Gloucester, observing that "the limp would do well enough to represent the hump."

A story which I have seen in print, about his partaking in the dancing lessons of his brothers, I do not believe. But it was during Mr. Mitchell's residence in the family that they all made their unsuccessful attempts in the art of music, under the auspices of poor *Allister* Campbell—the Editor of Albyn's Anthology.

Mr. Mitchell appears to have terminated his superintendence before Walter left Dr. Adam, and in the interval between this and his entrance at College, he spent some time with his aunt, who now inhabited a cottage at Kelso; but the Memoir, I suspect, gives too much extension to that residence—which may be accounted for by his blending with it a similar

visit which he paid to the same place during his College vacation of the next year.

Some of the features of Miss Jenny's abode at Kelso are alluded to in the Memoir, but the fullest description of it occurs in his Essay on Landscape Gardening (1828), where, talking of grounds laid out in the *Dutch taste*, he says:—"Their rarity *now* entitles them to some care as a species of antiques, and unquestionably they give character to some snug, quiet, and sequestered situations, which would otherwise have no marked feature of any kind. I retain an early and pleasing recollection of the seclusion of such a scene. A small cottage, adjacent to a beautiful village, the habitation of an ancient maiden lady, was for some time my abode. It was situated in a garden of seven or eight acres, planted about the beginning of the eighteenth century by one of the Millars, related to the author of the Gardeners' Dictionary, or, for aught I know, by himself. It was full of long, straight walks, between hedges of yew and hornbeam, which rose tall and close on every side. There were thickets of flowery shrubs, a bower, and an arbor, to which access was obtained through a little maze of contorted walks calling itself a labyrinth. In the centre of the bower was a splendid Platanus, or Oriental plane—a huge hill of leaves—one of the noblest specimens of that regularly beautiful tree which I remember to have seen. In different parts of the garden were fine ornamental trees, which had attained great size, and the orchard was filled with fruit-trees of the best description. There were seats, and hilly walks, and a banqueting house. I visited this scene lately, after an absence of many years. Its air of retreat, the seclusion which its alleys afforded, was entirely gone; the huge Platanus had died, like most of its kind, in the beginning of this century; the hedges were cut down, the trees stubbed up, and the whole character of the place so destroyed that I was glad when I could leave it." It was under this Platanus that Scott first devoured Percy's Reliques. I remember well being with him, in 1820 or 1821, when he revisited the favorite scene, and the sadness of his looks when he discovered that the "huge hill of leaves" was no more.

To keep up his scholarship while inhabiting *the garden*, he attended daily, as he informs us, the public school of Kelso, and here he made his first acquaintance with a family, two members of which were intimately connected with the most important literary transactions of his after-life—James Ballantyne, the printer of almost all his works, and his brother John, who had a share in the publication of many of them. Their father was a

respectable tradesman in this pretty town. The elder of the brothers, who did not long survive his illustrious friend, was kind enough to make an exertion on behalf of this work, while stretched on the bed from which he never rose, and dictated a valuable paper of *memoranda* from which I shall here introduce my first extract:—

> "I think," says James Ballantyne, "it was in the year 1783 that I first became acquainted with Sir Walter Scott, then a boy about my own age, at the Grammar School of Kelso, of which Mr. Lancelot Whale was the Rector. The impression left by his manners was, even at that early period, calculated to be deep, and I cannot recall any other instance in which the man and the boy continued to resemble each other so much and so long. Walter Scott was not a constant schoolfellow at this seminary; he only attended it for a few weeks during the vacation of the Edinburgh High School. He was then, as he continued during all his after-life to be, devoted to antiquarian lore, and was certainly the best story-teller I had ever heard, either then or since. He soon discovered that I was as fond of listening as he himself was of relating; and I remember it was a thing of daily occurrence, that after he had made himself master of his own lesson, I, alas, being still sadly to seek in mine, he used to whisper to me, 'Come, slink over beside me, Jamie, and I'll tell you a story.' I well recollect that he had a form, or seat, appropriated to himself, the particular reason of which I cannot tell, but he was always treated with a peculiar degree of respect, not by the boys of the different classes merely, but by the venerable Master Lancelot himself, who, an absent, grotesque being, betwixt six and seven feet high, was nevertheless an admirable scholar, and sure to be delighted to find any one so well qualified to sympathize with him as young Walter Scott; and the affectionate gratitude of the young pupil was never intermitted, so long as his venerable master continued to live. I may mention, in passing, that old Whale bore, in many particulars, a strong resemblance to Dominie Sampson, though, it must be admitted, combining more gentlemanly manners with equal classical lore, and, on the

> whole, being a much superior sort of person. In the intervals of school hours, it was our constant practice to walk together by the banks of the Tweed, our employment continuing exactly the same, for his stories seemed to be quite inexhaustible. This intercourse continued during the summers of the years 1783—84, but was broken off in 1785-86, when I went into Edinburgh to College."

Perhaps the separate seat assigned to Walter Scott by the Kelso schoolmaster was considered due to him as a temporary visitor from the great Edinburgh seminary. Very possibly, however, the worthy Mr. Whale thought of nothing but protecting his solitary student of Persius and Tacitus from the chances of being jostled among the adherents of Ruddiman and Cornelius Nepos.

Another of his Kelso schoolfellows was Robert Waldie (son of Mr. Waldie of Henderside), and to this connection he owed, both while quartered in the garden, and afterwards at Rosebank, many kind attentions, of which he ever preserved a grateful recollection, and which have left strong traces on every page of his works in which he has occasion to introduce the Society of Friends. This young companion's mother, though always called in the neighborhood "Lady Waldie," belonged to that community; and the style of life and manners depicted in the household of Joshua Geddes of Mount Sharon and his amiable sister, in some of the sweetest chapters of Redgauntlet, is a slightly decorated edition of what he witnessed under her hospitable roof. He records, in a note to the novel, the "liberality and benevolence" of this "kind old lady" in allowing him to "rummage at pleasure, and carry home any volumes he chose of her small but valuable library;" annexing only the condition that he should "take at the same time some of the tracts printed for encouraging and extending the doctrines of her own sect. She did not," he adds, "even exact any assurance that I would read these performances, being too justly afraid of involving me in a breach of promise, but was merely desirous that I should have the chance of instruction within my reach, in case whim, curiosity, or accident, might induce me to have recourse to it." I remember the pleasure with which he read, late in life, Rome in the Nineteenth Century, an ingenious work produced by one of Mrs. Waldie's granddaughters, and how comically

he pictured the alarm with which his ancient friend would have perused some of its delineations of the high places of Popery.

I shall be pardoned for adding a marginal note written, apparently late in Scott's life, on his copy of a little forgotten volume, entitled Trifles in Verse, by a Young Soldier. "In 1783," he says, "or about that time, I remember John Marjoribanks, a smart recruiting officer in the village of Kelso, the Weekly Chronicle of which he filled with his love verses. His Delia was a Miss Dickson, daughter of a shopkeeper in the same village—his Gloriana a certain prudish old maiden lady, benempt Miss Goldie; I think I see her still, with her thin arms sheathed in scarlet gloves, and crossed like two lobsters in a fishmonger's stand. Poor Delia was a very beautiful girl, and not more conceited than a be-rhymed miss ought to be. Many years afterwards I found the Kelso *belle*, thin and pale, her good looks gone, and her smart dress neglected, governess to the brats of a Paisley manufacturer. I ought to say there was not an atom of scandal in her flirtation with the young military poet. The bard's fate was not much better; after some service in India and elsewhere, he led a half-pay life about Edinburgh, and died there. There is a tenuity of thought in what he has written, but his verses are usually easy, and I like them because they recall my schoolboy days, when I thought him a Horace, and his Delia a goddess."

Chapter IV

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Illustrations of the Autobiography Continued. — Anecdotes of Scott's College Life

1783-1786

On returning to Edinburgh, and entering the College, in November, 1783, Scott found himself once more in the fellowship of all his intimates of the High School; of whom, besides those mentioned in the autobiographical fragment, he speaks in his diaries with particular affection of Sir William Rae, Bart., David Monypenny (afterwards Lord Pitmilly), Thomas Tod, W. S., Sir Archibald Campbell of Succoth, Bart., all familiar friends of his through manhood,—and the Earl of Dalhousie, whom, on meeting with him after a long separation in the evening of life, he records as still being, and having always been, "the same manly and generous character that all about him loved as the *Lordie Ramsay* of the Yards." The chosen companion, however, continued to be for some time Mr. John Irving—his suburban walks with whom have been recollected so tenderly, both in the Memoir of 1808, and in the Preface to Waverley of 1829. It will interest the reader to compare with those beautiful descriptions the following extract from a letter with which Mr. Irving has favored me:—

> "Every Saturday, and more frequently during the vacations, we used to retire, with three or four books from the circulating library, to Salisbury Crags, Arthur's Seat, or Blackford Hill, and read them together. He read faster than I, and had, on this account, to wait a little at finishing every two pages, before turning the leaf. The books we most delighted in were romances of knight-errantry; the Castle of Otranto, Spenser, Ariosto, and Boiardo were great favorites. We used to climb up the rocks in search of places where we might sit sheltered from the wind; and the more inaccessible they were, the better we liked them. He was very expert at climbing. Sometimes we got into places where we found it difficult to move either up or

> down, and I recollect it being proposed, on several occasions, that I should go for a ladder to see and extricate him; but I never had any need really to do so, for he always managed somehow either to get down or ascend to the top. The number of books we thus devoured was very great. I forgot great part of what I read; but my friend, notwithstanding he read with such rapidity, remained, to my surprise, master of it all, and could even weeks or months afterwards repeat a whole page in which anything had particularly struck him at the moment. After we had continued this practice of reading for two years or more together, he proposed that we should recite to each other alternately such adventures of knight-errants as we could ourselves contrive; and we continued to do so a long while. He found no difficulty in it, and used to recite for half an hour or more at a time, while I seldom continued half that space. The stories we told were, as Sir Walter has said, interminable—for we were unwilling to have any of our favorite knights killed. Our passion for romance led us to learn Italian together; after a time we could both read it with fluency, and we then copied such tales as we had met with in that language, being a continued succession of battles and enchantments. He began early to collect old ballads, and as my mother could repeat a great many, he used to come and learn those she could recite to him. He used to get all the copies of these ballads he could, and select the best."

These, no doubt, were among the germs of the collection of ballads in six little volumes, which, from the handwriting, had been begun at this early period, and which is still preserved at Abbotsford. And it appears that at least as early a date must be ascribed to another collection of little humorous stories in prose, the *Penny Chap-books*, as they are called, still in high favor among the lower classes in Scotland, which stands on the same shelf. In a letter of 1830 he states that he had bound up things of this kind to the extent of several volumes, before he was ten years old.

Although the Ashestiel Memoir mentions so very lightly his boyish addiction to verse, and the rebuke which his vein received from the apothecary's blue-buskined wife as having been followed by similar

treatment on the part of others, I am inclined to believe that while thus devouring, along with his young friend, the stories of Italian romance, he essayed, from time to time, to weave some of their materials into rhyme;—nay, that he must have made at least one rather serious effort of this kind, as early as the date of these rambles to the Salisbury Crags. I have found among his mother's papers a copy of verses, headed, "*Lines to Mr. Walter Scott—on reading his poem of Guiscard and Matilda, inscribed to Miss Keith of Ravelston*." There is no date; but I conceive the lines bear internal evidence of having been written when he was very young—not, I should suppose, above fourteen or fifteen at most. I think it also certain that the writer was a woman; and have almost as little doubt that they came from the pen of his old admirer, Mrs. Cockburn. They are as follows:—

"If such the accents of thy early youth
When playful fancy holds the place of truth;
If so divinely sweet thy numbers flow,
And thy young heart melts with such tender woe;
What praise, what admiration shall be thine,
When sense mature with science shall combine
To raise thy genius, and thy taste refine!

"Go on, dear youth, the glorious path pursue
Which bounteous Nature kindly smooths for you;
Go, bid the seeds her hand hath sown arise,
By timely culture, to their native skies;
Go, and employ the poet's heavenly art,
Not merely to delight, but mend the heart.
Than other poets happier mayst thou prove,
More blest in friendship, fortunate in love,
Whilst Fame, who longs to make true merit known,
Impatient waits, to claim, thee as her own.

"Scorning the yoke of prejudice and pride,
Thy tender mind let truth and reason guide;
Let meek humility thy steps attend,
And firm integrity, youth's surest friend.
So peace and honor all thy hours shall bless,
And conscious rectitude each joy increase;

A nobler meed be thine than empty praise—
Heaven shall approve thy life, and Keith thy lays."

At the period to which I refer these verses, Scott's parents still continued to have some expectations of curing his lameness, and Mr. Irving remembers to have often assisted in applying the electrical apparatus, on which for a considerable time they principally rested their hopes. There is an allusion to these experiments in Scott's autobiographical fragment, but I have found a fuller notice on the margin of his copy of the Guide to Health, Beauty, Riches, and Longevity, as Captain Grose chose to entitle an amusing collection of quack advertisements.

"The celebrated Dr. Graham," says the annotator, "was an empiric of some genius and great assurance. In fact, he had a dash of madness in his composition. He had a fine electrical apparatus, and used it with skill. I myself, amongst others, was subjected to a course of electricity under his charge. I remember seeing the old Earl of Hopetoun seated in a large armchair, and hung round with a collar, and a belt of magnets, like an Indian chief. After this, growing quite wild, Graham set up his *Temple of Health*, and lectured on *the Celestial Bed*. He attempted a course of these lectures at Edinburgh, and as the Magistrates refused to let him do so, he libelled them in a series of advertisements, the flights of which were infinitely more absurd and exalted than those which Grose has collected. In one tirade (long in my possession), he declared that 'he looked down upon them' (the Magistrates) 'as the sun in his meridian glory looks down on the poor, feeble, stinking glimmer of an expiring farthing candle, or as G— himself, in the plenitude of his omnipotence, may regard the insolent bouncings of a few refractory maggots in a rotten cheese.' Graham was a good-looking man; he used to come to the Greyfriars' Church in a suit of white and silver, with a chapeau-bras, and his hair marvellously dressed into a sort of double toupee, which divided upon his head like the two tops of Parnassus. Mrs. Macaulay, the historianess, married his brother. Lady Hamilton is said to have first enacted his Goddess of Health, being at this time a *fille de joie* of great celebrity. The Temple of Health dwindled into a sort of obscene *hell*, or gambling house. In a quarrel which took place there, a poor young man was run into the bowels with a red-hot poker, of which injury he died. The mob vented their fury on the house, and the Magistrates, somewhat of the latest, shut up the exhibition. A quantity of glass and

crystal trumpery, the remains of the splendid apparatus, was sold on the South Bridge for next to nothing. Graham's next receipt was the *earth-bath*, with which he wrought some cures; but that also failing, he was, I believe, literally starved to death."

Graham's earth-bath, too, was, I understand, tried upon Scott, but his was not one of the cases, if any such there were, in which it worked a cure. He, however, improved about this time greatly in his general health and strength, and Mr. Irving, in accordance with the statement in the Memoir, assures me that while attending the early classes at the College the young friends extended their walks, so as to visit in succession all the old castles within eight or ten miles of Edinburgh. "Sir Walter," he says, "was specially fond of Rosslyn. We frequently walked thither before breakfast—after breakfasting there, walked all down the river side to Lasswade—and thence home to town before dinner. He used generally to rest one hand upon my shoulder when we walked together, and leaned with the other on a stout stick."

The love of picturesque scenery, and especially of feudal castles, with which the vicinity of Edinburgh is plentifully garnished, awoke, as the Memoir tells us, the desire of being able to use the pencil. Mr. Irving says —"I attended one summer a class of drawing along with him, but although both fond of it, we found it took up so much time that we gave this up before we had made much progress." In one of his later diaries, Scott himself gives the following more particular account of this matter:—

"I took lessons of oil-painting in youth from a little Jew animalcule—a smouch called Burrell—a clever, sensible creature though. But I could make no progress either in painting or drawing. Nature denied me the correctness of eye and neatness of hand. Yet I was very desirous to be a draughtsman at least—and labored harder to attain that point than at any other in my recollection to which I did not make some approaches. Burrell was not useless to me altogether neither. He was a Prussian, and I got from him many a long story of the battles of Frederick, in whose armies his father had been a commissary, or perhaps a spy. I remember his picturesque account of seeing a party of the *black hussars* bringing in some forage carts which they had taken from a body of the Cossacks, whom he described as lying on the top of the carts of hay mortally wounded, and, like the dying gladiator, eyeing their own blood as it ran down through the straw."

A year or two later Scott renewed his attempt. "I afterwards," he says, "took lessons from Walker, whom we used to call *Blue Beard*. He was one of the most conceited persons in the world, but a good teacher; one of the ugliest countenances he had that need be exhibited—enough, as we say, to *spean weans*. The man was always extremely precise in the quality of everything about him; his dress, accommodations, and everything else. He became insolvent, poor man, and, for some reason or other, I attended the meeting of those concerned in his affairs. Instead of ordinary accommodations for writing, each of the persons present was equipped with a large sheet of drawing-paper and a swan's quill. It was mournfully ridiculous enough. Skirving made an admirable likeness of Walker; not a single scar or mark of the small-pox, which seamed his countenance, but the too accurate brother of the brush had faithfully laid it down in longitude and latitude. Poor Walker destroyed it (being in crayons) rather than let the caricature of his ugliness appear at the sale of his effects. I did learn myself to take some vile views from nature. When Will Clerk and I lived very much together, I used sometimes to make them under his instruction. He to whom, as to all his family, art is a familiar attribute, wondered at me as a Newfoundland dog would at a greyhound which showed fear of the water."

Notwithstanding all that Scott says about the total failure of his attempts in the art of the pencil, I presume few will doubt that they proved very useful to him afterwards; from them it is natural to suppose he caught the habit of analyzing, with some approach at least to accuracy, the scenes over which his eye might have continued to wander with the vague sense of delight. I may add that a longer and more successful practice of the crayon might, I cannot but think, have proved the reverse of serviceable to him as a future painter with the pen. He might have contracted the habit of copying from pictures rather than from nature itself; and we should thus have lost that which constitutes the very highest charm in his delineations of scenery, namely, that the effect is produced by the selection of a few striking features, arranged with a light, unconscious grace, neither too much nor too little—equally remote from the barren generalizations of a former age, and the dull, servile fidelity with which so many inferior writers of our time fill in both background and foreground, having no more notion of the perspective of genius than Chinese paper-stainers have of that of the atmosphere, and producing in fact not descriptions but inventories.

The illness which he alludes to in his Memoir, as interrupting for a considerable period his attendance on the Latin and Greek classes in Edinburgh College, is spoken of more largely in one of his prefaces. It arose from the bursting of a blood-vessel in the lower bowels; and I have heard him say that his uncle, Dr. Rutherford, considered his recovery from it as little less than miraculous. His sweet temper and calm courage were no doubt important elements of safety. He submitted without a murmur to the severe discipline prescribed by his affectionate physician, and found consolation in poetry, romance, and the enthusiasm of young friendship. Day after day John Irving relieved his mother and sister in their attendance upon him. The bed on which he lay was piled with a constant succession of works of imagination, and sad realities were forgotten amidst the brilliant day-dreams of genius drinking unwearied from the eternal fountains of Spenser and Shakespeare. Chess was recommended as a relief to these unintermitted, though desultory studies; and he engaged eagerly in the game which had found favor with so many of his Paladins. Mr. Irving remembers playing it with him hour after hour, in very cold weather, when, the windows being kept open as a part of the medical treatment, nothing but youthful nerves and spirit could have persevered. But Scott did not pursue the science of chess after his boyhood. He used to say that it was a shame to throw away upon mastering a mere game, however ingenious, the time which would suffice for the acquisition of a new language. "Surely," he said, "chess-playing is a sad waste of brains."

His recovery was completed by another visit to Roxburghshire. Captain Robert Scott, who had been so kind to the sickly infant at Bath, finally retired about this time from his profession, and purchased the elegant villa of Rosebank, on the Tweed, a little below Kelso. Here Walter now took up his quarters, and here, during all the rest of his youth, he found, whenever he chose, a second home, in many respects more agreeable than his own. His uncle, as letters to be subsequently quoted will show, had nothing of his father's coldness for polite letters, but entered into all his favorite pursuits with keen sympathy, and was consulted, from this time forth, upon all his juvenile essays, both in prose and verse.

He does not seem to have resumed attendance at College during the session of 1785-86; so that the Latin and Greek classes, with that of Logic, were the only ones he had passed through previous to the signing of his indentures as an apprentice to his father. The Memoir mentions the ethical

course of Dugald Stewart, as if he had gone immediately from the logical professor (Mr. Bruce) to that eminent lecturer; but he, in fact, attended Mr. Stewart four years afterwards, when beginning to consider himself as finally destined for the Bar.

I shall only add to what he sets down on the subject of his early academical studies, that in this, as in almost every case, he appears to have underrated his own attainments. He had, indeed, no pretensions to the name of an extensive, far less of an accurate, Latin scholar; but he could read, I believe, any Latin author, of any age, so as to catch without difficulty his meaning; and although his favorite Latin poet, as well as historian, in later days, was Buchanan, he had preserved, or subsequently acquired, a strong relish for some others of more ancient date. I may mention, in particular, Lucan and Claudian. Of Greek, he does not exaggerate in saying that he had forgotten even the alphabet; for he was puzzled with the words ἀοιδος and ποιητης, which he had occasion to introduce, from some authority on his table, into his Introduction to Popular Poetry, written in April, 1830; and happening to be in the house with him at the time, he sent for me to insert them for him in his MS. Mr. Irving has informed us of the early period at which he enjoyed the real Tasso and Ariosto. I presume he had at least as soon as this enabled himself to read Gil Blas in the original; and, in all probability, we may refer to the same time of his life, or one not much later, his acquisition of as much Spanish as served for the Guerras Civiles de Granada, Lazarillo de Tormes, and, above all, Don Quixote. He read all these languages in after-life with about the same facility. I never but once heard him attempt to speak any of them, and that was when some of the courtiers of Charles X. came to Abbotsford, soon after that unfortunate prince took up his residence for the second time at Holyrood-house. Finding that one or two of these gentlemen could speak no English at all, he made some efforts to amuse them in their own language after the champagne had been passing briskly round the table; and I was amused next morning with the expression of one of the party, who, alluding to the sort of reading in which Sir Walter seemed to have chiefly occupied himself, said, "Mon Dieu! comme il estropiait, entre deux vins, le Français du bon sire de Joinville!" Of all these tongues, as of German somewhat later, he acquired as much as was needful for his own purposes, of which a critical study of any foreign language made at no time any part. In them he sought for incidents, and he found images; but for the treasures of diction he was

content to dig on British soil. He had all he wanted in the old wells of "English undefiled," and the still living, though fast shrinking, waters of that sister idiom which had not always, as he flattered himself, deserved the name of a dialect.

As may be said, I believe, with perfect truth of every really great man, Scott was self-educated in every branch of knowledge which he ever turned to account in the works of his genius—and he has himself told us that his real studies were those lonely and desultory ones of which he has given a copy in the third chapter of Waverley, where the hero is represented as "driving through the sea of books, like a vessel without pilot or rudder;" that is to say, obeying nothing but the strong breath of native inclination:—"He had read, and stored in a memory of uncommon tenacity, much curious, though ill-arranged and miscellaneous information. In English literature, he was master of Shakespeare and Milton, of our earlier dramatic authors, of many picturesque and interesting passages from our old historical chronicles, and was particularly well acquainted with Spenser, Drayton, and other poets, who have exercised themselves on romantic fiction,—*of all themes the most fascinating to a youthful imagination, before the passions have roused themselves, and demand poetry of a more sentimental description*." I need not repeat his enumeration of other favorites, Pulci, the Decameron, Froissart, Brantôme, Delanoue, and the chivalrous and romantic lore of Spain. I have quoted a passage so well known, only for the sake of the striking circumstance by which it marks the very early date of these multifarious studies.

Chapter V

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Illustrations Continued. — Scott's Apprenticeship to His Father. — Excursions to the Highlands, Etc. — Debating Societies. — Early Correspondence, Etc. — Williamina Stuart

1786-1790

In the Minute-books of the Society of Writers to the Signet appears the following entry: "Edinburgh, 15th May, 1786. Compeared Walter Scott, and presented an indenture, dated 31st March last, entered into between him and Walter Scott, his son, for five years from the date thereof, under a mutual penalty of £40 sterling."

An inauspicious step this might at first sight appear in the early history of one so strongly predisposed for pursuits wide as the antipodes asunder from the dry technicalities of conveyancing; but he himself, I believe, was never heard, in his mature age, to express any regret that it should have been taken; and I am convinced for my part that it was a fortunate one. It prevented him, indeed, from passing with the usual regularity through a long course of Scotch metaphysics; but I extremely doubt whether any discipline could ever have led him to derive either pleasure or profit from studies of that order. His apprenticeship left him time enough, as we shall find, for continuing his application to the stores of poetry and romance, and those old chroniclers, who to the end were his darling historians. Indeed, if he had wanted any new stimulus, the necessity of devoting certain hours of every day to a routine of drudgery, however it might have operated on a spirit more prone to earth, must have tended to quicken his appetite for "the sweet bread eaten in secret." But the duties which he had now to fulfil were, in various ways, directly and positively beneficial to the development both of his genius and his character. It was in the discharge of his functions as a Writer's Apprentice that he first penetrated into the Highlands, and formed those friendships among the surviving heroes of 1745, which laid the foundation for one great class of his works. Even the less attractive parts of his new vocation were calculated to give him a more complete insight into the smaller workings of poor human nature than can ever perhaps be

gathered from the experience of the legal profession in its higher walk;—the etiquette of the bar in Scotland, as in England, being averse to personal intercourse between the advocate and his client. But finally, and I will say chiefly, it was to this prosaic discipline that he owed those habits of steady, sober diligence, which few imaginative authors had ever before exemplified—and which, unless thus beaten into his composition at a ductile stage, even he, in all probability, could never have carried into the almost professional exercise of some of the highest and most delicate faculties of the human mind. He speaks, in not the least remarkable passage of the preceding Memoir, as if constitutional indolence had been his portion in common with all the members of his father's family. When Gifford, in a dispute with Jacob Bryant, quoted Doctor Johnson's own confession that he knew little Greek, Bryant answered, "Yes, young man; but how shall we know what Johnson would have called much Greek?" and Gifford has recorded the deep impression which this hint left on his own mind. What Scott would have called constitutional diligence, I know not; but surely, if indolence of any kind had been inherent in his nature, even the triumph of Socrates was not more signal than his.

It will be, by some of my friends, considered as trivial to remark on such a circumstance—but the reader who is unacquainted with the professional habits of the Scotch lawyers may as well be told that the Writer's Apprentice receives a certain allowance in money for every page he transcribes; and that, as in those days the greater part of the business, even of the supreme courts, was carried on by means of written papers, a ready penman, in a well-employed chamber, could earn in this way enough, at all events, to make a handsome addition to the pocket-money which was likely to be thought suitable for a youth of fifteen by such a man as the elder Scott. The allowance being, I believe, threepence for every page containing a certain fixed number of words, when Walter had finished, as he tells us he occasionally did, 120 pages within twenty-four hours, his fee would amount to thirty shillings; and in his early letters I find him more than once congratulating himself on having been, by some such exertion, enabled to purchase a book, or a coin, otherwise beyond his reach. A schoolfellow, who was now, like himself, a Writer's Apprentice, recollects the eagerness with which he thus made himself master of Evans's Ballads, shortly after their publication; and another of them, already often referred to, remembers, in particular, his rapture with Mickle's Cumnor Hall, which first appeared in

that collection. "After the labors of the day were over," says Mr. Irving, "we often walked in *the Meadows*"—(a large field intersected by formal alleys of old trees, adjoining George's Square)—"especially in the moonlight nights; and he seemed never weary of repeating the first stanza—

> 'The dews of summer night did fall—
> The Moon, sweet regent of the sky,
> Silvered the walls of Cumnor Hall,
> And many an oak that grew thereby.'"

I have thought it worth while to preserve these reminiscences of his companions at the time, though he has himself stated the circumstance in his Preface to Kenilworth. "There is a period in youth," he there says, "when the mere power of numbers has a more strong effect on ear and imagination than in after-life. At this season of immature taste, the author was greatly delighted with the poems of Mickle and Langhorne. The first stanza of Cumnor Hall especially had a peculiar enchantment for his youthful ear—the force of which is not yet (1829) entirely spent." Thus that favorite elegy, after having dwelt on his memory and imagination for forty years, suggested the subject of one of his noblest romances.

It is affirmed by a preceding biographer, on the authority of one of these brother-apprentices, that about this period Scott showed him a MS. poem on the Conquest of Granada, in four books, each amounting to about 400 lines, which, soon after it was finished, he committed to the flames. As he states in his Essay on the Imitation of Popular Poetry, that, for ten years previous to 1796, when his first translation from the German was executed, he had written no verses "except an occasional sonnet to his mistress's eyebrow," I presume this Conquest of Granada, the fruit of his study of the Guerras Civiles, must be assigned to the summer of 1786—or, making allowance for trivial inaccuracy, to the next year at latest. It was probably composed in imitation of Mickle's Lusiad:—at all events, we have a very distinct statement, that he made no attempts in the manner of the old minstrels, early as his admiration for them had been, until the period of his acquaintance with Bürger. Thus with him, as with most others, genius had hazarded many a random effort ere it discovered the true keynote. Long had

> "Amid the strings his fingers stray'd,
> And an uncertain warbling made,"

before "the measure wild" was caught, and

> "In varying cadence, soft or strong,
> He swept the sounding chords along."

His youthful admiration of Langhorne has been rendered memorable by his own record of his first and only interview with his great predecessor, Robert Burns. Although the letter in which he narrates this incident, addressed to myself in 1827, when I was writing a short biography of that poet, has been often reprinted, it is too important for my present purpose to be omitted here.

"As for Burns," he writes, "I may truly say, *Virgilium vidi tantum*. I was a lad of fifteen in 1786-87, when he came first to Edinburgh, but had sense and feeling enough to be much interested in his poetry, and would have given the world to know him; but I had very little acquaintance with any literary people, and still less with the gentry of the west country, the two sets that he most frequented. Mr. Thomas Grierson was at that time a clerk of my father's. He knew Burns, and promised to ask him to his lodgings to dinner, but had no opportunity to keep his word, otherwise I might have seen more of this distinguished man. As it was, I saw him one day at the late venerable Professor Ferguson's, where there were several gentlemen of literary reputation, among whom I remember the celebrated Mr. Dugald Stewart. Of course we youngsters sat silent, looked, and listened. The only thing I remember which was remarkable in Burns's manner was the effect produced upon him by a print of Bunbury's, representing a soldier lying dead on the snow, his dog sitting in misery on the one side, on the other his widow, with a child in her arms. These lines were written beneath,—

> 'Cold on Canadian hills, or Minden's plain,
> Perhaps that parent wept her soldier slain;
> Bent o'er her babe, her eye dissolved in dew,
> The big drops, mingling with the milk he drew,
> Gave the sad presage of his future years,
> The child of misery baptized in tears.'

Burns seemed much affected by the print, or rather the ideas which it suggested to his mind. He actually shed tears. He asked whose the lines were, and it chanced that nobody but myself remembered that they occur in

a half-forgotten poem of Langhorne's, called by the unpromising title of The Justice of the Peace. I whispered my information to a friend present, who mentioned it to Burns, who rewarded me with a look and a word, which, though of mere civility, I then received, and still recollect, with very great pleasure.

"His person was strong and robust: his manners rustic, not clownish; a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity, which received part of its effect perhaps from one's knowledge of his extraordinary talents. His features are represented in Mr. Nasmyth's picture, but to me it conveys the idea that they are diminished as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. I would have taken the poet, had I not known what he was, for a very sagacious country farmer of the old Scotch school—*i. e.*, none of your modern agriculturists, who keep laborers for their drudgery, but the *douce gudeman* who held his own plough. There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large, and of a dark cast, and glowed (I say literally *glowed*) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men in my time. His conversation expressed perfect self-confidence, without the slightest presumption. Among the men who were the most learned of their time and country he expressed himself with perfect firmness, but without the least intrusive forwardness; and when he differed in opinion, he did not hesitate to express it firmly, yet at the same time with modesty. I do not remember any part of his conversation distinctly enough to be quoted, nor did I ever see him again, except in the street, where he did not recognize me, as I could not expect he should. He was much caressed in Edinburgh, but (considering what literary emoluments have been since his day) the efforts made for his relief were extremely trifling.

"I remember on this occasion I mention, I thought Burns's acquaintance with English poetry was rather limited, and also, that having twenty times the abilities of Allan Ramsay and of Fergusson, he talked of them with too much humility as his models; there was doubtless national predilection in his estimate."

I need not remark on the extent of knowledge and justness of taste exemplified in this early measurement of Burns, both as a student of English literature and as a Scottish poet. The print, over which Scott saw

Burns shed tears, is still in the possession of Dr. Ferguson's family, and I had often heard him tell the story, in the room where the precious relic hangs, before I requested him to set it down in writing—how little anticipating the use to which I should ultimately apply it!

His intimacy with Adam (now Sir Adam) Ferguson was thus his first means of introduction to the higher literary society of Edinburgh; and it was very probably to that connection that he owed, among the rest, his acquaintance with the blind poet Blacklock, whom Johnson, twelve years earlier, "beheld with reverence." We have seen, however, that the venerable author of Douglas was a friend of his own parents, and had noticed him even in his infancy at Bath. John Home now inhabited a villa at no great distance from Edinburgh, and there, all through his young days, Scott was a frequent guest. Nor must it be forgotten that his uncle, Dr. Rutherford, inherited much of the general accomplishments, as well as the professional reputation of his father—and that it was beneath that roof he saw, several years before this, Dr. Cartwright, then in the enjoyment of some fame as a poet. In this family, indeed, he had more than one kind and strenuous encourager of his early literary tastes, as will be shown abundantly when we reach certain relics of his correspondence with his mother's sister. Dr. Rutherford's good-natured remonstrances with him, as a boy, for reading at breakfast, are well remembered, and will remind my reader of a similar trait in the juvenile manners both of Burns and Byron; nor was this habit entirely laid aside even in Scott's advanced age.

If he is quite accurate in referring his first acquaintance with the Highlands to his fifteenth year, this incident also belongs to the first season of his apprenticeship. His father had, among a rather numerous list of Highland clients, Alexander Stewart of Invernahyle, an enthusiastic Jacobite, who had survived to recount, in secure and vigorous old age, his active experiences in the insurrections both of 1715 and 1745. He had, it appears, attracted Walter's attention and admiration at a very early date; for he speaks of having "seen him in arms" and heard him "exult in the prospect of drawing his claymore once more before he died," when Paul Jones threatened a descent on Edinburgh; which transaction occurred in September, 1779. Invernahyle, as Scott adds, was the only person who seemed to have retained possession of his cool senses at the period of that disgraceful alarm, and offered the magistrates to collect as many Highlanders as would suffice for cutting off any part of the pirate's crew

that might venture, in quest of plunder, into a city full of high houses and narrow lanes, and every way well calculated for defence. The eager delight with which the young apprentice now listened to the tales of this fine old man's early days produced an invitation to his residence among the mountains; and to this excursion he probably devoted the few weeks of an autumnal vacation—whether in 1786 or 1787 it is of no great consequence to ascertain.

In the Introduction to one of his Novels he has preserved a vivid picture of his sensations when the vale of Perth first burst on his view, in the course of his progress to Invernahyle, and the description has made classical ground of the *Wicks of Baiglie*, the spot from which that beautiful landscape was surveyed. "Childish wonder, indeed," he says, "was an ingredient in my delight, for I was not above fifteen years old, and as this had been the first excursion which I was permitted to make on a pony of my own, I also experienced the glow of independence, mingled with that degree of anxiety which the most conceited boy feels when he is first abandoned to his own undirected counsels. I recollect pulling up the reins without meaning to do so, and gazing on the scene before me as if I had been afraid it would shift, like those in a theatre, before I could distinctly observe its different parts, or convince myself that what I saw was real. Since that hour the recollection of that inimitable landscape has possessed the strongest influence over my mind, and retained its place as a memorable thing, while much that was influential on my own fortunes has fled from my recollection." So speaks the poet; and who will not recognize his habitual modesty in thus undervaluing, as uninfluential in comparison with some affair of worldly business, the ineffaceable impression thus stamped on the glowing imagination of his boyhood?

I need not quote the numerous passages scattered over his writings, both early and late, in which he dwells with, fond affection on the chivalrous character of Invernahyle—the delight with which he heard the veteran describe his broadsword duel with Rob Roy—his campaigns with Mar and Charles Edward—and his long seclusion (as pictured in the story of Bradwardine) within a rocky cave situated not far from his own house, while it was garrisoned by a party of English soldiers, after the battle of Culloden. Here, too, still survived the trusty henchman who had attended the chieftain in many a bloody field and perilous escape, the same "grim-looking old Highlander" who was in the act of cutting down Colonel

Whitefoord with his Lochaber axe at Prestonpans when his master arrested the blow—an incident to which Invernahyle owed his life, and we are indebted for another of the most striking pages in Waverley.

I have often heard Scott mention some curious particulars of his first visit to the remote fastness of one of these Highland friends; but whether he told the story of Invernahyle, or of one of his own relations of the Clan Campbell, I do not recollect; I rather think the latter was the case. On reaching the brow of a bleak eminence overhanging the primitive tower and its tiny patch of cultivated ground, he found his host and three sons, and perhaps half-a-dozen attendant *gillies*, all stretched half asleep in their tartans upon the heath, with guns and dogs, and a profusion of game about them; while in the courtyard, far below, appeared a company of women actively engaged in loading a cart with manure. The stranger was not a little astonished when he discovered, on descending from the height, that among these industrious females were the laird's own lady, and two or three of her daughters; but they seemed quite unconscious of having been detected in an occupation unsuitable to their rank—retired presently to their "bowers," and when they reappeared in other dresses, retained no traces of their morning's work, except complexions glowing with a radiant freshness, for one evening of which many a high-bred beauty would have bartered half her diamonds. He found the young ladies not ill informed, and exceedingly agreeable; and the song and the dance seemed to form the invariable termination of their busy days. I must not forget his admiration at the principal article of this laird's first course; namely, a gigantic *haggis*, borne into the hall in a wicker basket by two half-naked Celts, while the piper strutted fiercely behind them, blowing a tempest of dissonance.

These Highland visits were repeated almost every summer for several successive years, and perhaps even the first of them was in some degree connected with his professional business. At all events, it was to his allotted task of enforcing the execution of a legal instrument against some Maclarens, refractory tenants of Stewart of Appin, brother-in-law to Invernahyle, that Scott owed his introduction to the scenery of The Lady of the Lake. "An escort of a sergeant and six men," he says, "was obtained from a Highland regiment lying in Stirling, and the author, then a Writer's Apprentice, equivalent to the honorable situation of an attorney's clerk, was invested with the superintendence of the expedition, with directions to see that the messenger discharged his duty fully, and that the gallant sergeant

did not exceed his part by committing violence or plunder. And thus it happened, oddly enough, that the author first entered the romantic scenery of Loch Katrine, of which he may perhaps say he has somewhat extended the reputation, riding in all the dignity of danger, with a front and rear guard, and loaded arms. The sergeant was absolutely a Highland Sergeant Kite, full of stories of Rob Roy and of himself, and a very good companion. We experienced no interruption whatever, and when we came to Invernenty, found the house deserted. We took up our quarters for the night, and used some of the victuals which we found there. The Maclarens, who probably had never thought of any serious opposition, went to America, where, having had some slight share in removing them from their *paupera regna*, I sincerely hope they prospered."

That he entered with ready zeal into such professional business as inferred Highland expeditions with comrades who had known Rob Roy, no one will think strange; but more than one of his biographers allege that in the ordinary indoor fagging of the chamber in George's Square, he was always an unwilling, and rarely an efficient assistant. Their addition, that he often played chess with one of his companions in the office, and had to conceal the board with precipitation when the old gentleman's footsteps were heard on the staircase, is, I do not doubt, true; and we may remember along with it his own insinuation that his father was sometimes poring in his secret nook over Spottiswoode or Wodrow, when his apprentices supposed him to be deep in Dirleton's Doubts, or Stair's decisions. But the Memoir of 1808, so candid—indeed more than candid—as to many juvenile irregularities, contains no confession that supports the broad assertion to which I have alluded; nor can I easily believe, that with his affection for his father, and that sense of duty which seems to have been inherent in his character, and, lastly, with the evidence of a most severe training in industry which the habits of his after-life presented, it is at all deserving of serious acceptation. His mere handwriting, indeed, continued, during the whole of his prime, to afford most striking and irresistible proof how completely he must have submitted himself for some very considerable period to the mechanical discipline of his father's office. It spoke to months after months of this humble toil, as distinctly as the illegible scrawl of Lord Byron did to his self-mastership from the hour that he left Harrow. There are some little technical tricks, such as no gentleman who has not been subjected to a similar regimen ever can fall into, which he practised invariably while

composing his poetry, which appear not unfrequently on the MSS. of his best novels, and which now and then dropt instinctively from his pen, even in the private letters and diaries of his closing years. I allude particularly to a sort of flourish at the bottom of the page, originally, I presume, adopted in engrossing as a safeguard against the intrusion of a forged line between the legitimate text and the attesting signature. He was quite sensible that this ornament might as well be dispensed with; and his family often heard him mutter, after involuntarily performing it, "There goes the old shop again!"

I dwell on this matter because it was always his favorite tenet, in contradiction to what he called the cant of sonneteers, that there is no necessary connection between genius and an aversion or contempt for any of the common duties of life; he thought, on the contrary, that to spend some fair portion of every day in any matter of fact occupation is good for the higher faculties themselves in the upshot. In a word, from beginning to end, he piqued himself on being *a man of business*; and did—with one sad and memorable exception—whatever the ordinary course of things threw in his way, in exactly the businesslike fashion which might have been expected from the son of a thoroughbred old Clerk to the Signet, who had never deserted his father's profession.

In the winter of 1788, however, his apprentice habits were exposed to a new danger; and from that date I believe them to have undergone a considerable change. He was then sent to attend the lectures of the Professor of Civil Law in the University, this course forming part of the usual professional education of Writers to the Signet, as well as of Advocates. For some time his companions, when in Edinburgh, had been chiefly, almost solely, his brother-apprentices and the clerks in his father's office. He had latterly seen comparatively little even of the better of his old High School friends, such as Ferguson and Irving—for though both of these also were writer's apprentices, they had been indentured to other masters, and each had naturally formed new intimacies within his own chamber. The Civil Law class brought him again into daily contact with both Irving and Ferguson, as well as others of his earlier acquaintance of the higher ranks; but it also led him into the society of some young gentlemen previously unknown to him, who had from the outset been destined for the Bar, and whose conversation, tinctured with certain prejudices natural to scions of what he calls in Redgauntlet *the Scottish noblesse de la robe*, soon banished from his mind every thought of ultimately adhering to the secondary branch

of the law. He found these future barristers cultivating general literature, without the least apprehension that such elegant pursuits could be regarded by any one as interfering with the proper studies of their professional career; justly believing, on the contrary, that for the higher class of forensic exertion some acquaintance with almost every branch of science and letters is a necessary preparative. He contrasted their liberal aspirations, and the encouragement which these received in their domestic circles, with the narrower views which predominated in his own home; and resolved to gratify his ambition by adopting a most precarious walk in life, instead of adhering to that in which he might have counted with perfect security on the early attainment of pecuniary independence. This resolution appears to have been foreseen by his father, long before it was announced in terms; and the handsome manner in which the old gentleman conducted himself upon the occasion is remembered with dutiful gratitude in the preceding Autobiography.

The most important of these new alliances was the intimate friendship which he now formed with Mr. John Irving's near relation, William Clerk of Eldin, of whose powerful talents and extensive accomplishments we shall hereafter meet with many enthusiastic notices. It was in company with this gentleman that he entered the debating societies described in his Memoir; through him he soon became linked in the closest intimacy with George Cranstoun (now Lord Corehouse), George Abercromby (now Lord Abercromby), John James Edmonstone of Newton (whose mother was sister of Sir Ralph Abercromby), Patrick Murray of Simprim, Sir Patrick Murray of Ochtertyre, and a group of other young men, all high in birth and connection, and all remarkable in early life for the qualities which afterwards led them to eminent station, or adorned it. The introduction to their several families is alluded to by Scott as having opened to him abundantly certain advantages, which no one could have been more qualified to improve, but from which he had hitherto been in great measure debarred in consequence of the retired habits of his parents.

Mr. Clerk says that he had been struck from the first day he entered the Civil Law class-room with something odd and remarkable in Scott's appearance; what this something was he cannot now recall, but he remembers telling his companion some time afterwards that he thought he looked like a *hautboy player*. Scott was amused with this notion, as he had never touched a musical instrument of any kind; but I fancy his friend had

been watching a certain noticeable but altogether indescribable play of the upper lip when in an abstracted mood. He rallied Walter, he says, during one of their first evening walks together, on the slovenliness of his dress: he wore a pair of corduroy breeches, much glazed by the rubbing of his staff, which he immediately flourished—and said, "They be good enough for drinking in—let us go and have some oysters in the Covenant Close."

Convivial habits were then indulged among the young men of Edinburgh, whether students of law, solicitors, or barristers, to an extent now happily unknown; and this anecdote recalls some striking hints on that subject which occur in Scott's brief Autobiography. That he partook profusely in the juvenile bacchanalia of that day, and continued to take a plentiful share in such jollities down to the time of his marriage, are facts worthy of being distinctly stated; for no man in mature life was more habitually averse to every sort of intemperance. He could, when I first knew him, swallow a great quantity of wine without being at all visibly disordered by it; but nothing short of some very particular occasion could ever induce him to put this strength of head to a trial; and I have heard him many times utter words which no one in the days of his youthful temptation can be the worse for remembering:—"Depend upon it, of all vices, drinking is the most incompatible with greatness."

The liveliness of his conversation—the strange variety of his knowledge—and above all, perhaps, the portentous tenacity of his memory—riveted more and more Clerk's attention, and commanded the wonder of all his new allies; but of these extraordinary gifts Scott himself appeared to be little conscious; or at least he impressed them all as attaching infinitely greater consequence—(exactly as had been the case with him in the days of the Cowgate Port and the kittle nine steps)—to feats of personal agility and prowess. William Clerk's brother, James, a midshipman in the navy, happened to come home from a cruise in the Mediterranean shortly after this acquaintance began, and Scott and the sailor became almost at sight "sworn brothers." In order to complete his time under the late Sir Alexander Cochrane, who was then on the Leith station, James Clerk obtained the command of a lugger, and the young friends often made little excursions to sea with him. "The first time Scott dined on board," says William Clerk, "we met before embarking at a tavern in Leith—it was a large party, mostly midshipmen, and strangers to him, and our host introducing his landsmen guests said, 'My brother you know, gentlemen; as for Mr. Scott, mayhap

you may take him for a poor lamiter, but he is the first to begin a row, and the last to end it;' which eulogium he confirmed with some of the expletives of Tom Pipes." When, many years afterwards, Clerk read The Pirate, he was startled by the resurrection of a hundred traits of the table-talk of this lugger; but the author has since traced some of the most striking passages in that novel to his recollection of the almost childish period when he hung on his own brother Robert's stories about Rodney's battles and the haunted *keys* of the West Indies.

One morning Scott called on Clerk, and, exhibiting his stick all cut and marked, told him he had been attacked in the streets the night before by three fellows, against whom he had defended himself for an hour. "By Shrewsbury clock?" said his friend. "No," said Scott, smiling, "by the Tron." But thenceforth, adds Mr. Clerk, and for twenty years after, he called his walking stick by the name of "Shrewsbury."

With these comrades Scott now resumed, and pushed to a much greater extent, his early habits of wandering over the country in quest of castles and other remains of antiquity, his passion for which derived a new impulse from the conversation of the celebrated John Clerk of Eldin, the father of his friend. William Clerk well remembers his father telling a story which was introduced in due time in The Antiquary. While he was visiting his grandfather, Sir John Clerk, at Dumcrieff, in Dumfriesshire, many years before this time, the old Baronet carried some English virtuosos to see a supposed Roman camp; and on his exclaiming at a particular spot, "This I take to have been the Prætorium," a herdsman who stood by answered, "Prætorium here Prætorium there, I made it wi' a slaughter spade." Many traits of the elder Clerk were, his son has no doubt, embroidered on the character of George Constable in the composition of Jonathan Oldbuck. The old gentleman's enthusiasm, for antiquities was often played on by these young friends, but more effectually by his eldest son, John Clerk (Lord Eldin), who, having a great genius for art, used to amuse himself with manufacturing mutilated heads, which, after being buried for a convenient time in the ground, were accidentally discovered in some fortunate hour, and received by the laird with great honor as valuable accessions to his museum.

On a fishing excursion to a loch near Howgate, among the Moorfoot Hills, Scott, Clerk, Irving, and Abercromby spent the night at a little public-house kept by one Mrs. Margaret Dods. When St. Ronan's Well was

published, Clerk, meeting Scott in the street, observed, "That's an odd name; surely I have met with it somewhere before." Scott smiled, said, "Don't you remember Howgate?" and passed on. The name alone, however, was taken from the Howgate hostess.

At one of their drinking bouts of those days William Clerk, Sir P. Murray, Edmonstone, and Abercromby, being of the party, the sitting was prolonged to a very late hour, and Scott fell asleep. When he awoke, his friends succeeded in convincing him that he had sung a song in the course of the evening, and sung it extremely well. How must these gentlemen have chuckled when they read Frank Osbaldistone's account of his revels in the old hall! "It has even been reported by maligners that I sung a song while under this vinous influence; but as I remember nothing of it, and never attempted to turn a tune in all my life, either before or since, I would willingly hope there is no actual foundation for the calumny."

On one of his first long walks with Clerk and others of the same set, their pace, being about four miles an hour, was found rather too much for Scott, and he offered to contract for three, which measure was thenceforth considered as the legal one. At this rate they often continued to wander from five in the morning till eight in the evening, halting for such refreshment at mid-day as any village alehouse might afford. On many occasions, however, they had stretched so far into the country, that they were obliged to be absent from home all night; and though great was the alarm which the first occurrence of this sort created in George's Square, the family soon got accustomed to such things, and little notice was taken, even though Walter remained away for the better part of a week. I have heard him laugh heartily over the recollections of one protracted excursion, towards the close of which the party found themselves a long day's walk—thirty miles, I think—from Edinburgh, without a single sixpence left among them. "We were put to our shifts," said he; "but we asked every now and then at a cottage door for a drink of water; and one or two of the good-wives, observing our worn-out looks, brought forth milk in place of water—so with that, and hips and haws, we came in little the worse." His father met him with some impatient questions as to what he had been living on so long, for the old man well knew how scantily his pocket was supplied. "Pretty much like the young ravens," answered he; "I only wished I had been as good a player on the flute as poor George Primrose in The Vicar of Wakefield. If I had his art I should like nothing better than to tramp like him

from cottage to cottage over the world."—"I doubt," said the grave Clerk to the Signet, "I greatly doubt, sir, you were born for nae better than a *gangrel scrape gut*." Some allusions to reproaches of this kind occur in the Memoir; and we shall find others in letters subsequent to his admission at the Bar.

The debating club formed among these young friends at this era of their studies was called *The Literary Society*; and is not to be confounded with the more celebrated Speculative Society, which Scott did not join for two years later. At *The Literary* he spoke frequently, and very amusingly and sensibly, but was not at all numbered among the most brilliant members. He had a world of knowledge to produce; but he had not acquired the art of arranging it to the best advantage in a continued address; nor, indeed, did he ever, I think, except under the influence of strong personal feeling, even when years and fame had given him full confidence in himself, exhibit upon any occasion the powers of oral eloquence. His antiquarian information, however, supplied many an interesting feature in these evenings of discussion. He had already dabbled in Anglo-Saxon and the Norse Sagas: in his Essay on Imitations of Popular Poetry, he alludes to these studies as having facilitated his acquisition of German:—But he was deep especially in Fordun and Wyntoun, and all the Scotch chronicles; and his friends rewarded him by the honorable title of *Duns Scotus*.

A smaller society, formed with less ambitious views, originated in a ride to Pennycuik, the seat of the head of Mr. Clerk's family, whose elegant hospitalities are recorded in the Memoir. This was called, by way of excellence, *The Club*, and I believe it is continued under the same name to this day. Here, too, Walter had his sobriquet; and—his corduroy breeches, I presume, not being as yet worn out—it was *Colonel Grogg*.

Meantime he had not broken up his connection with Rosebank; he appears to have spent several weeks in the autumn, both of 1788 and 1789, under his uncle's roof; and it was, I think, of his journey thither, in the last named year, that he used to tell an anecdote, which I shall here set down—how shorn, alas, of all the accessories that gave it life when he recited it. Calling, before he set out, on one of the ancient spinsters of his family, to inquire if she had any message for Kelso, she retired, and presently placed in his hands a packet of some bulk and weight, which required, she said, very particular attention. He took it without examining the address, and carried it in his pocket next day, not at all to the lightening of a forty miles' ride in August. On his arrival, it turned out to contain one of the old lady's

pattens, sealed up for a particular cobbler in Kelso, and accompanied with fourpence to pay for mending it, and special directions that it might be brought back to her by the same economical conveyance.

It will be seen from the following letter, the earliest of Scott's writing that has fallen into my hands, that professional business had some share in this excursion to Kelso; but I consider with more interest the brief allusion to a day at Sandy-Knowe:—

TO MRS. SCOTT, GEORGE'S SQUARE, EDINBURGH.
(*With a parcel*.)

Rosebank, 5th September, 1788.

Dear Mother,—I was favored with your letter, and send you Anne's stockings along with this: I would have sent them last week, but had some expectations of a private opportunity. I have been very happy for this fortnight; we have some plan or other for every day. Last week my uncle, my cousin William, and I, rode to Smailholm, and from thence walked to Sandy-Knowe Craigs, where we spent the whole day, and made a very hearty dinner by the side of the Orderlaw Well, on some cold beef and bread and cheese: we had also a small case-bottle of rum to make grog with, which we drank to the Sandy-Knowe bairns, and all their connections. This jaunt gave me much pleasure, and had I time, I would give you a more full account of it.

The fishing has been hitherto but indifferent, and I fear I shall not be able to accomplish my promise with regard to the wild ducks. I was out on Friday, and only saw three. I may probably, however, send you a hare, as my uncle has got a present of two greyhounds from Sir H. MacDougall, and as he has a license, only waits till the corn is off the ground to commence coursing. Be it known to you, however, I am not altogether employed in amusements, for I have got two or three clients besides my uncle, and am busy drawing tacks and contracts,—not, however, of marriage. I am in a fair way of making money, if I stay here long.

Here I have written a pretty long letter, and nothing in it; but you know writing to one's friends is the next thing to seeing them. My love to my father and the boys, from, Dear Mother, your dutiful and affectionate son,

It appears from James Ballantyne's *memoranda*, that having been very early bound apprentice to a solicitor in Kelso, he had no intercourse with Scott during the three or four years that followed their companionship at the school of Lancelot Whale; but Ballantyne was now sent to spend a winter in Edinburgh, for the completion of his professional education, and in the course of his attendance on the Scots Law class, became a member of a young Teviotdale club, where Walter Scott seldom failed to make his appearance. They supped together, it seems, once a month; and here, as in the associations above mentioned, good fellowship was often pushed beyond the limits of modern indulgence. The strict intimacy between Scott and Ballantyne was not at this time renewed,—their avocations prevented it,—but the latter was no uninterested observer of his old comrade's bearing on this new scene. "Upon all these occasions," he says, "one of the principal features of his character was displayed as conspicuously as I believe it ever was at any later period. This was the remarkable ascendency he never failed to exhibit among his young companions, and which appeared to arise from their involuntary and unconscious submission to the same firmness of understanding, and gentle exercise of it, which produced the same effects throughout his after-life. Where there was always a good deal of drinking, there was of course now and then a good deal of quarrelling. But three words from Walter Scott never failed to put all such propensities to quietness."

Mr. Ballantyne's account of his friend's peace-making exertions at this club may seem a little at variance with some preceding details. There is a difference, however, between encouraging quarrels in the bosom of a convivial party, and taking a fair part in a *row* between one's own party and another. But Ballantyne adds, that at *The Teviotdale*, Scott was always remarkable for being the most temperate of the set; and if the club consisted chiefly of persons, like Ballantyne himself, somewhat inferior to Scott in birth and station, his carefulness both of sobriety and decorum at their meetings was but another feature of his unchanged and unchangeable character—*qualis ab incepto*.

At one of the many merry suppers of this time Walter Scott had said something, of which, on recollecting himself next morning, he was sensible that his friend Clerk might have reason to complain. He sent him

accordingly a note apologetical, which has by some accident been preserved, and which I am sure every reader will agree with me in considering well worthy of preservation. In it Scott contrives to make use of *both* his own club designations, and addresses his friend by another of the same order, which Clerk had received in consequence of comparing himself on some forgotten occasion to Sir John Brute in the play. This characteristic document is as follows:—

TO WILLIAM CLERK, ESQ.

Dear Baronet,—I am sorry to find that our friend Colonel Grogg has behaved with a very undue degree of vehemence in a dispute with you last night, occasioned by what I am convinced was a gross misconception of your expressions. As the Colonel, though a military man, is not too haughty to acknowledge an error, he has commissioned me to make his apology as a mutual friend, which I am convinced you will accept from yours ever,

DUNS SCOTUS.

Given at Castle Duns,
Monday.

I should perhaps have mentioned sooner that when first *Duns Scotus* became *the Baronet's* daily companion, this new alliance was observed with considerable jealousy by some of his former inseparables of the writing office. At the next annual supper of the clerks and apprentices, the *gaudy* of the chamber, this feeling showed itself in various ways, and when the cloth was drawn, Walter rose and asked what was meant. "Well," said one of the lads, "since you will have it out, you are *cutting* your old friends for the sake of Clerk and some more of these dons that look down on the like of us." "Gentlemen," answered Scott, "I will never *cut* any man unless I detect him in scoundrelism; but I know not what right any of you have to interfere with my choice of my company. If any one thought I had injured him, he would have done well to ask an explanation in a more private manner. As it is, I fairly own, that though I like many of you very much, and have long done so, I think William Clerk well worth you all put together." The senior in the chair was wise enough to laugh, and the evening passed off without further disturbance.

As one effect of his office education, Scott soon began to preserve in regular files the letters addressed to him; and from the style and tone of such letters, as Mr. Southey observes in his Life of Cowper, a man's character may often be gathered even more surely than from those written by himself. The first series of any considerable extent in his collection includes letters dated as far back as 1786, and proceeds, with not many interruptions, down beyond the period when his fame had been established. I regret, that from the delicate nature of the transactions chiefly dwelt upon in the earlier of these communications, I dare not make a free use of them; but I feel it my duty to record the strong impression they have left on my own mind of high generosity of affection, coupled with calm judgment, and perseverance in well-doing, on the part of the stripling Scott. To these indeed every line in the collection bears pregnant testimony. A young gentleman, born of good family, and heir to a tolerable fortune, is sent to Edinburgh College, and is seen partaking, along with Scott, through several apparently happy and careless years, of the studies and amusements of which the reader may by this time have formed an adequate notion. By degrees, from the usual license of his equal comrades, he sinks into habits of a looser description—becomes reckless, contracts debts, irritates his own family almost beyond hope of reconciliation, is virtually cast off by them, runs away from Scotland, forms a marriage far below his condition in a remote part of the sister kingdom—and, when the poor girl has made him a father, then first begins to open his eyes to the full consequences of his mad career. He appeals to Scott, by this time in his eighteenth year, "as the truest and noblest of friends," who had given him "the earliest and the strongest warnings," had assisted him "the most generously throughout all his wanderings and distresses," and will not now abandon him in his "penitent lowliness of misery," the result of his seeing "virtue and innocence involved in the punishment of his errors." I find Scott obtaining the slow and reluctant assistance of his own careful father—who had long before observed this youth's wayward disposition, and often cautioned his son against the connection—to intercede with the unfortunate wanderer's family, and procure, if possible, some mitigation of their sentence. The result is that he is furnished with the scanty means of removing himself to a distant colony, where he spends several years in the drudgery of a very humble occupation, but by degrees establishes for himself a new character, which commands the anxious interest of strangers;—and I find these

strangers, particularly a benevolent and venerable clergyman, addressing, on his behalf, without his privacy, the young person, as yet unknown to the world, whom the object of their concern had painted to them as "uniting the warm feelings of youth with the sense of years"—whose hair he had, "from the day he left England, worn next his heart." Just at the time when this appeal reached Scott, he hears that his exiled friend's father has died suddenly, and, after all, intestate; he has actually been taking steps to ascertain the truth of the case at the moment when the American despatch is laid on his table. I leave the reader to guess with what pleasure Scott has to communicate the intelligence that his repentant and reformed friend may return to take possession of his inheritance. The letters before me contain touching pictures of their meeting—of Walter's first visit to the ancient hall, where a happy family are now assembled—and of the affectionately respectful sense which his friend retained ever afterwards of all that he had done for him in the season of his struggles. But what a grievous loss is Scott's part of this correspondence! I find the comrade over and over again expressing his admiration of the letters in which Scott described to him his early tours both in the Highlands and the Border dales: I find him prophesying from them, as early as 1789, "one day your pen will make you famous,"—and already, in 1790, urging him to concentrate his ambition on a "history of the clans."

This young gentleman appears to have had a decided turn for literature; and, though in his earlier epistles he makes no allusion to Scott as ever dabbling in rhyme, he often inserts verses of his own, some of which are not without merit. There is a long letter in doggerel, dated 1788, descriptive of a ramble from Edinburgh to Carlisle—of which I may quote the opening lines, as a sample of the simple habits of these young people:—

> "At four in the morning, I won't be too sure,
> Yet, if right I remember me, that was the hour,
> When with Fergusson, Ramsay, and Jones, sir, and you,
> From Auld Reekie I southward my route did pursue.
> But two of the dogs (yet God bless them, I said)
> Grew tired, and but set me half way to Lasswade,
> While Jones, you, and I, Wat, went on without flutter,
> And at Symonds's feasted on good bread and butter;
> Where I, wanting a sixpence, you lugged out a shilling,

And paid for me too, though I was most unwilling.
We parted—be sure I was ready to snivel—
Jones and you to go home—I to go to the devil."

In a letter of later date, describing the adventurer's captivation with the cottage maiden whom he afterwards married, there are some lines of a very different stamp. This couplet at least seems to me exquisite:—

"Lowly beauty, dear friend, beams with primitive grace,
And 't is innocence' self plays the rogue in her face."

I find in another letter of this collection—and it is among the first of the series—the following passage:—"Your Quixotism, dear Walter, was highly characteristic. From the description of the blooming fair, as she appeared when she lowered her *manteau vert*, I am hopeful you have not dropt the acquaintance. At least I am certain some of our more rakish friends would have been glad enough of such an introduction." This hint I cannot help connecting with the first scene of *The Lady Green Mantle* in Redgauntlet; but indeed I could easily trace many more coincidences between these letters and that novel, though at the same time I have no sort of doubt that William Clerk was, in the main, *Darsie Latimer*, while Scott himself unquestionably sat for his own picture in young *Alan Fairford*.

The allusion to "our more rakish friends" is in keeping with the whole strain of this juvenile correspondence. Throughout there occurs no coarse or even jocular suggestion as to the conduct of *Scott* in that particular, as to which most youths of his then age are so apt to lay up stores of self-reproach. In this season of hot and impetuous blood he may not have escaped quite blameless, but I have the concurrent testimony of all the most intimate among his surviving associates, that he was remarkably free from such indiscretions; that while his high sense of honor shielded him from the remotest dream of tampering with female innocence, he had an instinctive delicacy about him which made him recoil with utter disgust from low and vulgar debaucheries. His friends, I have heard more than one of them confess, used often to rally him on the coldness of his nature. By degrees they discovered that he had, from almost the dawn of the passions, cherished a secret attachment, which continued, through all the most perilous stage of life, to act as a romantic charm in safeguard of virtue. This —(however he may have disguised the story by mixing it up with the

Quixotic adventure of the damsel in the Green Mantle)—this was the early and innocent affection to which we owe the tenderest pages, not only of Redgauntlet, but of The Lay of the Last Minstrel, and of Rokeby. In all of these works the heroine has certain distinctive features, drawn from one and the same haunting dream of his manly adolescence.

It was about 1790, according to Mr. William Clerk, that Scott was observed to lay aside that carelessness, not to say slovenliness, as to dress, which used to furnish matter for joking at the beginning of their acquaintance. He now did himself more justice in these little matters, became fond of mixing in general female society, and, as his friend expresses it, "began to set up for a squire of dames."

His personal appearance at this time was not unengaging. A lady of high rank, who well remembers him in the Old Assembly Rooms, says, "Young Walter Scott was a comely creature." He had outgrown the sallowness of early ill health, and had a fresh, brilliant complexion. His eyes were clear, open, and well set, with a changeful radiance, to which teeth of the most perfect regularity and whiteness lent their assistance, while the noble expanse and elevation of the brow gave to the whole aspect a dignity far above the charm of mere features. His smile was always delightful; and I can easily fancy the peculiar intermixture of tenderness and gravity, with playful innocent hilarity and humor in the expression, as being well calculated to fix a fair lady's eye. His figure, excepting the blemish in one limb, must in those days have been eminently handsome; tall, much above the usual standard, it was cast in the very mould of a young Hercules; the head set on with singular grace, the throat and chest after the truest model of the antique, the hands delicately finished; the whole outline that of extraordinary vigor, without as yet a touch of clumsiness. When he had acquired a little facility of manner, his conversation must have been such as could have dispensed with any exterior advantages, and certainly brought swift forgiveness for the one unkindness of nature. I have heard him, in talking of this part of his life, say, with an arch simplicity of look and tone which those who were familiar with him can fill in for themselves—"It was a proud night with me when I first found that a pretty young woman could think it worth her while to sit and talk with me, hour after hour, in a corner of the ballroom, while all the world were capering in our view."

I believe, however, that the "pretty young woman" here specially alluded to had occupied his attention long before he ever appeared in the

Edinburgh Assembly Rooms, or any of his friends took note of him as "setting up for a squire of dames." I have been told that their acquaintance began in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, where rain beginning to fall one Sunday as the congregation were dispersing, Scott happened to offer his umbrella, and the tender being accepted, so escorted her to her residence, which proved to be at no great distance from his own. To return from church together had, it seems, grown into something like a custom, before they met in society, Mrs. Scott being of the party. It then appeared that she and the lady's mother had been companions in their youth, though, both living secludedly, they had scarcely seen each other for many years; and the two matrons now renewed their former intercourse. But no acquaintance appears to have existed between the fathers of the young people, until things had advanced in appearance farther than met the approbation of the good Clerk to the Signet.

Being aware that the young lady, who was very highly connected, had prospects of fortune far above his son's, the upright and honorable man conceived it his duty to give her parents warning that he observed a degree of intimacy which, if allowed to go on, might involve the parties in future pain and disappointment. He had heard his son talk of a contemplated excursion to the part of the country in which his neighbor's estates lay, and not doubting that Walter's real object was different from that which he announced, introduced himself with a frank statement that he wished no such affair to proceed without the express sanction of those most interested in the happiness of persons as yet too young to calculate consequences for themselves. The northern Baronet had heard nothing of the young apprentice's intended excursion, and appeared to treat the whole business very lightly. He thanked Mr. Scott for his scrupulous attention—but added that he believed he was mistaken; and this paternal interference, which Walter did not hear of till long afterwards, produced no change in his relations with the object of his growing attachment.

I have neither the power nor the wish to give in detail the sequel of this story. It is sufficient to say, that after he had through several long years nourished the dream of an ultimate union with this lady, his hopes terminated in her being married to a gentleman of the highest character, to whom some affectionate allusions occur in one of the greatest of his works, and who lived to act the part of a most generous friend to his early rival throughout the anxieties and distresses of 1826 and 1827. I have said

enough for my purpose—which was only to render intelligible a few allusions in the letters which I shall by and by have to introduce; but I may add that I have no doubt this unfortunate passion, besides one good effect already adverted to, had a powerful influence in nerving Scott's mind for the sedulous diligence with which he pursued his proper legal studies, as described in his Memoir, during the two or three years that preceded his call to the Bar.

Chapter VI

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Illustrations Continued. — Studies for the Bar. — Excursion to Northumberland. — Letter on Flodden Field. — Call to the Bar

1790-1792

The two following letters may sufficiently illustrate the writer's every-day existence in the autumn of 1790. The first, addressed to his *fidus Achates*, has not a few indications of the vein of humor from which he afterwards drew so largely in his novels; and indeed, even in his last days, he delighted to tell the story of the Jedburgh bailies' *boots*.

TO WILLIAM CLERK, ESQ., AT JOHN CLERK'S, ESQ., OF ELDIN, PRINCE'S STREET, EDINBURGH.

Rosebank, 6th August, 1790.

Dear William,—Here am I, the weather, according to your phrase, most bitchiferous; the Tweed, within twenty yards of the window at which I am writing, swelled from bank to brae, and roaring like thunder. It is paying you but a poor compliment to tell you I waited for such a day to perform my promise of writing, but you must consider that it is the point here to reserve such within-doors employment as we think most agreeable for bad weather, which in the country always wants something to help it away. In fair weather we are far from wanting amusement, which at present is my business; on the contrary, every fair day has some plan of pleasure annexed to it, in so much that I can hardly believe I have been here above two days, so swiftly does the time pass away. You will ask how it is employed? Why, negatively, I read *no* civil law. Heineccius and his fellow-worthies have ample time to gather a venerable coat of dust, which they merit by their dulness. As to my positive amusements, besides riding, fishing, and the other usual sports of the country, I often spend an hour or two in the evening in shooting herons, which are numerous on this part of the river. To do this I have no farther to go than the bottom of our garden, which literally

hangs over the river. When you fire at a bird, she always crosses the river, and when again shot at with ball, usually returns to your side, and will cross in this way several times before she takes wing. This furnishes fine sport; nor are they easily shot, as you never can get very near them. The intervals between their appearing are spent very agreeably in eating gooseberries.

Yesterday was St. James's Fair, a day of great business. There was a great show of black cattle—I mean of ministers; the narrowness of their stipends here obliges many of them to enlarge their incomes by taking farms and grazing cattle. This, in my opinion, diminishes their respectability, nor can the farmer be supposed to entertain any great reverence for the ghostly advice of a *pastor* (they literally deserve the epithet) who perhaps the day before overreached him in a bargain. I would not have you to suppose there are no exceptions to this character, but it would serve most of them. I had been fishing with my uncle, Captain Scott, on the Teviot, and returned through the ground where the Fair is kept. The servant was waiting there with our horses, as we were to ride the water. Lucky it was that it was so; for just about that time the magistrates of Jedburgh, who preside there, began their solemn procession through the Fair. For the greater dignity upon this occasion they had a pair of boots among three men—*i. e.*, as they ride three in a rank, the *outer* legs of those personages who formed the outside, as it may be called, of the procession, were each clothed in a boot. This and several other incongruous appearances were thrown in the teeth of those cavaliers by the Kelso populace, and, by the assistance of whiskey, parties were soon inflamed to a very tight battle, one of that kind which, for distinction sake, is called royal. It was not without great difficulty that we extricated ourselves from the confusion; and had we been on foot, we might have been trampled down by these fierce Jedburghians, who charged like so many troopers. We were spectators of the combat from an eminence, but peace was soon after restored, which made the older warriors regret the effeminacy of the age, as, regularly, it ought to have lasted till night. Two lives were lost, I mean of horses; indeed, had you seen them, you would rather have wondered that they were able to bear their masters to the scene of action, than that they could not carry them off.

I am ashamed to read over this sheet of nonsense, so excuse inaccuracies. Remember me to the lads of the Literary, those of *the club* in particular. I wrote Irving. Remember my most respectful compliments to Mr. and Mrs.

Clerk and family, particularly James; when you write, let me know how he did when you heard of him. Imitate me in writing a long letter, but not in being long in writing it. Direct to me at Miss Scott's, Garden, Kelso. My letters lie there for me, as it saves their being sent down to Rosebank. The carrier puts up at the Grassmarket, and goes away on Wednesday forenoon. Yours,

Walter Scott.

The next letter is dated from a house at which I have often seen the writer in his latter days. Kippilaw, situated about five or six miles behind Abbotsford, on the high ground between the Tweed and the Water of Ayle, is the seat of an ancient laird of the clan Kerr, but was at this time tenanted by the family of Walter's brother-apprentice, James Ramsay, who afterwards realized a fortune in the civil service of Ceylon.

TO WILLIAM CLERK, ESQ.

Kippilaw, September 3, 1790.

Dear Clerk,—I am now writing from the country habitation of our friend Ramsay, where I have been spending a week as pleasantly as ever I spent one in my life. Imagine a commodious old house, pleasantly situated amongst a knot of venerable elms, in a fine sporting, open country, and only two miles from an excellent water for trouts, inhabited by two of the best old ladies (Ramsay's aunts), and three as pleasant young ones (his sisters) as any person could wish to converse with—and you will have some idea of Kippilaw. James and I wander about, fish, or look for hares, the whole day, and at night laugh, chat, and play round games at cards. Such is the fatherland in which I have been living for some days past, and which I leave to-night or to-morrow. This day is very bad; notwithstanding which, James has sallied out to make some calls, as he soon leaves the country. I have a great mind to trouble him with the care of this.

And now for your letter, the receipt of which I have not, I think, yet acknowledged, though I am much obliged to you for it. I dare say you would relish your jaunt to Pennycuik very much, especially considering the solitary desert of Edinburgh, from which it relieved you. By the bye, know, O thou devourer of grapes, who contemnest the vulgar gooseberry, that thou

art not singular in thy devouring—*nec tam aversus equos sol jungit ab urbe (Kelsonianâ scilicet*)—my uncle being the lawful possessor of a vinery measuring no less than twenty-four feet by twelve, the contents of which come often in my way; and, according to the proverb, that enough is as good as a feast, are equally acceptable as if they came out of the most extensive vineyard in France. I cannot, however, equal your boast of breakfasting, dining, and supping on them. As for the civilians—peace be with them, and may the dust lie light upon their heads—they deserve this prayer in return for those sweet slumbers which their benign influence infuses into their readers. I fear I shall too soon be forced to disturb them, for some of our family being now at Kelso, I am under the agonies lest I be obliged to escort them into town. The only pleasure I shall reap by this is that of asking you how you do, and, perhaps, the solid advantage of completing our studies before the College sits down. Employ, therefore, your mornings in slumber while you can, for soon it will be chased from your eyes. I plume myself on my sagacity with regard to C. J. Fox. I always foretold you would tire of him—a vile brute. I have not yet forgot the narrow escape of my fingers. I rejoice at James's intimacy with Miss Menzies. She promised to turn out a fine girl, has a fine fortune, and could James get her, he might sing, "I'll go no more to sea, to sea." Give my love to him when you write.—"God preserve us, what a scrawl!" says one of the ladies just now, in admiration at the expedition with which I scribble. Well—I was never able in my life to do anything with what is called gravity and deliberation.

I dined two days ago *tête-à-tête* with Lord Buchan. Heard a history of all his ancestors whom he has hung round his chimney-piece. From counting of pedigrees, good Lord deliver us! He is thinking of erecting a monument to Thomson. He frequented Dryburgh much in my grandfather's time. It will be a handsome thing. As to your scamp of a boy, I saw nothing of him; but the face is enough to condemn there. I have seen a man flogged for stealing spirits on the sole information of his nose. Remember me respectfully to your family.

Believe me yours affectionately,

Walter Scott

After his return from the scene of these merry doings, he writes as follows to his kind uncle. The reader will see that, in the course of the preceding year, he had announced his early views of the origin of what is called the feudal system, in a paper read before the *Literary Society*. He, in the succeeding winter, chose the same subject for an essay, submitted to Mr. Dugald Stewart, whose prelections on ethics he was then attending. Some time later he again illustrated the same opinions more at length in a disquisition before the Speculative Society; and, indeed, he always adhered to them. One of the last historical books he read, before leaving Abbotsford for Malta in 1831, was Colonel Tod's interesting account of Rajasthan; and I well remember the delight he expressed on finding his views confirmed, as they certainly are in a very striking manner, by the philosophical soldier's details of the structure of society in that remote region of the East.

TO CAPTAIN ROBERT SCOTT, ROSEBANK, KELSO.

Edinburgh, September 30, 1790.

Dear Uncle,—We arrived here without any accident about five o'clock on Monday evening. The good weather made our journey pleasant. I have been attending to your commissions here, and find that the last volume of Dodsley's Annual Register published is that for 1787, which I was about to send you; but the bookseller I frequent had not one in boards, though he expects to procure one for me. There is a new work of the same title and size, on the same plan, which, being published every year regularly, has almost cut out Dodsley's, so that this last is expected to stop altogether. You will let me know if you would wish to have the new work, which is a good one, will join very well with those volumes of Dodsley's which you already have, and is published up to the present year. Byron's Narrative is not yet published, but you shall have it whenever it comes out.

Agreeable to your permission, I send you the scroll copy of an essay on the origin of the feudal system, written for the Literary Society last year. As you are kind enough to interest yourself in my style and manner of writing, I thought you might like better to see it in its original state, than one on the polishing of which more time had been bestowed. You will see that the intention and attempt of the essay is principally to controvert two propositions laid down by the writers on the subject:—1st, That the system

was invented by the Lombards; and, 2dly, that its foundation depended on the king's being acknowledged the sole lord of all the lands in the country, which he afterwards distributed to be held by military tenures. I have endeavored to assign it a more general origin, and to prove that it proceeds upon principles common to all nations when placed in a certain situation. I am afraid the matter will but poorly reward the trouble you will find in reading some parts. I hope, however, you will make out enough to enable you to favor me with your sentiments upon its faults. There is none whose advice I prize so high, for there is none in whose judgment I can so much confide, or who has shown me so much kindness.

I also send, as amusement for an idle half hour, a copy of the regulations of our Society, some of which will, I think, be favored with your approbation.

My mother and sister join in compliments to aunt and you, and also in thanks for the attentions and hospitality which they experienced at Rosebank. And I am ever your affectionate nephew,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—If you continue to want a mastiff, I think I can procure you one of a good breed, and send him by the carrier.

While attending Mr. Dugald Stewart's class, in the winter of 1790-91, Scott produced, in compliance with the usual custom of ethical students, several essays besides that to which I have already made an allusion, and which was, I believe, entitled, On the Manners and Customs of the Northern Nations. But this essay it was that first attracted, in any particular manner, his Professor's attention. Mr. Robert Ainslie, well known as the friend and fellow-traveller of Burns, happened to attend Stewart the same session, and remembers his saying, *ex cathedra*, "The author of this paper shows much knowledge of his subject, and a great taste for such researches." Scott became, before the close of the session, a frequent visitor in Mr. Stewart's family, and an affectionate intercourse was maintained between them through their after-lives.

Let me here set down a little story which most of his friends must have heard him tell of the same period. While attending Dugald Stewart's lectures on moral philosophy, Scott happened to sit frequently beside a modest and diligent youth, considerably his senior, and obviously of very

humble condition. Their acquaintance soon became rather intimate, and he occasionally made this new friend the companion of his country walks, but as to his parentage and place of residence he always preserved total silence. One day towards the end of the session, as Scott was returning to Edinburgh from a solitary ramble, his eye was arrested by a singularly venerable *Bluegown*, a beggar of the Edie Ochiltree order, who stood propped on his stick, with his hat in his hand, but silent and motionless, at one of the outskirts of the city. Scott gave the old man what trifle he had in his pocket, and passed on his way. Two or three times afterwards the same thing happened, and he had begun to consider the Bluegown as one who had established a claim on his bounty: when one day he fell in with him as he was walking with his humble student. Observing some confusion in his companion's manner as he saluted his pensioner, and bestowed the usual benefaction, he could not help saying, after they had proceeded a few yards further, "Do you know anything to the old man's discredit?" Upon which the youth burst into tears, and cried, "Oh no, sir, God forbid!—but I am a poor wretch to be ashamed to speak to him—he is my own father. He has enough laid by to serve for his own old days, but he stands bleaching his head in the wind, that he may get the means of paying for my education." Compassionating the young man's situation, Scott soothed his weakness, and kept his secret, but by no means broke off the acquaintance. Some months had elapsed before he again met the Bluegown—it was in a retired place, and the old man begged to speak a word with him. "I find, sir," he said, "that you have been very kind to my Willie. He had often spoke of it before I saw you together. Will you pardon such a liberty, and give me the honor and pleasure of seeing you under my poor roof? Tomorrow is Saturday; will you come at two o'clock? Willie has not been very well, and it would do him meikle good to see your face." His curiosity, besides better feelings, was touched, and he accepted this strange invitation. The appointed hour found him within sight of a sequestered little cottage, near St. Leonard's—the hamlet where he has placed the residence of his David Deans. His fellow-student, pale and emaciated from recent sickness, was seated on a stone bench by the door, looking out for his coming, and introduced him into a not untidy cabin, where the old man, divested of his professional garb, was directing the last vibrations of a leg of mutton that hung by a hempen cord before the fire. The mutton was excellent—so were the potatoes and whiskey; and Scott returned home from an entertaining

conversation, in which, besides telling many queer stories of his own life—and he had seen service in his youth—the old man more than once used an expression, which was long afterwards put into the mouth of Dominie Sampson's mother:—"Please God, I may live to see my bairn wag his head in a pulpit yet."

Walter could not help telling all this the same night to his mother, and added, that he would fain see his poor friend obtain a tutor's place in some gentleman's family. "Dinna speak to your father about it," said the good lady; "if it had been *a shoulder* he might have thought less, but he will say *the jigot* was a sin. I'll see what I can do." Mrs. Scott made her inquiries in her own way among the Professors, and having satisfied herself as to the young man's character, applied to her favorite minister, Dr. Erskine, whose influence soon procured such a situation as had been suggested for him, in the north of Scotland. "And thenceforth," said Sir Walter, "I lost sight of my friend—but let us hope he made out his *curriculum* at Aberdeen, and is now wagging his head where the fine old carle wished to see him."

On the 4th January, 1791, Scott was admitted a member of *The Speculative Society*, where it had, long before, been the custom of those about to be called to the Bar, and those who after assuming the gown were left in possession of leisure by the solicitors, to train or exercise themselves in the arts of elocution and debate. From time to time each member produces an essay, and his treatment of his subject is then discussed by the conclave. Scott's essays were, for November, 1791, On the Origin of the Feudal System; for the 14th February, 1792, On the Authenticity of Ossian's Poems; and on the 11th December of the same year, he read one, On the Origin of the Scandinavian Mythology. The selection of these subjects shows the course of his private studies and predilections; but he appears, from the minutes, to have taken his fair share in the ordinary debates of the Society,—and spoke, in the spring of 1791, on these questions, which all belong to the established text-book for juvenile speculation in Edinburgh:—"Ought any permanent support to be provided for the poor?" "Ought there to be an established religion?" "Is attainder and corruption of blood ever a proper punishment?" "Ought the public expenses to be defrayed by levying the amount directly upon the people, or is it expedient to contract national debt for that purpose?" "Was the execution of Charles I. justifiable?" "Should the slave-trade be abolished?" In the next session, previous to his call to the Bar, he spoke in the debates of which these were

the theses:—"Has the belief in a future state been of advantage to mankind, or is it ever likely to be so?" "Is it for the interest of Britain to maintain what is called the balance of Europe?" and again on the eternal question as to the fate of King Charles I., which, by the way, was thus set up for re-discussion on a motion by Walter Scott.

He took, for several winters, an ardent interest in this society. Very soon after his admission (18th January, 1791), he was elected their librarian; and in the November following he became also their secretary and treasurer; all which appointments indicate the reliance placed on his careful habits of business, the fruit of his chamber education. The minutes kept in his handwriting attest the strict regularity of his attention to the small affairs, literary and financial, of the club; but they show also, as do all his early letters, a strange carelessness in spelling. His constant good temper softened the asperities of debate; while his multifarious lore, and the quaint humor with which he enlivened its display, made him more a favorite as a speaker than some whose powers of rhetoric were far above his.

Lord Jeffrey remembers being struck, the first night he spent at the Speculative, with the singular appearance of the secretary, who sat gravely at the bottom of the table in a huge woollen nightcap; and when the president took the chair, pleaded a bad toothache as his apology for coming into that worshipful assembly in such a "portentous machine." He read that night an essay on ballads, which so much interested the new member that he requested to be introduced to him. Mr. Jeffrey called on him next evening, and found him "in a small den, on the sunk floor of his father's house in George's Square, surrounded with dingy books," from which they adjourned to a tavern, and supped together. Such was the commencement of an acquaintance, which by degrees ripened into friendship, between the two most distinguished men of letters whom Edinburgh produced in their time. I may add here the description of that early *den*, with which I am favored by a lady of Scott's family:—"Walter had soon begun to collect out-of-the-way things of all sorts. He had more books than shelves; a small painted cabinet, with Scotch and Roman coins in it, and so forth. A claymore and Lochaber axe, given him by old Invernahyle, mounted guard on a little print of Prince Charlie; and *Broughton's Saucer* was hooked up against the wall below it." Such was the germ of the magnificent library and museum of Abbotsford; and such were the "new realms" in which he, on taking possession, had arranged his little paraphernalia about him "with all the feelings of novelty

and liberty." Since those days, the habits of life in Edinburgh, as elsewhere, have undergone many changes: and the "convenient parlor," in which Scott first showed Jeffrey his collections of minstrelsy, is now, in all probability, thought hardly good enough for a menial's sleeping-room.

But I have forgotten to explain *Broughton's Saucer*. We read of Mr. Saunders Fairford, that though "an elder of the kirk, and of course zealous for King George and the Government," yet, having "many clients and connections of business among families of opposite political tenets, he was particularly cautious to use all the conventional phrases which the civility of the time had devised as an admissible mode of language betwixt the two parties: Thus he spoke sometimes of the Chevalier, but never either of the *Prince*, which would have been sacrificing his own principles, or of *the Pretender*, which would have been offensive to those of others: Again, he usually designated the Rebellion as the *affair* of 1745, and spoke of any one engaged in it as a person who had been *out* at a certain period—so that, on the whole, he was much liked and respected on all sides." All this was true of Mr. Walter Scott, W. S.; but I have often heard his son tell an anecdote of him, which he dwelt on with particular satisfaction, as illustrative of the man, and of the difficult time through which he had lived.

Mrs. Scott's curiosity was strongly excited one autumn by the regular appearance, at a certain hour every evening, of a sedan chair, to deposit a person carefully muffled up in a mantle, who was immediately ushered into her husband's private room, and commonly remained with him there until long after the usual bedtime of this orderly family. Mr. Scott answered her repeated inquiries with a vagueness which irritated the lady's feelings more and more; until, at last, she could bear the thing no longer; but one evening, just as she heard the bell ring as for the stranger's chair to carry him off, she made her appearance within the forbidden parlor with a salver in her hand, observing that she thought the gentlemen had sat so long, they would be the better of a dish of tea, and had ventured accordingly to bring some for their acceptance. The stranger, a person of distinguished appearance, and richly dressed, bowed to the lady, and accepted a cup; but her husband knit his brows, and refused very coldly to partake the refreshment. A moment afterwards the visitor withdrew—and Mr. Scott, lifting up the window-sash, took the cup which he had left empty on the table, and tossed it out upon the pavement. The lady exclaimed for her china, but was put to silence by her husband's saying, "I can forgive your little curiosity, madam, but you must

pay the penalty. I may admit into my house, on a piece of business, persons wholly unworthy to be treated as guests by my wife. Neither lip of me nor of mine comes after Mr. Murray of Broughton's."

This was the unhappy man who, after attending Prince Charles Stuart as his secretary throughout the greater part of his expedition, condescended to redeem his own life and fortune by bearing evidence against the noblest of his late master's adherents, when

> "Pitied by gentle hearts Kilmarnock died—
> The brave, Balmerino, were on thy side."

When confronted with Sir John Douglas of Kelhead (ancestor of the Marquess of Queensberry), before the Privy Council in St. James's, the prisoner was asked, "Do you know this witness?" "Not I," answered Douglas; "I once knew a person who bore the designation of Murray of Broughton—but that was a gentleman and a man of honor, and one that could hold up his head!"

The saucer belonging to Broughton's teacup had been preserved; and Walter, at a very early period, made prize of it. One can fancy young Alan Fairford pointing significantly to the relic, when Mr. Saunders was vouchsafing him one of his customary lectures about listening with, unseemly sympathy to "the blawing, bleezing stories which the Hieland gentlemen told of those troublous times."

The following letter is the only one of the autumn of 1791 that has reached my hands. It must be read with particular interest for its account of Scott's first visit to Flodden field, destined to be celebrated seventeen years afterwards in the very noblest specimen of his numbers:—

TO WILLIAM CLERK, ESQ., PRINCE'S STREET,
EDINBURGH.

Northumberland, 26th August, 1791.

Dear Clerk,—Behold a letter from the mountains; for I am very snugly settled here, in a farmer's house, about six miles from Wooler, in the very centre of the Cheviot hills, in one of the wildest and most romantic situations which your imagination, fertile upon the subject of cottages, ever suggested. And what the deuce are you about there? methinks I hear you say. Why, sir, of all things in the world—drinking goat's whey—not that I

stand in the least need of it, but my uncle having a slight cold, and being a little tired of home, asked me last Sunday evening if I would like to go with him to Wooler, and I answering in the affirmative, next morning's sun beheld us on our journey, through a pass in the Cheviots, upon the back of two special nags, and man Thomas behind with a portmanteau, and two fishing-rods fastened across his back, much in the style of St. Andrew's Cross. Upon reaching Wooler we found the accommodations so bad that we were forced to use some interest to get lodgings here, where we are most delightfully appointed indeed. To add to my satisfaction, we are amidst places renowned by the feats of former days; each hill is crowned with a tower, or camp, or cairn, and in no situation can you be near more fields of battle: Flodden, Otterburn, Chevy Chase, Ford Castle, Chillingham Castle, Copland Castle, and many another scene of blood, are within the compass of a forenoon's ride. Out of the brooks, with which these hills are intersected, we pull trouts of half a yard in length, as fast as we did the perches from the pond at Pennycuik, and we are in the very country of muirfowl.

Often as I have wished for your company, I never did it more earnestly than when I rode over Flodden Edge. I know your taste for these things, and could have undertaken to demonstrate that never was an affair more completely bungled than that day's work was. Suppose one army posted upon the face of a hill, and secured by high grounds projecting on each flank, with the river Till in front, a deep and still river, winding through a very extensive valley called Milfield Plain, and the only passage over it by a narrow bridge, which the Scots artillery, from the hill, could in a moment have demolished. Add, that the English must have hazarded a battle while their troops, which were tumultuously levied, remained together; and that the Scots, behind whom the country was open to Scotland, had nothing to do but to wait for the attack as they were posted. Yet did two thirds of the army, actuated by the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, rush down and give an opportunity to Stanley to occupy the ground they had quitted, by coming over the shoulder of the hill, while the other third, under Lord Home, kept their ground, and having seen their king and about 10,000 of their countrymen cut to pieces, retired into Scotland without loss. For the reason of the bridge not being destroyed while the English passed, I refer you to

Pitscottie, who narrates at large, and to whom I give credit for a most accurate and clear description, agreeing perfectly with the ground.

My uncle drinks the whey here, as I do ever since I understood it was brought to his bedside every morning at six, by a very pretty dairy-maid. So much for my residence: all the day we shoot, fish, walk, and ride; dine and sup upon fish struggling from the stream, and the most delicious heath-fed mutton, barn-door fowls, poys, milk-cheese, etc., all in perfection; and so much simplicity resides among these hills, that a pen, which could write at least, was not to be found about the house, though belonging to a considerable farmer, till I shot the crow with whose quill I write this epistle. I wrote to Irving before leaving Kelso. Poor fellow, I am sure his sister's death must have hurt him much; though he makes no noise about feelings, yet still streams always run deepest. I sent a message by him to Edie, poor devil, adding my mite of consolation to him in his affliction. I pity poor ******, who is more deserving of compassion, being his first offence. Write soon, and as long as the last; you will have Perthshire news, I suppose, soon. Jamie's adventure diverted me much. I read it to my uncle, who being long in the India service, was affronted. Remember me to James when you write, and to all your family, and friends in general. I send this to Kelso—you may address as usual; my letters will be forwarded—adieu—au revoir,

Walter Scott.

With the exception of this little excursion, Scott appears to have been nailed to Edinburgh during this autumn, by that course of legal study, in company with Clerk, on which he dwells in his Memoir with more satisfaction than on any other passage in his early life. He copied out *twice*, as the fragment tells us, his notes of those lectures of the eminent Scots Law professor (Mr. Hume), which he speaks of in such a high strain of eulogy; and Mr. Irving adds that the second copy, being fairly finished and bound into volumes, was presented to his father. The old gentleman was highly gratified with this performance, not only as a satisfactory proof of his son's assiduous attention to the law professor, but inasmuch as the lectures afforded himself "very pleasant reading for leisure hours."

Mr. Clerk assures me that nothing could be more exact (excepting as to a few petty circumstances introduced for obvious reasons) than the

resemblance of the Mr. Saunders Fairford of Redgauntlet to his friend's father:—"He was a man of business of the old school, moderate in his charges, economical, and even niggardly in his expenditure; strictly honest in conducting his own affairs and those of his clients; but taught by long experience to be wary and suspicious in observing the motions of others. Punctual as the clock of St. Giles tolled nine" (the hour at which the Court of Session meets), "the dapper form of the hale old gentleman was seen at the threshold of the court hall, or, at farthest, at the head of the Back Stairs" (the most convenient access to the Parliament House from George's Square), "trimly dressed in a complete suit of snuff-colored brown, with stockings of silk or woollen, as suited the weather; a bob wig and a small cocked hat; shoes blacked as Warren would have blacked them; silver shoe-buckles, and a gold stock-buckle. His manners corresponded with his attire, for they were scrupulously civil, and not a little formal.... On the whole, he was a man much liked and respected, though his friends would not have been sorry if he had given a dinner more frequently, as his little cellar contained some choice old wine, of which, on such rare occasions, he was no niggard. The whole pleasure of this good old-fashioned man of method, besides that which he really felt in the discharge of his own daily business, was the hope to see his son attain what in the father's eyes was the proudest of all distinctions—the rank and fame of a well-employed lawyer. Every profession has its peculiar honors, and his mind was constructed upon so limited and exclusive a plan, that he valued nothing save the objects of ambition which his own presented. He would have shuddered at his son's acquiring the renown of a hero, and laughed with scorn at the equally barren laurels of literature; it was by the path of the law alone that he was desirous to see him rise to eminence; and the probabilities of success or disappointment were the thoughts of his father by day, and his dream by night."

It is easy to imagine the original of this portrait, writing to one of his friends, about the end of June, 1792—"I have the pleasure to tell you that my son has passed his private Scots Law examinations with good approbation—a great relief to my mind, especially as worthy Mr. Pest told me in my ear, there was no fear of the 'callant,' as he familiarly called him, which gives me great heart. His public trials, which are nothing in comparison, save a mere form, are to take place, by order of the Honorable Dean of Faculty, on Wednesday first, and on Friday he puts on the gown,

and gives a bit chack of dinner to his friends and acquaintances, as is the custom. Your company will be wished for there by more than him.—*P. S.* His thesis is on the title, *De periculo et commodo rei venditæ*, and is a very pretty piece of Latinity."

And all things passed in due order, even as they are figured. The real *Darsie* was present at the real Alan Fairford's "bit chack of dinner," and the old Clerk of the Signet was very joyous on the occasion. Scott's *thesis* was, in fact, on the Title of the Pandects, *Concerning the disposal of the dead bodies of Criminals*. It was dedicated, I doubt not by the careful father's advice, to his friend and neighbor in George's Square, the coarsely humorous, but acute and able, and still well-remembered, Macqueen of Braxfield, then Lord Justice-Clerk (or President of the Supreme Criminal Court) of Scotland.

I have often heard both *Alan* and *Darsie* laugh over their reminiscences of the important day when they "put on the gown." After the ceremony was completed, and they had mingled for some time with the crowd of barristers in the Outer Court, Scott said to his comrade, mimicking the air and tone of a Highland lass waiting at the Cross of Edinburgh to be hired for the harvest work—"We've stood here an hour by the Tron, hinny, and de'il a ane has speered our price." Some friendly solicitor, however, gave him a guinea fee before the Court rose; and as they walked down the High Street together, he said to Mr. Clerk, in passing a hosier's shop—"This is a sort of a wedding-day, Willie; I think I must go in and buy me a new nightcap," He did so accordingly; perhaps this was Lord Jeffrey's "portentous machine." His first fee of any consequence, however, was expended on a silver taper-stand for his mother, which the old lady used to point to with great satisfaction, as it stood on her chimney-piece five-and-twenty years afterwards.

Chapter VII

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First Expedition Into Liddesdale. — Study of German. — Political Trials, Etc. — Specimen of Law Papers. — Bürger's Lenore Translated. — Disappointment in Love

1792-1796

Scott was called to the Bar only the day before the closing of the session, and he appears to have almost immediately escaped to the country. On the 2d of August I find his father writing,—"I have sent the copies of your *thesis* as desired;" and on the 15th he addressed to him at Rosebank a letter, in which there is this paragraph, an undoubted autograph of Mr. Saunders Fairford, *anno ætatis* sixty-three:—

> "Dear Walter,—... I am glad that your expedition to the west proved agreeable. You do well to warn your mother against Ashestiel. Although I said little, yet I never thought that road could be agreeable; besides, it is taking too wide a circle. Lord Justice-Clerk is in town attending the Bills. He called here yesterday, and inquired very particularly for you. I told him where you was, and he expects to see you at Jedburgh upon the 21st. He is to be at Mellerstain on the 20th, and will be there all night. His Lordship said, in a very pleasant manner, that something might cast up at Jedburgh to give you an opportunity of appearing, and that he would insist upon it, and that in future he meant to give you a share of the criminal business in this Court,—all which is very kind. I told his Lordship that I had dissuaded you from appearing at Jedburgh, but he said I was wrong in doing so, and I therefore leave the matter to you and him. *I think it is probable he will breakfast with Sir H. H. MacDougall on the 21st, on his way to Jedburgh*."...

This last quiet hint, that the young lawyer might as well be at Makerstoun (the seat of a relation) when *His Lordship* breakfasted there, and of course

swell the train of His Lordship's little procession into the county town, seems delightfully characteristic. I think I hear Sir Walter himself lecturing *me*, when in the same sort of situation, thirty years afterwards. He declined, as one of the following letters will show, the opportunity of making his first appearance on this occasion at Jedburgh. He was present, indeed, at the Court during the assizes, but "durst not venture." His accounts to William Clerk of his vacation amusements, and more particularly of his second excursion to Northumberland, will, I am sure, interest every reader:—

TO WILLIAM CLERK, ESQ., ADVOCATE, PRINCE'S STREET, EDINBURGH.

Rosebank, 10th September, 1792.

Dear William,—Taking the advantage of a very indifferent day, which is likely to float away a good deal of corn, and of my father's leaving this place, who will take charge of this scroll, I sit down to answer your favor. I find you have been, like myself, taking advantage of the good weather to look around you a little, and congratulate you upon the pleasure you must have received from your jaunt with Mr. Russell I apprehend, though you are silent on the subject, that your conversation was enlivened by many curious disquisitions of the nature of *undulating exhalations*. I should have bowed before the venerable grove of oaks at Hamilton with as much respect as if I had been a Druid about to gather the sacred mistletoe. I should hardly have suspected your host Sir William of having been the occasion of the scandal brought upon the library and Mr. Gibb by the introduction of the Cabinet des Fées, of which I have a volume or two here. I am happy to think there is an admirer of *snug things* in the administration of the library. Poor Linton's misfortune, though I cannot say it surprises, yet heartily grieves me. I have no doubt he will have many advisers and animadverters upon the naughtiness of his ways, whose admonitions will be forgot upon the next opportunity.

I am lounging about the country here, to speak sincerely, as idle as the day is long. Two old companions of mine, brothers of Mr. Walker of Wooden, having come to this country, we have renewed a great intimacy. As they live directly upon the opposite bank of the river, we have signals agreed upon by which we concert a plan of operations for the day. They are both officers,

and very intelligent young fellows, and what is of some consequence, have a brace of fine greyhounds. Yesterday forenoon we killed seven hares, so you may see how plenty the game is with us. I have turned a keen duck-shooter, though my success is not very great; and when wading through the mosses upon this errand, accoutred with the long gun, a jacket, mosquito trousers, and a rough cap, I might well pass for one of my redoubted moss-trooper progenitors, Walter Fire-the-Braes, or rather Willie wi' the Bolt-Foot.

For about-doors' amusement, I have constructed a seat in a large tree which spreads its branches horizontally over the Tweed. This is a favorite situation of mine for reading, especially in a day like this, when the west wind rocks the branches on which I am perched, and the river rolls its waves below me of a turbid blood color. I have, moreover, cut an embrasure, through which I can fire upon the gulls, herons, and cormorants, as they fly screaming past my nest. To crown the whole, I have carved an inscription upon it in the ancient Roman taste. I believe I shall hardly return into town, barring accidents, sooner than the middle of next month, perhaps not till November. Next week, weather permitting, is destined for a Northumberland expedition, in which I shall visit some parts of that country which I have not yet seen, particularly about Hexham. Some days ago I had nearly met with a worse accident than the tramp I took at Moorfoot; for having bewildered myself among the Cheviot hills, it was nearly nightfall before I got to the village of Hownam, and the passes with which I was acquainted. You do not speak of being in Perthshire this season, though I suppose you intend it. I suppose we, that is, *nous autres*, are at present completely dispersed.

Compliments to all who are in town, and best respects to your own family, both in Prince's Street and at Eldin.—Believe me ever most sincerely yours,

Walter Scott.

TO WILLIAM CLERK, ESQ.

Rosebank, 30th September, 1792.

Dear William,—I suppose this will find you flourishing like a green bay-tree on the mountains of Perthshire, and in full enjoyment of all the pleasures of the country. All that I envy you is the *noctes cœnæque deum*,

which, I take it for granted, you three merry men will be spending together, while I am poring over Bartholine in the long evenings, solitary enough; for, as for the lobsters, as you call them, I am separated from them by the Tweed, which precludes evening meetings, unless in fine weather and full moons. I have had an expedition through Hexham and the higher parts of Northumberland, which would have delighted the very cockles of your heart, not so much on account of the beautiful romantic appearance of the country, though that would have charmed you also, as because you would have seen more Roman inscriptions built into gate-posts, barns, etc., than perhaps are to be found in any other part of Britain. These have been all dug up from the neighboring Roman wall, which is still in many places very entire, and gives a stupendous idea of the perseverance of its founders, who carried such an erection from sea to sea, over rocks, mountains, rivers, and morasses. There are several lakes among the mountains above Hexham, well worth going many miles to see, though their fame is eclipsed by their neighborhood to those of Cumberland. They are surrounded by old towers and castles, in situations the most savagely romantic; what would I have given to have been able to take effect-pieces from some of them! Upon the Tyne, about Hexham, the country has a different aspect, presenting much of the beautiful, though less of the sublime. I was particularly charmed with the situation of Beaufront, a house belonging to a mad sort of genius, whom, I am sure, I have told you some stories about. He used to call himself the Noble Errington, but of late has assumed the title of Duke of Hexham. Hard by the town is the field of battle where the forces of Queen Margaret were defeated by those of the House of York, a blow which the Red Rose never recovered during the civil wars. The spot where the Duke of Somerset and the northern nobility of the Lancastrian faction were executed after the battle is still called Dukesfield. The inhabitants of this country speak an odd dialect of the Saxon, approaching nearly that of Chaucer, and have retained some customs peculiar to themselves. They are the descendants of the ancient Danes, chased into the fastnesses of Northumberland by the severity of William the Conqueror. Their ignorance is surprising to a Scotchman. It is common for the traders in cattle, which business is carried on to a great extent, to carry all letters received in course of trade to the parish church, where the clerk reads them aloud after service, and answers them according to circumstances.

We intended to visit the lakes in Cumberland, but our jaunt was cut short by the bad weather. I went to the circuit at Jedburgh, to make my bow to Lord J. Clerk, and might have had employment, but durst not venture. Nine of the Dunse rioters were condemned to banishment, but the ferment continues violent in the Merse. Kelso races afforded little sport—Wishaw lost a horse which cost him £500, and foundered irrecoverably on the course. At another time I shall quote George Buchanan's adage of "a fool and his money," but at present labor under a similar misfortune; my Galloway having yesterday thought proper (N. B., without a rider) to leap over a gate, and being lamed for the present. This is not his first *faux-pas*, for he jumped into a water with me on his back when in Northumberland, to the imminent danger of my life. He is, therefore, to be sold (when recovered), and another purchased. This accident has occasioned you the trouble of reading so long an epistle, the day being Sunday, and my uncle, the captain, busily engaged with your father's naval tactics, is too seriously employed to be an agreeable companion. Apropos (des bottes)—I am sincerely sorry to hear that James is still unemployed, but have no doubt a time will come round when his talents will have an opportunity of being displayed to his advantage. I have no prospect of seeing my *chère adorable* till winter, if then. As for you, I pity you not, seeing as how you have so good a succedaneum in M. G.; and, on the contrary, hope, not only that Edmonstone may *roast* you, but that Cupid may again (as erst) *fry* you on the gridiron of jealousy for your infidelity. Compliments to our right trusty and well-beloved Linton and Jean Jacques. If you write, which, by the way, I hardly have the conscience to expect, direct to my father's care, who will forward your letter. I have quite given up duck-shooting for the season, the birds being too old, and the mosses too deep and cold. I have no reason to boast of my experience or success in the sport, and for my own part, should fire at any distance under eighty or even ninety paces, though above forty-five I would reckon it a *coup désespéré*, and as the bird is beyond measure shy, you may be sure I was not very bloody. Believe me, deferring, *as usual*, our dispute till another opportunity, always sincerely yours,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—I believe, if my pony does not soon recover, that misfortune, with the bad weather, may send me soon to town.

It was within a few days after Scott's return from his excursion to Hexham, that, while attending the Michaelmas head-court, as an annual county-meeting is called, at Jedburgh, he was introduced, by an old companion, Charles Kerr of Abbotrule, to Mr. Robert Shortreed, that gentleman's near relation, who spent the greater part of his life in the enjoyment of much respect as Sheriff-substitute of Roxburghshire. Scott had been expressing his wish to visit the then wild and inaccessible district of Liddesdale, particularly with a view to examine the ruins of the famous castle of Hermitage, and to pick up some of the ancient *riding ballads*, said to be still preserved among the descendants of the moss-troopers, who had followed the banner of the Douglases, when lords of that grim and remote fastness. Mr. Shortreed had many connections in Liddesdale, and knew its passes well, and he was pointed out as the very guide the young advocate wanted. They started, accordingly, in a day or two afterwards, from Abbotrule; and the laird meant to have been of the party; but "it was well for him," said Shortreed, "that he changed his mind—for he could never have done as we did."

During seven successive years Scott made a *raid*, as he called it, into Liddesdale, with Mr. Shortreed for his guide; exploring every rivulet to its source, and every ruined *peel* from foundation to battlement. At this time no wheeled carriage had ever been seen in the district—the first, indeed, that ever appeared there was a gig, driven by Scott himself for a part of his way, when on the last of these seven excursions. There was no inn or public-house of any kind in the whole valley; the travellers passed from the shepherd's hut to the minister's manse, and again from the cheerful hospitality of the manse to the rough and jolly welcome of the homestead; gathering, wherever they went, songs and tunes, and occasionally more tangible relics of antiquity—even such "a rowth of auld nicknackets" as Burns ascribes to Captain Grose. To these rambles Scott owed much of the materials of his Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border; and not less of that intimate acquaintance with the living manners of these unsophisticated regions, which constitutes the chief charm of one of the most charming of his prose works. But how soon he had any definite object before him in his researches seems very doubtful. "He was *makin' himsel'* a' the time," said Mr. Shortreed; "but he didna ken maybe what he was about till years had passed: at first he thought o' little, I dare say, but the queerness and the fun."

"In those days," says the Memorandum before me, "advocates were not so plenty—at least about Liddesdale;" and the worthy Sheriff-substitute goes on to describe the sort of bustle, not unmixed with alarm, produced at the first farmhouse they visited (Willie Elliot's at Millburnholm), when the honest man was informed of the quality of one of his guests. When they dismounted, accordingly, he received Mr. Scott with great ceremony, and insisted upon himself leading his horse to the stable. Shortreed accompanied Willie, however, and the latter, after taking a deliberate peep at Scott, "out-by the edge of the door-cheek," whispered, "Weel, Robin, I say, de'il hae me if I's be a bit feared for him now; he's just a chield like ourselves, I think." Half-a-dozen dogs of all degrees had already gathered round "the advocate," and his way of returning their compliments had set Willie Elliot at once at his ease.

According to Mr. Shortreed, this goodman of Millburnholm was the great original of Dandie Dinmont. As he seems to have been the first of these upland sheep-farmers that Scott ever visited, there can be little doubt that he sat for some parts of that inimitable portraiture; and it is certain that the James Davidson, who carried the name of Dandie to his grave with him, and whose thoroughbred deathbed scene is told in the Notes to Guy Mannering, was first pointed out to Scott by Mr. Shortreed himself, several years after the novel had established the man's celebrity all over the Border; some accidental report about his terriers, and their odd names, having alone been turned to account in the original composition of the tale. But I have the best reason to believe that the kind and manly character of Dandie, the gentle and delicious one of his wife, and some at least of the most picturesque peculiarities of the *ménage* at Charlieshope, were filled up from Scott's observation, years after this period, of a family, with one of whose members he had, through the best part of his life, a close and affectionate connection. To those who were familiar with him, I have perhaps already sufficiently indicated the early home of his dear friend, William Laidlaw, among "the braes of Yarrow."

They dined at Millburnholm, and after having lingered over Willie Elliot's punch-bowl, until, in Mr. Shortreed's phrase, they were "half-glowrin," mounted their steeds again, and proceeded to Dr. Elliot's at Cleughhead, where ("for," says my Memorandum, "folk were na very nice in those days") the two travellers slept in one and the same bed—as, indeed, seems to have been the case with them throughout most of their excursions

in this primitive district. This Dr. Elliot had already a large MS. collection of the ballads Scott was in quest of; and finding how much his guest admired his acquisitions, thenceforth exerted himself, for several years, with redoubled diligence, in seeking out the living depositaries of such lore among the darker recesses of the mountains. "The Doctor," says Mr. Shortreed, "would have gane through fire and water for Sir Walter, when he ance kenned him."

Next morning they seem to have ridden a long way, for the express purpose of visiting one "auld Thomas o' Twizzlehope," another Elliot, I suppose, who was celebrated for his skill on the Border pipe, and in particular for being in possession of the real *lilt* of *Dick o' the Cow*. Before starting, that is, at six o'clock, the ballad-hunters had, "just to lay the stomach, a devilled duck or twae, and some *London* porter." Auld Thomas found them, nevertheless, well disposed for "breakfast" on their arrival at Twizzlehope; and this being over, he delighted them with one of the most hideous and unearthly of all the specimens of "riding music," and, moreover, with considerable libations of whiskey-punch, manufactured in a certain wooden vessel, resembling a very small milk-pail, which he called "Wisdom," because it "made" only a few spoonfuls of spirits—though he had the art of replenishing it so adroitly, that it had been celebrated for fifty years as more fatal to sobriety than any bowl in the parish. Having done due honor to "Wisdom," they again mounted, and proceeded over moss and moor to some other equally hospitable master of the pipe. "Eh me," says Shortreed, "sic an endless fund o' humor and drollery as he then had wi' him! Never ten yards but we were either laughing or roaring and singing. Wherever we stopped, how brawlie he suited himsel' to everybody! He aye did as the lave did; never made himsel' the great man, or took ony airs in the company. I've seen him in a' moods in these jaunts, grave and gay, daft and serious, sober and drunk—(this, however, even in our wildest rambles, was but rare)—but, drunk or sober, he was aye the gentleman. He looked excessively heavy and stupid when he was *fou*, but he was never out o' gude-humor."

On reaching, one evening, some *Charlieshope* or other (I forget the name) among those wildernesses, they found a kindly reception as usual; but to their agreeable surprise, after some days of hard living, a measured and orderly hospitality as respected liquor. Soon after supper, at which a bottle of elderberry wine alone had been produced, a young student of

divinity, who happened to be in the house, was called upon to take the "big ha' Bible," in the good old fashion of Burns's Saturday Night; and some progress had been already made in the service, when the goodman of the farm, whose "tendency," as Mr. Mitchell says, "was soporific," scandalized his wife and the dominie by starting suddenly from his knees, and rubbing his eyes, with a stentorian exclamation of "By ——, here 's the keg at last!" and in tumbled, as he spake the word, a couple of sturdy herdsmen, whom, on hearing a day before of the advocate's approaching visit, he had despatched to a certain smuggler's haunt, at some considerable distance, in quest of a supply of *run* brandy from the Solway Frith. The pious "exercise" of the household was hopelessly interrupted. With a thousand apologies for his hitherto shabby entertainment, this jolly Elliot, or Armstrong, had the welcome *keg* mounted on the table without a moment's delay, and gentle and simple, not forgetting the dominie, continued carousing about it until daylight streamed in upon the party. Sir Walter Scott seldom failed, when I saw him in company with his Liddesdale companion, to mimic with infinite humor the sudden outburst of his old host, on hearing the clatter of horses' feet, which he knew to indicate the arrival of the keg—the consternation of the dame—and the rueful despair with which the young clergyman closed the book.

"It was in that same season, I think," says Mr. Shortreed, "that Sir Walter got from Dr. Elliot the large old border war-horn, which ye may still see hanging in the armory at Abbotsford. How *great* he was when he was made master o' *that*! I believe it had been found in Hermitage Castle—and one of the Doctor's servants had used it many a day as a grease-horn for his scythe, before they discovered its history. When cleaned out, it was never a hair the worse—the original chain, hoop, and mouth-piece of steel, were all entire, just as you now see them. Sir Walter carried it home all the way from Liddesdale to Jedburgh, slung about his neck like Johnny Gilpin's bottle, while I was entrusted with an ancient bridle-bit, which we had likewise picked up.

> 'The feint o' pride—na pride had he...
> A lang kail-gully hung down by his side,
> And a great meikle nowt-horn to rout on had he,'

and meikle and sair we routed on 't and 'hotched and blew, wi' micht and main.' O what pleasant days! And then a' the nonsense we had cost us naething. We never put hand in pocket for a week on end. Toll-bars there were none—and indeed I think our haill charges were a feed o' corn to our horses in the gangin' and comin' at Riccartoun mill."

It is a pity that we have no letters of Scott's describing this first *raid* into Liddesdale; but as he must have left Kelso for Edinburgh very soon after its conclusion, he probably chose to be the bearer of his own tidings. At any rate, the wonder perhaps is, not that we should have so few letters of this period, as that any have been recovered. "I ascribe the preservation of my little handful," says Mr. Clerk, "to a sort of instinctive prophetic sense of his future greatness."

I have found, however, two note-books, inscribed "Walter Scott, 1792," containing a variety of scraps and hints which may help us to fill up our notion of his private studies during that year. He appears to have used them indiscriminately. We have now an extract from the author he happened to be reading; now a memorandum of something that had struck him in conversation; a fragment of an essay; transcripts of favorite poems; remarks on curious cases in the old records of the Justiciary Court; in short, a most miscellaneous collection, in which there is whatever might have been looked for, with perhaps the single exception of original verse. One of the books opens with: "*Vegtam's Kvitha*, or The Descent of Odin, with the Latin of Thomas Bartholine, and the English poetical version of Mr. Gray; with some account of the death of Balder, both as narrated in the Edda, and as handed down to us by the Northern historians—*Auctore Gualtero Scott*." The Norse original and the two versions are then transcribed; and the historical account appended, extending to seven closely written quarto pages, was, I doubt not, read before one or other of his debating societies. Next comes a page, headed "Pecuniary Distress of Charles the First," and containing a transcript of a receipt for some plate lent to the King in 1643. He then copies Langhorne's Owen of Carron; the verses of Canute, on passing Ely; the lines to a cuckoo, given by Warton as the oldest specimen of English verse; a translation "by a gentleman in Devonshire," of the death-song of Regner Lodbrog; and the beautiful quatrain omitted in Gray's Elegy,—

"There scattered oft, the earliest of the year," etc.

After this we have an Italian canzonet, on the praises of blue eyes (which were much in favor at this time); several pages of etymologies from Ducange; some more of notes on the Morte Arthur; extracts from the books of Adjournal, about Dame Janet Beaton, the Lady of Branksome of The Lay of the Last Minstrel, and her husband, "Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, called *Wicked Wat*;" other extracts about witches and fairies; various couplets from Hall's Satires; a passage from Albania; notes on the Second Sight, with extracts from Aubrey and Glanville; a "List of Ballads to be discovered or recovered;" extracts from Guerin de Montglave; and after many more similar entries, a table of the Mæso-Gothic, Anglo-Saxon and Runic alphabets—with a fourth section, headed *German*, but left blank. But enough perhaps of this record.

In November, 1792, Scott and Clerk began their regular attendance at the Parliament House, and Scott, to use Mr. Clerk's words, "by and by crept into a tolerable share of such business as may be expected from a writer's connection." By this we are to understand that he was employed from time to time by his father, and probably a few other solicitors, in that dreary every-day taskwork, chiefly of long written *informations*, and other papers for the Court, on which young counsellors of the Scotch Bar were then expected to bestow a great deal of trouble for very scanty pecuniary remuneration, and with scarcely a chance of finding reserved for their hands any matter that could elicit the display of superior knowledge of understanding. He had also his part in the cases of persons suing *in forma pauperis*; but how little important those that came to his share were, and how slender was the impression they had left on his mind, we may gather from a note on Redgauntlet, wherein he signifies his doubts whether he really had ever been engaged in what he has certainly made the *cause célèbre* of *Poor Peter Peebles*.

But he soon became as famous for his powers of storytelling among the lawyers of the Outer-House, as he had been among the companions of his High School days. The place where these idlers mostly congregated was called, it seems, by a name which sufficiently marks the date—it was *the Mountain*. Here, as Roger North says of the Court of King's Bench in his early day, "there was more news than law;"—here hour after hour passed away, week after week, month after month, and year after year, in the interchange of light-hearted merriment among a circle of young men, more than one of whom, in after-times, attained the highest honors of the

profession. Among the most intimate of Scott's daily associates from this time, and during all his subsequent attendance at the Bar, were, besides various since-eminent persons that have been already named, the first legal antiquary of our time in Scotland, Mr. Thomas Thomson, and William Erskine, afterwards Lord Kinnedder. Mr. Clerk remembers complaining one morning on finding the group convulsed with laughter, that *Duns Scotus* had been forestalling him in a good story, which he had communicated privately the day before—adding, moreover, that his friend had not only stolen, but disguised it. "Why," answered he, skilfully waiving the main charge, "this is always the way with *the Baronet*. He is continually saying that I change his stories, whereas in fact I only put a cocked hat on their heads, and stick a cane into their hands—to make them fit for going into company."

The German class, of which we have an account in one of the Prefaces of 1830, was formed before the Christmas of 1792, and it included almost all these loungers of *the Mountain*. In the essay now referred to Scott traces the interest excited in Scotland on the subject of German literature to a paper read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, on the 21st of April, 1788, by the author of The Man of Feeling. "The literary persons of Edinburgh," he says, "were then first made aware of the existence of works of genius in a language cognate with the English, and possessed of the same manly force of expression; they learned at the same time that the taste which dictated the German compositions was of a kind as nearly allied to the English as their language: those who were from their youth accustomed to admire Shakespeare and Milton, became acquainted for the first time with a race of poets, who had the same lofty ambition to spurn the flaming boundaries of the universe, and investigate the realms of Chaos and Old Night; and of dramatists, who, disclaiming the pedantry of the unities, sought, at the expense of occasional improbabilities and extravagance, to present life on the stage in its scenes of wildest contrast, and in all its boundless variety of character.... Their fictitious narratives, their ballad poetry, and other branches of their literature, which are particularly apt to bear the stamp of the extravagant and the supernatural, began also to occupy the attention of the British literati. In Edinburgh, where the remarkable coincidence between the German language and the Lowland Scottish encouraged young men to approach this newly discovered spring of literature, a class was formed of six or seven intimate friends, who

proposed to make themselves acquainted with the German language. They were in the habit of being much together, and the time they spent in this new study was felt as a period of great amusement. One source of this diversion was the laziness of one of their number, the present author, who, averse to the necessary toil of grammar, and the rules, was in the practice of fighting his way to the knowledge of the German by his acquaintance with the Scottish and Anglo-Saxon dialects, and of course frequently committed blunders which were not lost on his more accurate and more studious companions." The teacher, Dr. Willich, a medical man, is then described as striving with little success to make his pupils sympathize in his own passion for the "sickly monotony" and "affected ecstasies" of Gessner's Death of Abel; and the young students, having at length acquired enough of the language for their respective purposes, as selecting for their private pursuits, some the philosophical treatises of Kant, others the dramas of Schiller and Goethe. The chief, if not the only *Kantist* of the party, was, I believe, John Macfarlan of Kirkton; among those who turned zealously to the popular belles-lettres of Germany were, with Scott, his most intimate friends of the period, William Clerk, William Erskine, and Thomas Thomson.

These studies were much encouraged by the example, and assisted by the advice, of an accomplished person, considerably Scott's superior in standing, Alexander Fraser Tytler, afterwards a Judge of the Court of Session by the title of Lord Woodhouselee. His version of Schiller's Robbers was one of the earliest from the German theatre, and no doubt stimulated his young friend to his first experiments in the same walk.

The contemporary familiars of those days almost all survive; but one, and afterwards the most intimate of them all, went before him; and I may therefore hazard in this place a few words on the influence which he exercised at this critical period on Scott's literary tastes and studies. William Erskine was the son of an Episcopalian clergyman in Perthshire, of a good family, but far from wealthy. He had received his early education at Glasgow, where, while attending the college lectures, he was boarded under the roof of Andrew Macdonald, the author of Vimonda, who then officiated as minister to a small congregation of Episcopalian nonconformists. From this unfortunate but very ingenious man, Erskine had derived, in boyhood, a strong passion for old English literature, more especially the Elizabethan dramatists; which, however, he combined with a far livelier relish for the

classics of antiquity than either Scott or his master ever possessed. From the beginning, accordingly, Scott had in Erskine a monitor who—entering most warmly into his taste for national lore—the life of the past—and the bold and picturesque style of the original English school—was constantly urging the advantages to be derived from combining with its varied and masculine breadth of delineation such attention to the minor graces of arrangement and diction as might conciliate the fastidiousness of modern taste. Deferring what I may have to say as to Erskine's general character and manners, until I shall have approached the period when I myself had the pleasure of sharing his acquaintance, I introduce the general bearing of his literary opinions thus early, because I conceive there is no doubt that his companionship was, even in those days, highly serviceable to Scott as a student of the German drama and romance. Directed, as he mainly was in the ultimate determination of his literary ambition, by the example of their great founders, he appears to have run at first no trivial hazard of adopting the extravagances, both of thought and language, which he found blended in their works with such a captivating display of genius, and genius employed on subjects so much in unison with the deepest of his own juvenile predilections. His friendly critic was just, as well as delicate; and unmerciful severity as to the mingled absurdities and vulgarities of German detail commanded deliberate attention from one who admired not less enthusiastically than himself the genuine sublimity and pathos of his new favorites. I could, I believe, name one other at least among Scott's fellow-students of the same time, whose influence was combined in this matter with Erskine's; but his was that which continued to be exerted the longest, and always in the same direction. That it was not accompanied with entire success, the readers of The Doom of Devorgoil, to say nothing of minor blemishes in far better works, must acknowledge.

These German studies divided Scott's attention with the business of the courts of law, on which he was at least a regular attendant during the winter of 1792-93.

In March, when the Court rose, he proceeded into Galloway, where he had not before been, in order to make himself acquainted with the persons and localities mixed up with the case of a certain Rev. Mr. M'Naught, minister of Girthon, whose trial, on charges of habitual drunkenness, singing of lewd and profane songs, dancing and toying at a penny-wedding with a "sweetie wife" (that is, an itinerant vender of gingerbread, etc.), and

moreover of promoting irregular marriages as a justice of the peace, was about to take place before the General Assembly of the Kirk.

As his "Case for M'Naught," dated May, 1793, is the first of his legal papers that I have discovered, and contains several characteristic enough turns, I make no apology for introducing a few extracts:—

At the head of the first class of offences stands the extraordinary assertion, that, being a Minister of the Gospel, the respondent had illegally undertaken the office of a justice of peace. It is, the respondent believes, the first time that ever the undertaking an office of such extensive utility was stated as a crime; for he humbly apprehends, that by conferring the office of a justice of the peace upon clergymen, their influence may, in the general case, be rendered more extensive among their parishioners, and many trifling causes be settled by them, which might lead the litigants to enormous expenses, and become the subject of much contention before other courts. The duty being only occasional, and not daily, cannot be said to interfere with those of their function; and their education, and presumed character, render them most proper for the office. It is indeed alleged that the Act 1584, chap. 133, excludes clergymen from acting under a commission of the peace. This Act, however, was passed at a time when it was of the highest importance to the Crown to wrench from the hands of the clergy the power of administering justice in civil cases, which had, from the ignorance of the laity, been enjoyed by them almost exclusively. During the whole reign of James VI., as is well known to the Reverend Court, such a jealousy subsisted betwixt the Church and the State, that those who were at the head of the latter endeavored, by every means in their power, to diminish the influence of the former. At present, when these dissensions happily no longer subsist, the law, as far as regards the office of justice of the peace, appears to have fallen into disuse, and the respondent conceives that any minister is capable of acting in that, or any other judicial capacity, provided it is of such a nature as not to withdraw much of his time from what the statute calls the comfort and edification of the flock committed to him. Further, the Act 1584 is virtually repealed by the statute 6th Anne, *c.* 6, sect. 2, which makes the Scots Law on the subject of justices of the peace the same with that of England, where the office is publicly exercised by the clergy of all descriptions.

... Another branch of the accusation against the defender as a justice of peace, is the ratification of irregular marriages. The defender must here also call the attention of his reverend brethren and judges to the expediency of his conduct. The girls were usually with child at the time the application was made to the defender. In this situation, the children born out of matrimony, though begot under promise of marriage, must have been thrown upon the parish, or perhaps murdered in infancy, had not the men been persuaded to consent to a solemn declaration of betrothment, or private marriage, emitted before the defender as a justice of peace. The defender himself, commiserating the situation of such women, often endeavored to persuade their seducers to do them justice; and men frequently acquiesced in this sort of marriage, when they could by no means have been prevailed upon to go through the ceremonies of proclamation of banns, or the expense and trouble of a public wedding. The declaration of a previous marriage was sometimes literally true; sometimes a fiction voluntarily emitted by the parties themselves, under the belief that it was the most safe way of constituting a private marriage *de presenti*. The defender had been induced, from the practice of other justices, to consider the receiving these declarations, whether true or false, as a part of his duty, which he could not decline, even had he been willing to do so. Finally, the defender must remind the Venerable Assembly that he acted upon these occasions as a justice of peace, which brings him back to the point from which he set out, namely, that the Reverend Court are utterly incompetent to take cognizance of his conduct in that character, which no sentence that they can pronounce could give or take away.

The second grand division of the libel against the defender refers to his conduct as a clergyman and a Christian. He was charged in the libel with the most gross and vulgar behavior, with drunkenness, blasphemy, and impiety; yet all the evidence which the appellants have been able to bring forward tends only to convict him of three acts of drunkenness during the course of fourteen years: for even the Presbytery, severe as they have been, acquit him *quoad ultra*. But the attention of the Reverend Court is earnestly entreated to the situation of the defender at the time, the circumstances which conduced to his imprudence, and the share which some of those had in occasioning his guilt, who have since been most active in persecuting and distressing him on account of it.

The defender must premise, by observing, that the crime of drunkenness consists not in a man's having been in that situation twice or thrice in his life, but in the constant and habitual practice of the vice; the distinction between *ebrius* and *ebriosus* being founded in common sense, and recognized by law. A thousand cases may be supposed, in which a man, without being aware of what he is about, may be insensibly led on to intoxication, especially in a country where the vice is unfortunately so common, that upon some occasions a man may go to excess from a false sense of modesty, or a fear of disobliging his entertainer. The defender will not deny, that after losing his senses upon the occasions, and in the manner to be afterwards stated, he may have committed improprieties which fill him with sorrow and regret: but he hopes, that in case he shall be able to show circumstances which abridge and palliate the guilt of his imprudent excess, the Venerable Court will consider these improprieties as the effects of that excess only, and not as arising from any radical vice in his temper or disposition. When a man is bereft of his judgment by the influence of wine, and commits any crime, he can only be said to be morally culpable, in proportion to the impropriety of the excess he has committed, and not in proportion to the magnitude of its evil consequences. In a legal view, indeed, a man must be held as answerable and punishable for such a crime, precisely as if he had been in a state of sobriety; but his crime is, in a moral light, comprised in the *origo mali*, the drunkenness only. His senses being once gone, he is no more than a human machine, as insensible of misconduct, in speech and action, as a parrot or an automaton. This is more particularly the case with respect to indecorums, such as the defender is accused of; for a man can no more be held a common swearer, or a habitual talker of obscenity, because he has been guilty of using such expressions when intoxicated, than he can be termed an idiot, because, when intoxicated, he has spoken nonsense. If, therefore, the defender can extenuate the guilt of his intoxication, he hopes that its consequences will be numbered rather among his misfortunes than faults; and that his Reverend Brethren will consider him, while in that state, as acting from a mechanical impulse, and as incapable of distinguishing between right and wrong. For the scandal which his behavior may have occasioned, he feels the most heartfelt sorrow, and will submit with penitence and contrition to the severe rebuke which the Presbytery have decreed against him. But he cannot think that his unfortunate misdemeanor, circumstanced as he was,

merits a severer punishment. He can show that pains were at these times taken to lead him on, when bereft of his senses, to subjects which were likely to call forth improper or indecent expressions. The defender must further urge, that not being originally educated for the church, he may, before he assumed the sacred character, have occasionally permitted himself freedoms of expression which are reckoned less culpable among the laity. Thus he may, during that time, have learned the songs which he is accused of singing, though rather inconsistent with his clerical character. What, then, was more natural, than that, when thrown off his guard by the assumed conviviality and artful solicitations of those about him, former improper habits, though renounced during his thinking moments, might assume the reins of his imagination, when his situation rendered him utterly insensible of their impropriety?

... The Venerable Court will now consider how far three instances of ebriety, and their consequences, should ruin at once the character and the peace of mind of the unfortunate defender, and reduce him, at his advanced time of life, about sixty years, together with his aged parent, to a state of beggary. He hopes his severe sufferings may be considered as some atonement for the improprieties of which he may have been guilty; and that the Venerable Court will, in their judgment, remember mercy.

In respect whereof, etc.

Walter Scott

This argument (for which he received five guineas) was sustained by Scott in a speech of considerable length at the Bar of the Assembly. It was far the most important business in which any solicitor had as yet employed him, and *The Club* mustered strong in the gallery. He began in a low voice, but by degrees gathered more confidence; and when it became necessary for him to analyze the evidence touching a certain penny-wedding, repeated some very coarse specimens of his client's alleged conversation, in a tone so bold and free, that he was called to order with great austerity by one of the leading members of the Venerable Court. This seemed to confuse him not a little; so when, by and by, he had to recite a stanza of one of M'Naught's convivial ditties, he breathed it out in a faint and hesitating style; whereupon, thinking he needed encouragement, the allies in the gallery

astounded the Assembly by cordial shouts of *hear! hear!—encore! encore!* They were immediately turned out, and Scott got through the rest of his harangue very little to his own satisfaction.

He believed, in a word, that he had made a complete failure, and issued from the Court in a melancholy mood. At the door he found Adam Ferguson waiting to inform him that the brethren so unceremoniously extruded from the gallery had sought shelter in a neighboring tavern, where they hoped he would join them. He complied with the invitation, but seemed for a long while incapable of enjoying the merriment of his friends. "Come, *Duns*," cried *the Baronet*,—"cheer up, man, and fill another tumbler; here's ****** going to give us *The Tailor*."—"Ah!" he answered, with a groan, "the tailor was a better man than me, sirs; for he didna venture *ben* until he *kenned the way*." A certain comical old song, which had, perhaps, been a favorite with the minister of Girthon—

> "The tailor he came here to sew,
> And weel he kenn'd the way o't," etc.

was, however, sung and chorused; and the evening ended in the full jollity of *High Jinks*.

Mr. M'Naught was deposed from the ministry, and his young advocate has written out at the end of the printed papers on the case two of the *songs* which had been alleged in the evidence. They are both grossly indecent. It is to be observed, that the research he had made with a view to pleading this man's cause carried him, for the first, and I believe for the last time, into the scenery of his Guy Mannering; and I may add that several of the names of the minor characters of the novel (that of *M'Guffog*, for example) appear in the list of witnesses for and against his client.

If the preceding autumn forms a remarkable point in Scott's history, as first introducing him to the manners of the wilder Border country, the summer which followed left traces of equal importance. He gave the greater part of it to an excursion which much extended his knowledge of Highland scenery and character; and in particular furnished him with the richest stores, which he afterwards turned to account in one of the most beautiful of his great poems, and in several, including the first, of his prose romances.

Accompanied by Adam Ferguson, he visited on this occasion some of the finest districts of Stirlingshire and Perthshire; and not in the percursory manner of his more boyish expeditions, but taking up his residence for a

week or ten days in succession at the family residences of several of his young allies of *the Mountain*, and from thence familiarizing himself at leisure with the country and the people round about. In this way he lingered some time at Tullibody, the seat of the father of Sir Ralph Abercromby, and grandfather of his friend Mr. George Abercromby (now Lord Abercromby); and heard from the old gentleman's own lips his narrative of a journey which he had been obliged to make, shortly after he first settled in Stirlingshire, to the wild retreat of Rob Roy. The venerable laird told how he was received by the cateran "with much courtesy," in a cavern exactly such as that of *Bean Lean*; dined on collops cut from some of his own cattle, which he recognized hanging by their heels from the rocky roof beyond; and returned in all safety, after concluding a bargain of *blackmail* —in virtue of which annual payment Rob Roy guaranteed the future security of his herds against, not his own followers merely, but all freebooters whatever. Scott next visited his friend Edmonstone, at Newton, a beautiful seat close to the ruins of the once magnificent Castle of Doune, and heard another aged gentleman's vivid recollections of all that happened there when John Home, the author of Douglas, and other Hanoverian prisoners, escaped from the Highland garrison in 1745. Proceeding towards the sources of the Teith, he was received for the first time under a roof which, in subsequent years, he regularly revisited, that of another of his associates, Buchanan, the young Laird of Cambusmore. It was thus that the scenery of Loch Katrine came to be so associated with "the recollection of many a dear friend and merry expedition of former days," that to compose The Lady of the Lake was "a labor of love, and no less so to recall the manners and incidents introduced." It was starting from the same house, when the poem itself had made some progress, that he put to the test the practicability of riding from the banks of Loch Vennachar to the Castle of Stirling within the brief space which he had assigned to Fitz-James's Grey Bayard, after the duel with Roderick Dim; and the principal landmarks in the description of that fiery progress are so many hospitable mansions, all familiar to him at the same period—Blairdrummond, the residence of Lord Kaimes; Ochtertyre, that of John Ramsay, the scholar and antiquary (now best remembered for his kind and sagacious advice to Burns); and "the lofty brow of ancient Kier," the splendid seat of the chief family of the name of Stirling; from which, to say nothing of remoter objects, the prospect has, on one hand, the rock of "Snowdon," and in front the field of Bannockburn.

Another resting-place was Craighall, in Perthshire, the seat of the Rattrays, a family related to Mr. Clerk, who accompanied him. From the position of this striking place, as Mr. Clerk at once perceived, and as the author afterwards confessed to him, that of the *Tully-Veolan* was very faithfully copied; though in the description of the house itself, and its gardens, many features were adopted from Bruntsfield and Ravelston. Mr. Clerk has told me that he went through the first chapters of Waverley without more than a vague suspicion of the new novelist; but that when he read the arrival at Tully-Veolan, his suspicion was at once converted into certainty, and he handed the book to a common friend of his and the author's, saying, "This is Scott's—and I'll lay a bet you'll find such and such things in the next chapter." I hope Mr. Clerk will forgive me for mentioning *the* particular circumstance that first flashed the conviction on his mind. In the course of a ride from Craighall they had both become considerably fagged and heated, and Clerk, seeing the smoke of a *clachan* a little way before them, ejaculated—"How agreeable if we should here fall in with one of those signposts where a red lion predominates over a punch-bowl!" The phrase happened to tickle Scott's fancy—he often introduced it on similar occasions afterwards—and at the distance of twenty years Mr. Clerk was at no loss to recognize an old acquaintance in the "huge bear" which "predominates" over the stone basin in the courtyard of Baron Bradwardine.

I believe the longest stay he made this autumn was at Meigle in Forfarshire, the seat of Patrick Murray of Simprim, a gentleman whose enthusiastic passion for antiquities, and especially military antiquities, had peculiarly endeared him both to Scott and Clerk. Here Adam Ferguson, too, was of the party; and I have often heard them each and all dwell on the thousand scenes of adventure and merriment which diversified that visit. In the village churchyard, close beneath Mr. Murray's gardens, tradition still points out the tomb of Queen Guenever; and the whole district abounds in objects of historical interest. Amidst them they spent their wandering days, while their evenings passed in the joyous festivity of a wealthy young bachelor's establishment, or sometimes under the roofs of neighbors less refined than their host, the *Balmawhapples* of the Braes of Angus. From Meigle they made a trip to Dunnottar Castle, the ruins of the huge old fortress of the Earls Marischall, and it was in the churchyard of that place that Scott then saw for the first and last time Robert Paterson, the living *Old Mortality*. He and Mr. Walker, the minister of the parish, found the poor

man refreshing the epitaphs on the tombs of certain Cameronians who had fallen under the oppressions of James the Second's brief insanity. Being invited into the manse after dinner to take a glass of whiskey-punch, "to which he was supposed to have no objections," he joined the minister's party accordingly; but "he was in bad humor," says Scott, "and, to use his own phrase, had no freedom for conversation. His spirit had been sorely vexed by hearing, in a certain Aberdonian kirk, the psalmody directed by a pitch-pipe or some similar instrument, which was to Old Mortality the abomination of abominations."

It was also while he had his headquarters at Meigle at this time that Scott visited for the first time *Glammis*, the residence of the Earls of Strathmore, by far the noblest specimen of the real feudal castle, entire and perfect, that had as yet come under his inspection. What its aspect was when he first saw it, and how grievously he lamented the change it had undergone when he revisited it some years afterwards, he has recorded in one of the most striking passages that I think ever came from his pen. Commenting, in his Essay on Landscape Gardening (1828), on the proper domestic ornaments of the Castle *Pleasaunce*, he has this beautiful burst of lamentation over the barbarous innovations of *the Capability men*:—"Down went many a trophy of old magnificence, courtyard, ornamented enclosure, fosse, avenue, barbican, and every external muniment of battled wall and flanking tower, out of the midst of which the ancient dome, rising high above all its characteristic accompaniments, and seemingly girt round by its appropriate defences, which again circled each other in their different gradations, looked, as it should, the queen and mistress of the surrounding country. It was thus that the huge old tower of Glammis, 'whose birth tradition notes not,' once showed its lordly head above seven circles (if I remember aright) of defensive boundaries, through which the friendly guest was admitted, and at each of which a suspicious person was unquestionably put to his answer. A disciple of Kent had the cruelty to render this splendid old mansion (the more modern part of which was the work of Inigo Jones) more *parkish*, as he was pleased to call it; to raze all those exterior defences, and bring his mean and paltry gravel-walk up to the very door from which, deluded by the name, one might have imagined Lady Macbeth (with the form and features of Siddons) issuing forth to receive King Duncan. It is thirty years and upwards since I have seen Glammis, but I

have not yet forgotten or forgiven the atrocity which, under pretence of improvement, deprived that lordly place of its appropriate accompaniments,

> 'Leaving an ancient dome and towers like these
> Beggar'd and outraged.'"

The night he spent at the yet unprofaned Glammis in 1793 was, as he elsewhere says, one of the "*two* periods distant from each other" at which he could recollect experiencing "that degree of superstitious awe which his countrymen call *eerie*."

> "The heavy pile," he writes, "contains much in its appearance, and in the traditions connected with it, impressive to the imagination. It was the scene of the murder of a Scottish King of great antiquity—not indeed the gracious Duncan, with whom the name naturally associates itself, but Malcolm II. It contains also a curious monument of the peril of feudal times, being a secret chamber, the entrance of which, by the law or custom of the family, must only be known to three persons at once, namely, the Earl of Strathmore, his heir-apparent, and any third person whom they may take into their confidence. The extreme antiquity of the building is vouched by the thickness of the walls, and the wild straggling arrangement of the accommodation within doors. As the late Earl seldom resided at Glammis, it was when I was there but half furnished, and that with movables of great antiquity, which, with the pieces of chivalric armor hanging on the walls, greatly contributed to the general effect of the whole. After a very hospitable reception from the late Peter Proctor, seneschal of the castle, I was conducted to my apartment in a distant part of the building. I must own, that when I heard door after door shut, after my conductor had retired, I began to consider myself as too far from the living, and somewhat too near the dead. We had passed through what is called *the King's Room*, a vaulted apartment, garnished with stags' antlers and other trophies of the chase, and said by tradition to be the spot of Malcolm's murder, and I had an idea of the vicinity of the castle chapel. In spite of the truth of history, the whole night scene in Macbeth's

> Castle rushed at once upon me, and struck my mind more forcibly than even when I have seen its terrors represented by John Kemble and his inimitable sister. In a word, I experienced sensations which, though not remarkable for timidity or superstition, did not fail to affect me to the point of being disagreeable, while they were mingled at the same time with a strange and indescribable sort of pleasure, the recollection of which affords me gratification at this moment."

He alludes here to the hospitable reception which had preceded the mingled sensations of this *eerie* night; but one of his notes on Waverley touches this not unimportant part of the story more distinctly; for we are there informed that the *silver bear* of Tully-Veolan, "*the poculum potatorium* of the valiant baron," had its prototype at Glammis—a massive beaker of silver, double gilt, moulded into the form of a *lion*, the name and bearing of the Earls of Strathmore, and containing about an English pint of wine. "The author," he says, "ought perhaps to be ashamed of recording that he had the honor of swallowing the contents of *the lion*; and the recollection of the feat suggested the story of the Bear of Bradwardine."

From this pleasant tour, so rich in its results, Scott returned in time to attend the autumnal assizes at Jedburgh, on which occasion he made his first appearance as counsel in a criminal court; and had the satisfaction of helping a veteran poacher and sheep-stealer to escape through some of the meshes of the law. "You're a lucky scoundrel," Scott whispered to his client, when the verdict was pronounced. "I'm just o' your mind," quoth the desperado, "and I'll send ye a maukin the morn, man." I am not sure whether it was at these assizes or the next in the same town, that he had less success in the case of a certain notorious housebreaker. The man, however, was well aware that no skill could have baffled the clear evidence against him, and was, after his fashion, grateful for such exertions as had been made in his behalf. He requested the young advocate to visit him once more before he left the place. Scott's curiosity induced him to accept this invitation, and his friend, as soon as they were alone together in the *condemned cell*, said—"I am very sorry, sir, that I have no fee to offer you —so let me beg your acceptance of two bits of advice which may be useful perhaps when you come to have a house of your own. I am done with practice, you see, and here is my legacy. Never keep a large watchdog out

of doors—we can always silence them cheaply—indeed if it be a *dog*, 'tis easier than whistling—but tie a little tight yelping terrier within; and secondly, put no trust in nice, clever, gimcrack locks—the only thing that bothers us is a huge old heavy one, no matter how simple the construction, —and the ruder and rustier the key, so much the better for the housekeeper." I remember hearing him tell this story some thirty years after at a Judges' dinner at Jedburgh, and he summed it up with a rhyme—"Ay, ay, my lord," (I think he addressed his friend Lord Meadowbank)—

> "Yelping terrier, rusty key,
> Was Walter Scott's best Jeddart fee."

At these, or perhaps the next assizes, he was also counsel in an appeal case touching a cow which his client had sold as sound, but which the court below (the sheriff) had pronounced to have what is called *the cliers*—a disease analogous to glanders in a horse. In opening his case before Sir David Rae, Lord Eskgrove, Scott stoutly maintained the healthiness of the cow, who, as he said, had merely a cough. "Stop there," quoth the judge; "I have had plenty of healthy kye in my time, but I never heard of are of them coughing. A coughin' cow!—that will never do. Sustain the sheriff's judgment, and decern."

A day or two after this, Scott and his old companion were again on their way into Liddesdale, and "just," says the Shortreed Memorandum, "as we were passing by Singdon, we saw a grand herd o' cattle a' feeding by the roadside, and a fine young bullock, the best in the whole lot, was in the midst of them, coughing lustily. 'Ah,' said Scott, 'what a pity for my client that old Eskgrove had not taken Singdon on his way to the town. That bonny creature would have saved us—

> "A Daniel come to judgment, yea a Daniel;
> O wise young judge, how I do honor thee!""

TO PATRICK MURRAY OF SIMPRIM, ESQ., MEIGLE.

Rosebank, near Kelso, September 13, 1793.

Dear Murray,—I would have let fly an epistle at you long ere this, had I not known I should have some difficulty in hitting so active a traveller, who may in that respect be likened unto a bird of passage. Were you to follow

the simile throughout, I might soon expect to see you winging your way to the southern climes, instead of remaining to wait the approach of winter in the colder regions of the north. Seriously, I have been in weekly hopes of hearing of your arrival in the Merse, and have been qualifying myself by constant excursions to be your Border *Cicerone*.

As the facetious Linton will no doubt make one of your party, I have got by heart for his amusement a reasonable number of Border ballads, most of them a little longer than Chevy Chase, which I intend to throw in at intervals, just by way of securing my share in the conversation. As for *you*, as I know your picturesque turn, I can be in this country at no loss how to cater for your entertainment, especially if you would think of moving before the fall of the leaf. I believe with respect to the real *To Kalon*, few villages can surpass that near which I am now writing; and as to your rivers, it is part of my creed that the Tweed and Teviot yield to none in the world, nor do I fear that even in your eyes, which have been feasted on classic ground, they will greatly sink in comparison with the Tiber or Po. Then for antiquities, it is true we have got no temples or heathenish fanes to show; but if substantial old castles and ruined abbeys will serve in their stead, they are to be found in abundance. So much for Linton and you. As for Mr. Robertson, I don't know quite so well how to bribe him. We had indeed lately a party of strollers here, who might in some degree have entertained him, *i. e.*, in case he felt no compassion for the horrid and tragical murders which they nightly committed,—but now, *Alas, Sir! the players be gone*.

I am at present very uncertain as to my own motions, but I still hope to be northwards again before the commencement of the session, which (d—n it) is beginning to draw nigher than I could wish. I would esteem myself greatly favored by a few lines informing me of your motions when they are settled; since visiting you, should I go north, or attending you if you come this way, are my two grand plans of amusement.

What think you of our politics now? Had I been within reach of you, or any of the chosen, I suspect the taking of Valenciennes would have been sustained as a reason for examining the contents of t'other bottle, which has too often suffered for slighter pretences. I have little doubt, however, that by the time we meet in glory (terrestrial glory, I mean) Dunkirk will be an equally good apology. Adieu, my good friend; remember me kindly to Mr.

Robertson, to Linton, and to the Baronet. I understand both these last intend seeing you soon. I am very sincerely yours,

Walter Scott.

The winter of 1793-94 appears to have been passed like the preceding one: the German class resumed their sittings; Scott spoke in his debating club on the questions of Parliamentary Reform and the Inviolability of the Person of the First Magistrate, which the circumstances of the time had invested with extraordinary interest, and in both of which he no doubt took the side adverse to the principles of the English, and the practice of the French Liberals. His love-affair continued on exactly the same footing as before;—and for the rest, like the young heroes in Redgauntlet, he "swept the boards of the Parliament House with the skirts of his gown; laughed, and made others laugh; drank claret at Bayle's, Fortune's, and Walker's, and eat oysters in the Covenant Close." On his desk "the new novel most in repute lay snugly intrenched beneath Stair's Institute, or an open volume of Decisions;" and his dressing-table was littered with "old play-bills, letters respecting a meeting of the Faculty, Rules of the Speculative, Syllabus of Lectures—all the miscellaneous contents of a young advocate's pocket, which contains everything but briefs and bank-notes." His professional occupation was still very slender; but he took a lively interest in the proceedings of the criminal court, and more especially in those arising out of the troubled state of the public feeling as to politics.

In the spring of 1794 I find him writing to his friends in Roxburghshire with great exultation about the "good spirit" manifesting itself among the upper classes of the citizens of Edinburgh, and, above all, the organization of a regiment of volunteers, in which his brother Thomas, now a fine active young man, equally handsome and high-spirited, was enrolled as a grenadier, while, as he remarks, his own "unfortunate infirmity" condemned him to be "a mere spectator of the drills." In the course of the same year, the plan of a corps of volunteer light horse was started; and, if the recollection of Mr. Skene be accurate, the suggestion originally proceeded from Scott himself, who certainly had a principal share in its subsequent success. He writes to his uncle at Rosebank, requesting him to be on the lookout for a "strong gelding, such as would suit a stalwart dragoon;" and intimating his intention to part with his collection of Scottish coins, rather than not be mounted to his mind. The corps, however, was not organized for some time;

and in the mean while he had an opportunity of displaying his zeal in a manner which Captain Scott by no means considered as so respectable.

A party of Irish medical students began, towards the end of April, to make themselves remarkable in the Edinburgh Theatre, where they mustered in a particular corner of the pit, and lost no opportunity of insulting the Loyalists of the boxes, by calling for revolutionary tunes, applauding every speech that could bear a seditious meaning, and drowning the national anthem in howls and hootings. The young Tories of the Parliament House resented this license warmly, and after a succession of minor disturbances, the quarrel was, put to the issue of a regular trial by combat. Scott was conspicuous among the juvenile advocates and solicitors who on this grand night assembled in front of the pit, armed with stout cudgels, and determined to have God save the King not only played without interruption, but sung in full chorus by both company and audience. The Irishmen were ready at the first note of the anthem. They rose, clapped on their hats, and brandished their shillelahs; a stern battle ensued, and after many a head had been cracked, the Loyalists at length found themselves in possession of the field. In writing to Simprim a few days afterwards, Scott says—"You will be glad to hear that the *affair* of Saturday passed over without any worse consequence to the Loyalists than that five, including your friend and humble servant Colonel Grogg, have been bound over to the peace, and obliged to give bail for their good behavior, which, you may believe, was easily found. The said Colonel had no less than three broken heads laid to his charge by as many of the Democrats." Alluding to Simprim's then recent appointment as Captain in the Perthshire Fencibles (Cavalry), he adds—"Among my own military (I mean mock-military) achievements, let me not fail to congratulate you and the country on the real character you have agreed to accept. Remember; in case of real action, I shall beg the honor of admission to your troop as a volunteer."

One of the theatrical party, Sir Alexander Wood, whose notes lie before me, says—"Walter was certainly our Coryphæus, and signalized himself splendidly in this desperate fray; and nothing used afterwards to afford him more delight than dramatizing its incidents. Some of the most efficient of our allies were persons previously unknown to him, and of several of these whom he had particularly observed, he never lost sight afterwards. There were, I believe, cases in which they owed most valuable assistance in life to his recollection of *the playhouse row*." To this last part of Sir Alexander's

testimony I can also add mine; and I am sure my worthy friend, Mr. Donald M'Lean, W. S., will gratefully confirm it. When that gentleman became candidate for some office in the Exchequer, about 1822 or 1823, and Sir Walter's interest was requested on his behalf,—"To be sure!" said he; "did not he sound the charge upon Paddy? Can I ever forget Donald's *Sticks by G ——t*?"

On the 9th May, 1794, Charles Kerr of Abbotrule writes to him—"I was last night at Rosebank, and your uncle told me he had been giving you a very long and very sage lecture upon the occasion of these Edinburgh squabbles; I am happy to hear they are now at an end. They were rather of the serious cast, and though you encountered them with spirit and commendable resolution, I, with your uncle, should wish to see your abilities conspicuous on another theatre." The same gentleman, in his next letter (June 3), congratulates Scott on having "seen *his name in the newspaper*," namely, as counsel for another Roxburghshire laird, by designation *Bedrule*. Such, no doubt, was Abbotrule's "other theatre."

Scott spent the long vacation of this year chiefly in Roxburghshire, but again visited Keir, Cambusmore, and others of his friends in Perthshire, and came to Edinburgh, early in September, to be present at the trials of Watt and Downie, on a charge of high treason. Watt seems to have tendered his services to Government as a spy upon the Society of the Friends of the People in Edinburgh, but ultimately, considering himself as underpaid, to have embraced, to their wildest extent, the schemes he had become acquainted with in the course of this worthy occupation; and he, and one Downie, a mechanic, were now arraigned as having taken a prominent part in the organizing of a plot for a general rising in Edinburgh, to seize the Castle, the Bank, the persons of the Judges, and proclaim a Provisional Republican Government; all which was supposed to have been arranged in concert with the Hardies, Thelwalls, Holcrofts, and so forth, who were a few weeks later brought to trial in London for an alleged conspiracy to "summon delegates to a National Convention, with a view to subvert the Government, and levy war upon the King." The English prisoners were acquitted, but Watt and Downie were not so fortunate. Scott writes as follows to his aunt, Miss Christian Rutherford, then at Ashestiel, in Selkirkshire:—

Advocates' Library, 5th September, 1794.

My dear Miss Christy will perceive, from the date of this epistle, that I have accomplished my purpose of coming to town to be present at the trial of the Edinburgh traitors. I arrived here on Monday evening from Kelso, and was present at Watt's trial on Wednesday, which displayed to the public the most atrocious and deliberate plan of villainy which has occurred, perhaps, in the annals of Great Britain. I refer you for particulars to the papers, and shall only add, that the equivocations and perjury of the witnesses (most of them being accomplices in what they called the *great plan*) set the abilities of Mr. Anstruther, the King's counsel, in the most striking point of view. The patience and temper with which he tried them on every side, and screwed out of them the evidence they were so anxious to conceal, showed much knowledge of human nature; and the art with which he arranged the information he received, made the trial, upon the whole, the most interesting I ever was present at. Downie's trial is just now going forwards over my head; but as the evidence is just the same as formerly brought against Watt, is not so interesting. You will easily believe that on Wednesday my curiosity was too much excited to retire at an early hour, and, indeed, I sat in the Court from seven in the morning till two the next morning; but as I had provided myself with some cold meat and a bottle of wine, I contrived to support the fatigue pretty well. It strikes me, upon the whole, that the plan of these miscreants might, from its very desperate and improbable nature, have had no small chance of succeeding, at least as far as concerned cutting off the soldiers, and obtaining possession of the banks, besides shedding the blood of the most distinguished inhabitants. There, I think, the evil must have stopped, unless they had further support than has yet appeared. Stooks was the prime mover of the whole, and the person who supplied the money; and our theatrical disturbances are found to have formed one link of the chain. So, I have no doubt, Messrs. Stooks, Burk, etc., would have found out a new way of paying old debts. The *people* are perfectly quiescent upon this grand occasion, and seem to interest themselves very little in the fate of their *soi-disant friends*. The Edinburgh volunteers make a respectable and formidable appearance already. They are exercised four hours almost every day, with all the rigor of military discipline. The grenadier company consists entirely of men above six feet. So much for public news.

As to home intelligence—you know that my mother and Anne had projected a *jaunt* to Inverleithen; fate, however, had destined otherwise. The intended day of departure was ushered in by a most complete deluge, to which, and the consequent disappointment, our proposed travellers did not submit with that Christian meekness which might have beseemed. In short, both within and without doors, it was a *devil* of a day. The second was like unto it. The third day came a post, a killing post, and in the shape of a letter from this fountain of health, informed us no lodgings were to be had there; so, whatever be its virtues, or the grandeur attending a journey to its streams, we might as well have proposed to visit the river Jordan, or the walls of Jericho. Not so our heroic John; he has been arrived here for some time (much the same as when he went away), and has formed the desperate resolution of riding out with me to Kelso to-morrow morning. I have stayed a day longer, waiting for the arrival of a pair of new boots and buckskin etcs., in which the soldier is to be equipt. I ventured to hint the convenience of a roll of diaculum plaister, and a box of the most approved horseman-salve, in which recommendation our doctor warmly joined. His impatience for the journey has been somewhat cooled by some inclination yesterday displayed by his charger (a pony belonging to Anne) to lay his warlike rider in the dust—a purpose he had nearly effected. He next mounted Queen Mab, who treated him with little more complaisance, and, in carters' phrase, would neither *hap* nor *wynd* till she got rid of him. Seriously, however, if Jack has not returned covered with laurels, a crop which the Rock no longer produces, he has brought back all his own good-nature, and a manner considerably improved, so that he is at times very agreeable company. Best love to Miss R., Jean, and Anne (I hope they are improved at the battledore), and the boys, not forgetting my friend Archy, though least not last in my remembrance. Best compliments to the Colonel. I shall remember with pleasure Ashestiel hospitality, and not without a desire to put it to the proof next year. Adieu, ma chère amie. When you write, direct to Rosebank, and I shall be a good boy, and write you another sheet of nonsense soon. All friends here well. Ever yours affectionately,

Walter Scott.

The letter, of which the following is an extract, must have been written in October or November—Scott having been in Liddesdale, and again in Perthshire, during the interval. It is worth quoting for the little domestic

allusions with which it concludes, and which every one who has witnessed the discipline of a Presbyterian family of the old school, at the time of preparation for *the Communion*, will perfectly understand. Scott's father, though on particular occasions he could permit himself, like Saunders Fairford, to play the part of a good Amphitryon, was habitually ascetic in his habits. I have heard his son tell, that it was common with him, if any one observed that the soup was good, to taste it again, and say,—"Yes, it is too good, bairns," and dash a tumbler of cold water into his plate. It is easy, therefore, to imagine with what rigidity he must have enforced the ultra-Catholic severities which marked, in those days, the yearly or half-yearly *retreat* of the descendants of John Knox.

TO MISS CHRISTIAN RUTHERFORD, ASHESTIEL.

Previous to my ramble, I stayed a single day in town, to witness the exit of the *ci-devant* Jacobin, Mr. Watt. It was a very solemn scene, but the pusillanimity of the unfortunate victim was astonishing, considering the boldness of his nefarious plans. It is matter of general regret that his associate Downie should have received a reprieve, which, I understand, is now prolonged for a second month, I suppose to wait the issue of the London trials. Our volunteers are now completely embodied, and, notwithstanding the heaviness of their dress, have a martial and striking appearance. Their accuracy in firing and manœvring excites the surprise of military gentlemen, who are the best judges of their merit in that way. Tom is very proud of the grenadier company, to which he belongs, which has indisputably carried off the palm upon all public occasions. And now, give me leave to ask you whether the approaching *winter* does not remind you of your snug parlor in George's Street? Do you not feel a little uncomfortable when you see

> "how bleak and bare
> He wanders o'er the heights of *Yair*?"

Amidst all this regard for your accommodation, don't suppose I am devoid of a little self-interest when I press your speedy return to Auld Reekie, for I am really tiring excessively to see the said parlor again inhabited, Besides that, I want the assistance of your eloquence to convince my honored father that Nature did not mean me either for a vagabond or *travelling merchant*,

when she honored me with the wandering propensity lately so conspicuously displayed. I saw Dr. yesterday, who is well. I did not choose to intrude upon the little lady, this being sermon week; for the same reason we are looking very religious and very sour at home. However, it is with *some folk* selon les règles, that in proportion as they are pure themselves, they are entitled to render uncomfortable those whom they consider as less perfect. Best love to Miss R., cousins and friends in general, and believe me ever most sincerely yours,

Walter Scott.

In July, 1795, a young lad, James Niven by name, who had served for some time with excellent character on board a ship of war, and been discharged in consequence of a wound which disabled one of his hands, had the misfortune, in firing off a toy cannon in one of the narrow wynds of Edinburgh, to kill on the spot David Knox, one of the attendants of the Court of Session; a button, or some other hard substance, having been accidentally inserted with his cartridge. Scott was one of his counsel when he was arraigned for murder, and had occasion to draw up a written argument or *information* for the prisoner, from which I shall make a short quotation. Considered as a whole, the production seems both crude and clumsy, but the following passages have, I think, several traces of the style of thought and language which he afterwards made familiar to the world:—

"Murder," he writes, "or the premeditated slaughter of a citizen, is a crime of so deep and scarlet a dye, that there is scarce a nation to be found in which it has not, from the earliest period, been deemed worthy of a capital punishment. 'He who sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed,' is a general maxim which has received the assent of all times and countries. But it is equally certain that even the rude legislators of former days soon perceived that the death of one man may be occasioned by another, without the slayer himself being the proper object of the *lex talionis*. Such an accident may happen either by the carelessness of the killer, or through that excess and vehemence of passion to which humanity is incident. In either case, though blamable, he ought not to be confounded with the cool and deliberate assassin, and the species of criminality attaching itself to those acts has been distinguished by the term *dolus*, in opposition to the milder term *culpa*. Again, there may be a third species of

homicide, in which the perpetrator being the innocent and unfortunate cause of casual misfortune, becomes rather an object of compassion than punishment.

"Admitting there may have been a certain degree of culpability in the panel's conduct, still there is one circumstance which pleads strongly in his favor, so as to preclude all presumption of *dole*. This is the frequent practice, whether proper or improper, of using this amusement in the streets. It is a matter of public notoriety, that boys of all ages and descriptions are, or at least till the late very proper proclamation of the magistrates were, to be seen every evening in almost every corner of this city, amusing themselves with fire-arms and small cannons, and that without being checked or interfered with. When the panel, a poor ignorant raw lad, lately discharged from a ship of war—certainly not the most proper school to learn a prudent aversion to unlucky or mischievous practices—observed the sons of gentlemen of the first respectability engaged in such amusements, unchecked by their parents or by the magistrates, surely it can hardly be expected that he should discover that in imitating them in so common a practice, he was constituting himself *hostis humani generis*, a wretch the pest and scourge of mankind.

"There is, no doubt, attached to every even the most innocent of casual slaughter, a certain degree of blame, inasmuch as almost everything of the kind might have been avoided had the slayer exhibited the strictest degree of diligence. A well-known and authentic story will illustrate the proposition. A young gentleman, just married to a young lady of whom he was passionately fond, in affectionate trifling presented at her a pistol, of which he had drawn the charge some days before. The lady, entering into the joke, desired him to fire: he did so, and shot her dead; the pistol having been again charged by his servant without his knowledge. Can any one read this story, and feel any emotion but that of sympathy towards the unhappy husband? Can they ever connect the case with an idea of punishment? Yet, divesting it of these interesting circumstances which act upon the imagination, it is precisely that of the panel at your Lordships' Bar; and though no one will pretend to say that such a homicide is other than casual, yet there is not the slightest question but it might have been avoided had the killer taken the precaution of examining his piece. But this is not the degree of *culpa* which can raise a misfortune to the pitch of a crime. It is only an

instance that no accident can take place without its afterwards being discovered that the chief actor might have avoided committing it, had he been gifted with the spirit of prophecy, or with such an extreme degree of prudence as is almost equally rare.

"In the instance of shooting at butts, or at a bird, the person killed must have been somewhat in the line previous to the discharge of the shot, otherways it could never have come near him. The shooter must therefore have been guilty *culpæ levis seu levissimæ* in firing while the deceased was in such a situation. In like manner, it is difficult to conceive how death should happen in consequence of a boxing or wrestling match, without some excess upon the part of the killer. Nay, in the exercise of the martial amusements of our forefathers, even by royal commission, should a champion be slain in running his barriers, or performing his tournament, it could scarcely happen without some *culpa seu levis seu levissima*, on the part of his antagonist. Yet all these are enumerated in the English law-books as instances of casual homicide only; and we may therefore safely conclude, that by the law of the sister country a slight degree of blame will not subject the slayer *per infortunium* to the penalties of culpable homicide.

"Guilt, as an object of punishment, has its origin in the mind and intention of the actor; and therefore, where that is wanting, there is no proper object of chastisement. A madman, for example, can no more properly be said to be guilty of murder than the sword with which he commits it, both being equally incapable of intending injury. In the present case, in like manner, although it ought no doubt to be matter of deep sorrow and contrition to the panel that his folly should have occasioned the loss of life to a fellow-creature; yet as that folly can neither be termed malice, nor yet doth amount to a gross negligence, he ought rather to be pitied than condemned. The fact done can never be recalled, and it rests with your Lordships to consider the case of this unfortunate young man, who has served his country in an humble though useful station,—deserved such a character as is given him in the letter of his officers,—and been disabled in that service. You will best judge how (considering he has suffered a confinement of six months) he can in humanity be the object of further or severer punishment, for a deed of which his mind at least, if not his hand, is guiltless. When a case is attended with some nicety, your Lordships will allow mercy to incline the balance of

justice, well considering with the legislator of the East, 'It is better ten guilty should escape than that one innocent man should perish in his innocence.'"

The young sailor was acquitted.

To return for a moment to Scott's love-affair. I find him writing as follows, in March, 1795, to his cousin, William Scott, now Laird of Raeburn, who was then in the East Indies:—"The lady you allude to has been in town all this winter, and going a good deal into public, which has not in the least altered the meekness of her manners. Matters, you see, stand just as they did."

To another friend he writes thus, from Rosebank, on the 23d of August, 1795:—

It gave me the highest satisfaction to find, by the receipt of your letter of the 14th current, that you have formed precisely the same opinion with me, both with regard to the interpretation of [Miss Stuart's] letter as highly flattering and favorable, and to the mode of conduct I ought to pursue—for, after all, what she has pointed out is the most prudent line of conduct for us both, at least till better days, which, I think myself now entitled to suppose, she, as well as I myself, will look forward to with pleasure. If you were surprised at reading the important billet, you may guess how agreeably I was so at receiving it; for I had, to anticipate disappointment, struggled to suppress every rising gleam of hope; and it would be very difficult to describe the mixed feelings her letter occasioned, which, *entre nous*, terminated in a very hearty fit of crying. I read over her epistle about ten times a day, and always with new admiration of her generosity and candor —and as often take shame to myself for the mean suspicions, which, after knowing her so long, I could listen to, while endeavoring to guess how she would conduct herself. To tell you the truth, I cannot but confess that my *amour propre*, which one would expect should have been exalted, has suffered not a little upon this occasion, through a sense of my own *unworthiness*, pretty similar to that which afflicted Linton upon sitting down at Keir's table. I ought perhaps to tell you, what indeed you will perceive from her letter, that I was always attentive, while consulting with you upon the subject of my declaration, rather to under-than over-rate the extent of our intimacy. By the way, I must not omit mentioning the respect in which I hold your knowledge of the fair sex, and your capacity of advising in these matters, since it certainly is to your encouragement that I

owe the present situation of my affairs. I wish to God, that, since you have acted as so useful an auxiliary during my attack, which has succeeded in bringing the enemy to terms, you would next sit down before some fortress yourself, and were it as impregnable as the rock of Gibraltar, I should, notwithstanding, have the highest expectations of your final success. Not a line from poor Jack—What can he be doing? Moping, I suppose, about some watering-place, and deluging his guts with specifics of every kind—or lowering and snorting in one corner of a post-chaise, with Kennedy, as upright and cold as a poker, stuck into the other. As for Linton, and Crab, I anticipate with pleasure their marvellous adventures, in the course of which Dr. Black's *self-denying ordinance* will run a shrewd chance of being neglected. They will be a source of fun for the winter evening conversations. Methinks I see the pair upon the mountains of Tipperary—John with a beard of three inches, united and blended with his shaggy black locks, an ellwand-looking cane with a gilt head in his hand, and a bundle in a handkerchief over his shoulder, exciting the cupidity of every Irish raparee who passes him, by his resemblance to a Jew pedlar who has sent forward his pack—Linton, tired of trailing his long legs, exalted in state upon an Irish garron, without stirrups, and a halter on its head, tempting every one to ask—

> "Who is that upon the pony,
> So long, so lean, so raw, so bony?"

—calculating, as he moves along, the expenses of the salt horse—and grinning a ghastly smile, when the hollow voice of his fellow-traveller observes—"God! Adam, if ye gang on at this rate, the eight shillings and seven-pence halfpenny will never carry us forward to my uncle's at Lisburn." Enough of a thorough Irish expedition.

We have a great marriage towards here—Scott of Harden, and a daughter of Count Brühl, the famous chess-player, a lady of sixteen quarters, half-sister to the Wyndhams. I wish they may come down soon, as we shall have fine racketing, of which I will, probably, get my share. I think of being in town some time next month, but whether for good and all, or only for a visit, I am not certain. Oh, for November! Our meeting will be a little embarrassing one. How will she look, etc., etc., etc., are the important subjects of my present conjectures—how different from what they were three weeks ago! I

give you leave to laugh when I tell you seriously, I had begun to "dwindle, peak, and pine," upon the subject—but now, after the charge I have received, it were a shame to resemble Pharaoh's lean kine. If good living and plenty of exercise can avert that calamity, I am in little danger of disobedience, and so, to conclude classically,

Dicite Io pœan, et Io bis dicite pœan!—
Jubeo te bene valere,

Gualterus Scott

I have had much hesitation about inserting the preceding letter, but could not make up my mind to omit what seems to me a most exquisite revelation of the whole character of Scott at this critical period of his history, both literary and personal;—more especially of his habitual effort to suppress, as far as words were concerned, the more tender feelings, which were in no heart deeper than in his.

It must, I think, have been, while he was indulging his *vagabond* vein, during the autumn of 1795, that Mrs. Barbauld paid her visit to Edinburgh, and entertained a party at Mr. Dugald Stewart's, by reading Mr. William Taylor's then unpublished version of Bürger's Lenore. In the essay on Imitation of Popular Poetry, the reader has a full account of the interest with which Scott heard, some weeks afterwards, a friend's imperfect recollections of this performance; the anxiety with which he sought after a copy of the original German; the delight with which he at length perused it; and how, having just been reading the specimens of ballad poetry introduced into Lewis's romance of The Monk, he called to mind the early facility of versification which had lain so long in abeyance, and ventured to promise his friend a rhymed translation of Lenore from his own pen. The friend in question was Miss Cranstoun, afterwards Countess of Purgstall, the sister of his friend George Cranstoun, now Lord Corehouse. He began the task, he tells us, after supper, and did not retire to bed until he had finished it, having by that time worked himself into a state of excitement which set sleep at defiance.

Next morning, before breakfast, he carried his MS. to Miss Cranstoun, who was not only delighted but astonished at it; for I have seen a letter of hers to a common friend in the country, in which she says—"Upon my word, Walter Scott is going to turn out a poet—something of a cross, I

think, between Burns and Gray." The same day he read it also to his friend Sir Alexander Wood, who retains a vivid recollection of the high strain of enthusiasm into which he had been exalted by dwelling on the wild unearthly imagery of the German bard. "He read it over to me," says Sir Alexander, "in a very slow and solemn tone, and after we had said a few words about its merits, continued to look at the fire silent and musing for some minutes, until he at length burst out with 'I wish to Heaven I could get a skull and two cross-bones.'" Wood said that if Scott would accompany him to the house of John Bell, the celebrated surgeon, he had no doubt this wish might be easily gratified. They went thither accordingly on the instant; —Mr. Bell smiled on hearing the object of their visit, and pointing to a closet, at the corner of his library, bade Walter enter and choose. From a well-furnished museum of mortality, he selected forthwith what seemed to him the handsomest skull and pair of cross-bones it contained, and wrapping them in his handkerchief, carried the formidable bundle home to George's Square. The trophies were immediately mounted on the top of his little bookcase; and when Wood visited him, after many years of absence from this country, he found them in possession of a similar position in his dressing-room at Abbotsford.

All this occurred in the beginning of April, 1796. A few days afterwards, Scott went to pay a visit at a country house, where he expected to meet the "lady of his love." Jane Anne Cranstoun was in the secret of his attachment, and knew, that however doubtful might be Miss [Stuart's] feeling on that subject, she had a high admiration of Scott's abilities, and often corresponded with him on literary matters; so, after he had left Edinburgh, it occurred to her that she might perhaps forward his views in this quarter, by presenting him in the character of a printed author. William Erskine being called into her councils, a few copies of the ballad were forthwith thrown off in the most elegant style, and one, richly bound and blazoned, followed Scott in the course of a few days to the country. The verses were read and approved of, and Miss Cranstoun at least flattered herself that he had not made his first appearance in types to no purpose.

I ought to have mentioned before, that in June, 1795, he was appointed one of the curators of the Advocates' Library, an office always reserved for those members of the Faculty who have the reputation of superior zeal in literary affairs. He had for colleagues David Hume, the Professor of Scots Law, and Malcolm Laing, the historian; and his discharge of his functions

must have given satisfaction, for I find him further nominated, in March, 1796, together with Mr. Robert Hodgson Cay—an accomplished gentleman, afterwards Judge of the Admiralty Court in Scotland—to "put the Faculty's cabinet of medals in proper arrangement."

On the 4th of June, 1796 (the birthday of George III.), there seems to have been a formidable riot in Edinburgh, and Scott is found again in the front. On the 5th, he writes as follows to his aunt, Christian Rutherford, who was then in the north of Scotland, and had meant to visit, among other places, the residence of the "chère adorable."

Edinburgh, 5th June, 1796.

My Chère Amie,—Nothing doubting that your curiosity will be upon the tenters to hear the wonderful events of the long-expected 4th of June, I take the pen to inform you that not one worth mentioning has taken place. Were I inclined to prolixity, I might, indeed, narrate at length *how* near a thousand gentlemen (myself among the number) offered their services to the magistrates to act as *constables* for the preservation of the peace—how their services were accepted—what fine speeches were made upon the occasion—*how* they were furnished with pretty painted brown *batons—how* they were assembled in the aisle of the New Church, and treated with claret and sweetmeats—*how* Sir John Whiteford was chased by the mob, and *how* Tom, Sandy Wood, and I rescued him, and dispersed his tormentors *à beaux coups de batons—how* the Justice-Clerk's windows were broke by a few boys, and *how* a large body of constables and a press-gang of near two hundred men arrived, and were much disappointed at finding the coast entirely clear; with many other matters of equal importance, but of which you must be contented to remain in ignorance till you return to your castle. Seriously, everything, with the exception of the very trifling circumstances above mentioned, was perfectly quiet—much more so than during any King's birthday I can recollect. That very stillness, however, shows that something is brewing among our friends the Democrats, which they will take their own time of bringing forward. By the wise precautions of the magistrates, or rather of the provost, and the spirited conduct of the gentlemen, I hope their designs will be frustrated. Our association meets to-night, when we are to be divided into districts according to the place of our abode, places of rendezvous and captains named; so that, upon the hoisting of a flag on the Tron-steeple, and ringing out all the large bells, we can be

on duty in less than five minutes. I am sorry to say that the complexion of the town seems to justify all precautions of this kind. I hope we shall demean ourselves as *quiet* and *peaceable* magistrates; and intend, for the purpose of learning the duties of my new office, to con diligently the instructions delivered to the watch by our brother Dogberry, of facetious memory. So much for information. By way of inquiry, pray let me know—that is, when you find a very idle hour—how you accomplished the perilous passage of her Majestie's Ferry without the assistance and escort of your preux-chevalier, and whether you will receive them on your return—how Miss R. and you are spending your time, whether stationary or otherwise—above all, whether you have been at [Invermay] and all the etcs., etcs., which the question involves. Having made out a pretty long scratch, which, as Win Jenkins says, will take you some time to decipher, I shall only inform you farther, that I shall tire excessively till you return to your shop. I beg to be remembered to Miss Kerr, and in particular to La Belle Jeanne. Best love to Miss Rutherford; and believe me ever, my dear Miss Christy, sincerely and affectionately your

Walter Scott

During the autumn of 1796 he visited again his favorite haunts in Perthshire and Forfarshire. It was in the course of this tour that he spent a day or two at Montrose with his old tutor Mitchell, and astonished and grieved that worthy Presbyterian by his zeal about witches and fairies. The only letter of his, written during this expedition, that I have recovered, was addressed to another of his clerical friends—one by no means of Mitchell's stamp—Mr. Walker, the minister of Dunnottar, and it is chiefly occupied with an account of his researches at a vitrified fort, in Kincardineshire, commonly called Lady Fenella's Castle, and, according to tradition, the scene of the murder of Kenneth III. While in the north, he visited also the residence of the lady who had now for so many years been the object of his attachment; and that his reception was not adequate to his expectations, may be gathered pretty clearly from some expressions in a letter addressed to him when at Montrose by his friend and confidante, Miss Cranstoun:—

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., POST-OFFICE, MONTROSE.

Dear Scott,—Far be it from me to affirm that there are no diviners in the land. The voice of the people and the voice of God are loud in their testimony. Two years ago, when I was in the neighborhood of Montrose, we had recourse for amusement one evening to chiromancy, or, as the vulgar say, having our fortunes read; and read mine were in such a sort, that either my letters must have been inspected, or the devil was by in his own proper person. I never mentioned the circumstance since, for obvious reasons; but now that you are on the spot, I feel it my bounden duty to conjure you not to put your shoes rashly from off your feet, for you are not standing on holy ground.

I bless the gods for conducting your poor dear soul safely to Perth. When I consider the wilds, the forests, the lakes, the rocks—and the spirits in which you must have whispered to their startled echoes, it amazeth me how you escaped. Had you but dismissed your little squire and Earwig, and spent a few days as Orlando would have done, all posterity might have profited by it; but to trot quietly away, without so much as one stanza to despair—never talk to me of love again—never, never, never! I am dying for your collection of exploits. When will you return? In the mean time, Heaven speed you! Be sober, and hope to the end.

William Taylor's translation of your ballad is published, and so inferior, that I wonder we could tolerate it. Dugald Stewart read yours to **** the other day. When he came to the fetter dance, he looked up, and poor ***** was sitting with his hands nailed to his knees, and the big tears rolling down his innocent nose in so piteous a manner, that Mr. Stewart could not help bursting out a-laughing. An angry man was *****. have seen another edition, too, but it is below contempt. So many copies make the ballad famous, so that every day adds to your renown.

This here place is very, very dull. Erskine is in London; my dear Thomson at Daily; Macfarlan hatching Kant—and George Fountainhall. I have nothing more to tell you, but that I am most affectionately yours. Many an anxious thought I have about you. Farewell.—J. A. C.

The affair in which this romantic creature took so lively an interest was now approaching its end. It was known, before this autumn closed, that the lady of his vows had finally promised her hand to his amiable rival; and, when

the fact was announced, some of those who knew Scott the best appear to have entertained very serious apprehensions as to the effect which the disappointment might have upon his feelings. For example, one of those brothers of *the Mountain* wrote as follows to another of them, on the 12th October, 1796: "Mr. [Forbes] marries Miss [Stuart]. This is not good news. I always dreaded there was some self-deception on the part of our romantic friend, and I now shudder at the violence of his most irritable and ungovernable mind. Who is it that says, 'Men have died, and worms have eaten them, but not for LOVE'? I hope sincerely it may be verified on this occasion."

Scott had, however, in all likelihood, digested his agony during the solitary ride in the Highlands to which Miss Cranstoun's last letter alludes.

Talking of this story with Lord Kinnedder, I once asked him whether Scott never made it the subject of verses at the period. His own confession, that, even during the time when he had laid aside the habit of versification, he did sometimes commit "a sonnet on a mistress's eyebrow," had not then appeared. Lord Kinnedder answered, "Oh yes, he made many little stanzas about the lady, and he sometimes showed them to Cranstoun, Clerk, and myself—but we really thought them in general very poor. Two things of the kind, however, have been preserved—and one of them was done just after the conclusion of the business." He then took down a volume of the English Minstrelsy, and pointed out to me some lines On a Violet, which had not at that time been included in Scott's collected works. Lord Kinnedder read them over in his usual impressive, though not quite unaffected, manner, and said, "I remember well, that when I first saw these, I told him they were his best, but he had touched them up afterwards."

"The violet in her greenwood bower,
Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen or copse or forest dingle.

"Though fair her gems of azure hue
Beneath the dewdrop's weight reclining,
I've seen an eye of lovelier blue
More sweet through watery lustre shining.

"The summer sun that dew shall dry,
Ere yet the sun be past its morrow,
Nor longer in my false love's eye
Remained the tear of parting sorrow!"

In turning over a volume of MS. papers, I have found a copy of verses, which, from the hand, Scott had evidently written down within the last ten years of his life. They are headed "To Time—by a Lady;" but certain *initials* on the back satisfy me that the authoress was no other than the object of his first passion. I think I must be pardoned for transcribing the lines which had dwelt so long on his memory—leaving it to the reader's fancy to picture the mood of mind in which the fingers of a gray-haired man may have traced such a relic of his youthful dreams:—

"Friend of the wretch oppress'd with grief,
Whose lenient hand, though slow, supplies
The balm that lends to care relief,
That wipes her tears—that checks her sighs!

"'Tis thine the wounded soul to heal
That hopeless bleeds from sorrow's smart,
From stern misfortune's shaft to steal
The barb that rankles in the heart.

"What though with thee the roses fly,
And jocund youth's gay reign is o'er;
Though dimm'd the lustre of the eye,
And hope's vain dreams enchant no more?

"Yet in thy train come dove-eyed peace,
Indifference with her heart of snow;
At her cold couch, lo! sorrows cease,
No thorns beneath her roses grow.

"O haste to grant thy suppliant's prayer,
To me thy torpid calm impart;
Rend from my brow youth's garland fair,
But take the thorn that's in my heart.

"Ah! why do fabling poets tell
That thy fleet wings outstrip the wind?
Why feign thy course of joy the knell,
And call thy slowest pace unkind?

"To me thy tedious feeble pace
Comes laden with the weight of years;
With sighs I view morn's blushing face,
And hail mild evening with my tears."

I venture to recall here to the reader's memory the opening of the twelfth chapter of Peveril of the Peak, written twenty-six years after the date of this youthful disappointment.

> "Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
> Could ever hear by tale or history,
> The course of true love never did run smooth!"
> *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

"The celebrated passage which we have prefixed to this chapter has, like most observations of the same author, its foundation in real experience. The period at which love is formed for the first time, and felt most strongly, is seldom that at which there is much prospect of its being brought to a happy issue. The state of artificial society opposes many complicated obstructions to early marriages; and the chance is very great, that such obstacles prove insurmountable. In fine, there are few men who do not look back in secret to some period of their youth, at which a sincere and early affection was repulsed or betrayed, or became abortive from opposing circumstances. It is these little passages of secret history, which leave a tinge of romance in every bosom, scarce permitting us, even in the most busy or the most advanced period of life, to listen with total indifference to a tale of true love."

Chapter VIII

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Publication of Ballads After Bürger. — Scott Quartermaster of the Edinburgh Light Horse. — Excursion to Cumberland. — Gilsland Wells. — Miss Carpenter. — Marriage

1796-1797

Rebelling, as usual, against circumstances, Scott seems to have turned with renewed ardor to his literary pursuits; and in that same October, 1796, he was "prevailed on," as he playfully expresses it, "by the *request of friends*, to indulge his own vanity, by publishing the translation of Lenore, with that of The Wild Huntsman, also from Bürger, in a thin quarto." The little volume, which has no author's name on the title-page, was printed for Manners and Miller of Edinburgh. The first named of these respectable publishers had been a fellow-student in the German class of Dr. Willich; and this circumstance probably suggested the negotiation. It was conducted by William Erskine, as appears from his postscript to a letter addressed to Scott by his sister, who, before it reached its destination, had become the wife of Mr. Campbell Colquhoun of Clathick and Killermont—in after-days Lord Advocate of Scotland. This was another of Scott's dearest female friends. The humble home which she shared with her brother during his early struggles at the Bar had been the scene of many of his happiest hours; and her letter affords such a pleasing idea of the warm affectionateness of the little circle that I cannot forbear inserting it:—

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., ROSEBANK, KELSO.

Monday evening.

If it were not that etiquette and I were constantly at war, I should think myself very blamable in thus trespassing against one of its laws; but as it is long since I forswore its dominion, I have acquired a prescriptive right to act as I will—and I shall accordingly anticipate the station of a *matron* in addressing *a young man*.

I can express but a very, very little of what I feel, and shall ever feel, for your unintermitting friendship and attention. I have ever considered you as a brother, and shall *now* think myself entitled to make even larger claims on your confidence. Well do I remember the *dark* conference we lately held together! The intention of unfolding *my own* future fate was often at my lips.

I cannot tell you my distress at leaving this house, wherein I have enjoyed so much real happiness, and giving up the service of so gentle a master, whose yoke was indeed easy. I will therefore only commend him to your care as the last bequest of Mary Anne Erskine, and conjure you to continue to each other through all your pilgrimage as you have commenced it. May every happiness attend you! Adieu!

Your most sincere friend and sister,

M. A. E.

Mr. Erskine writes on the other page, "The poems are gorgeous, but I have made no bargain with any bookseller. I have told M. and M. that I won't be satisfied with indemnity, but an offer must be made. They will be out before the end of the week." On what terms the publication really took place, I know not.

It has already been mentioned that Scott owed his copy of Bürger's works to the young lady of Harden, whose marriage occurred in the autumn of 1795. She was daughter of Count Brühl of Martkirchen, long Saxon ambassador at the Court of St. James's, by his wife Almeria, Countess-Dowager of Egremont. The young kinsman was introduced to her soon after her arrival at Mertoun, and his attachment to German studies excited her attention and interest. Mrs. Scott supplied him with many standard German books, besides Bürger; and the gift of an Adelung's dictionary from his old ally, George Constable (Jonathan Oldbuck), enabled him to master their contents sufficiently for the purposes of translation. The ballad of The Wild Huntsman appears to have been executed during the month that preceded his first publication; and he was thenceforth engaged in a succession of versions from the dramas of Meier and Iffland, several of which are still extant in his MS., marked 1796 and 1797. These are all in prose like their

originals; but he also versified at the same time some lyrical fragments of Goethe, as, for example, the Morlachian Ballad,

"What yonder glimmers so white on the mountain,"

and the song from Claudina von Villa Bella. He consulted his friend at Mertoun on all these essays; and I have often heard him say, that, among those many "obligations of a distant date which remained impressed on his memory, after a life spent in a constant interchange of friendship and kindness," he counted not as the least, the lady's frankness in correcting his Scotticisms, and more especially his Scottish *rhymes*.

His obligations to this lady were indeed various; but I doubt, after all, whether these were the most important. He used to say that she was the first *woman of real fashion* that *took him* up; that she used the privileges of her sex and station in the truest spirit of kindness; set him right as to a thousand little trifles, which no one else would have ventured to notice; and, in short, did for him what no one but an elegant woman can do for a young man, whose early days have been spent in narrow and provincial circles. "When I first saw Sir Walter," she writes to me, "he was about four-or five-and-twenty, but looked much younger. He seemed bashful and awkward; but there were from the first such gleams of superior sense and spirit in his conversation, that I was hardly surprised when, after our acquaintance had ripened a little, I felt myself to be talking with a man of genius. He was most modest about himself, and showed his little pieces apparently without any consciousness that they could possess any claim on particular attention. Nothing so easy and good-humored as the way in which he received any hints I might offer, when he seemed to be tampering with the King's English. I remember particularly how he laughed at himself, when I made him take notice that 'the little two dogs,' in some of his lines, did not please an English ear accustomed to 'the two little dogs.'"

Nor was this the only person at Mertoun who took a lively interest in his pursuits. Harden entered into all the feelings of his beautiful bride on this subject; and his mother, the Lady Diana Scott, daughter of the last Earl of Marchmont, did so no less. She had conversed, in her early days, with the brightest ornaments of the cycle of Queen Anne, and preserved rich stores of anecdote, well calculated to gratify the curiosity and excite the ambition of a young enthusiast in literature. Lady Diana soon appreciated the minstrel of the clan; and, surviving to a remarkable age, she had the

satisfaction of seeing him at the height of his eminence—the solitary person who could give the author of Marmion personal reminiscences of Pope.

On turning to James Ballantyne's Memorandum (already quoted), I find an account of Scott's journey from Rosebank to Edinburgh, in the November after the Ballads from Bürger were published, which gives an interesting notion of his literary zeal and opening ambition at this remarkable epoch of his life. Mr. Ballantyne had settled in Kelso as a solicitor in 1795; but, not immediately obtaining much professional practice, time hung heavy on his hands, and he willingly listened, in the summer of 1796, to a proposal of some of the neighboring nobility and gentry respecting the establishment of a weekly newspaper, in opposition to one of a democratic tendency, then widely circulated in Roxburghshire and the other Border counties. He undertook the printing and editing of this new journal, and proceeded to London, in order to engage correspondents and make other necessary preparations. While thus for the first time in the metropolis, he happened to meet with two authors, whose reputations were then in full bloom,—namely, Thomas Holcroft and William Godwin,—the former, a popular dramatist and novelist; the latter, a novelist of far greater merit, but "still more importantly distinguished," says the Memorandum before me, "by those moral, legal, political, and religious heterodoxies, which his talents enabled him to present to the world in a very captivating manner. His Caleb Williams had then just come out, and occupied as much public attention as any work has done before or since." "Both these eminent persons," Ballantyne continues, "I saw pretty frequently; and being anxious to hear whatever I could tell about the literary men in Scotland, they both treated me with remarkable freedom of communication. They were both distinguished by the clearness of their elocution, and very full of triumphant confidence in the truth of their systems. They were as willing to speak, therefore, as I could be to hear; and as I put my questions with all the fearlessness of a very young man, the result was, that I carried away copious and interesting stores of thought and information: that the greater part of what I heard was full of error, never entered into my contemplation. Holcroft at this time was a fine-looking, lively man, of green old age, somewhere about sixty. Godwin, some twenty years younger, was more shy and reserved. As to me, my delight and enthusiasm were boundless."

After returning home, Ballantyne made another journey to Glasgow for the purchase of types; and on entering the Kelso coach for this purpose, "It

would not be easy," says he, "to express my joy on finding that Mr. Scott was to be one of my partners in the carriage, the only other passenger being a fine, stout, muscular, old Quaker. A very few miles reëstablished us on our ancient footing. Travelling not being half so speedy then as it is now, there was plenty of leisure for talk, and Mr. Scott was exactly what is called *the old man*. He abounded, as in the days of boyhood, in legendary lore, and had now added to the stock, as his recitations showed, many of those fine ballads which afterwards composed the Minstrelsy. Indeed, I was more delighted with him than ever; and, by way of reprisal, I opened on him my London budget, collected from Holcroft and Godwin. I doubt if Boswell ever showed himself a more skilful *Reporter* than I did on this occasion. Hour after hour passed away, and found my borrowed eloquence still flowing, and my companion still hanging on my lips with unwearied interest. It was customary in those days to break the journey (only forty miles) by dining on the road, the consequence of which was, that we both became rather oblivious; and after we had reëntered the coach, the worthy Quaker felt quite vexed and disconcerted with the silence which had succeeded so much conversation. 'I wish,' said he, 'my young friends, that you would cheer up, and go on with your pleasant songs and tales as before: they entertained me much.' And so," says Ballantyne, "it went on again until the evening found us in Edinburgh; and from that day, until within a very short time of his death—a period of not less than five-and-thirty years—I may venture to say that our intercourse never flagged."

The reception of the two ballads had, in the mean time, been favorable, in his own circle at least. The many inaccuracies and awkwardnesses of rhyme and diction, to which he alludes in republishing them towards the close of his life, did not prevent real lovers of poetry from seeing that no one but a poet could have transfused the daring imagery of the German in a style so free, bold, masculine, and full of life; but, wearied as all such readers had been with that succession of feeble, flimsy, lackadaisical trash which followed the appearance of the Reliques by Bishop Percy, the opening of such a new vein of popular poetry as these verses revealed would have been enough to produce lenient critics for far inferior translations. Many, as we have seen, sent forth copies of the Lenore about the same time; and some of these might be thought better than Scott's in particular passages; but, on the whole, it seems to have been felt and acknowledged by those best entitled to judge, that he deserved the palm.

Meantime, we must not forget that Scotland had lost that very year the great poet Burns,—her glory and her shame. It is at least to be hoped that a general sentiment of self-reproach, as well as of sorrow, had been excited by the premature extinction of such a light; and, at all events, it is agreeable to know that they who had watched his career with the most affectionate concern were among the first to hail the promise of a more fortunate successor. Scott found on his table, when he reached Edinburgh, the following letters from two of Burns's kindest and wisest friends:—

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., ADVOCATE, GEORGE'S SQUARE.

My dear Sir,—I beg you will accept of my best thanks for the favor you have done me by sending me four copies of your beautiful translations. I shall retain two of them, as Mrs. Stewart and I both set a high value on them as gifts from the author. The other two I shall take the earliest opportunity of transmitting to a friend in England, who, I hope, may be instrumental in making their merits more generally known at the time of their first appearance. In a few weeks, I am fully persuaded they will engage public attention to the utmost extent of your wishes, without the aid of any recommendation whatever. I ever am, Dear Sir, yours most truly,

Dugald Stewart.

Canongate, Wednesday evening.

TO THE SAME.

Dear Sir,—On my return from Cardross, where I had been for a week, I found yours of the 14th, which had surely loitered by the way. I thank you most cordially for your present. I meet with little poetry nowadays that touches my heart; but your translations excite mingled emotions of pity and terror, insomuch, that I would not wish any person of weaker nerves to read William and Helen before going to bed. Great must be the original, if it equals the translation in energy and pathos. One would almost suspect you have used as much liberty with Bürger as Macpherson was suspected of doing with Ossian. It is, however, easier to *backspeir* you. Sober reason rejects the machinery as unnatural; it reminds me, however, of the magic of Shakespeare. Nothing has a finer effect than the repetition of certain words, that are echoes to the sense, as much as the celebrated lines in Homer about

the rolling up and falling down of the stone: *Tramp, tramp! splash, splash!* is to me perfectly new; and much of the imagery is nature. I should consider this muse of yours (if you carry the intrigue far) more likely to steal your heart from the law than even a wife. I am, Dear Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

Jo. Ramsay.

Ochtertyre, 30th November, 1796.

Among other literary persons at a distance, I may mention George Chalmers, the celebrated antiquary, with whom he had been in correspondence from the beginning of this year, supplying him with Border ballads for the illustration of his researches into Scotch history. This gentleman had been made acquainted with Scott's large collections in that way by a common friend, Dr. Somerville, minister of Jedburgh, author of the History of Queen Anne; and the numerous MS. copies communicated to him in consequence were recalled in the course of 1799, when the plan of the Minstrelsy began to take shape. Chalmers writes in great transports about Scott's versions; but weightier encouragement came from Mr. Taylor of Norwich, himself the first translator of the Lenore.

I need not tell you, sir [he writes], with how much eagerness I opened your volume—with how much glow I followed The Chase—or with how much alarm I came to William and Helen. Of the latter I will say nothing; praise might seem hypocrisy—criticism envy. The ghost nowhere makes his appearance so well as with you, or his exit so well as with Mr. Spenser. I like very much the recurrence of

> "The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
> The flashing pebbles flee;"

but of William and Helen I had resolved to say nothing. Let me return to The Chase, of which the metric stanza style pleases me entirely; yet I think a few passages written in too elevated a strain for the general spirit of the poem. This age leans too much to the Darwin style. Mr. Percy's Lenore owes its coldness to the adoption of this; and it seems peculiarly incongruous in the ballad—where habit has taught us to expect simplicity. Among the passages too stately and pompous, I should reckon—

"The mountain echoes startling wake—
And for devotion's choral swell
Exchange the rude discordant noise—
Fell Famine marks the maddening throng
With cold Despair's averted eye,"—

and perhaps one or two more. In the twenty-first stanza, I prefer Bürger's *trampling the corn into chaff and dust*, to your more metaphorical, and therefore less picturesque, "destructive sweep the field along." In the thirtieth, "On whirlwind's pinions swiftly borne," to me seems less striking than the still disapparition of the tumult and bustle—the earth has opened, and he is sinking with his evil genius to the nether world—as he approaches, *dumpf rauscht es wie ein fernes Meer*—it should be rendered, therefore, not by "Save what a distant torrent gave," but by some sounds which shall necessarily excite the idea of being *hell-sprung*—the sound of simmering seas of fire—pinings of goblins damned—or some analogous noise. The forty-seventh stanza is a very great improvement of the original. The profanest blasphemous speeches need not have been softened down, as, in proportion to the impiety of the provocation, increases the poetical probability of the final punishment. I should not have ventured upon these criticisms, if I did not think it required a microscopic eye to make any, and if I did not on the whole consider The Chase as a most spirited and beautiful translation. I remain (to borrow in another sense a concluding phrase from the Spectator), your constant admirer,

W. Taylor, Jun.
Norwich, 14th December, 1796.

The anticipations of these gentlemen, that Scott's versions would attract general attention in the south, were not fulfilled. He himself attributes this to the contemporaneous appearance of so many other translations from Lenore. "In a word," he says, "my adventure, where so many pushed off to sea, proved a dead loss, and a great part of the edition was condemned to the service of the trunkmaker. This failure did not operate in any unpleasant degree either on my feelings or spirits. I was coldly received by strangers, but my reputation began rather to increase among my own friends, and on the whole I was more bent to show the world that it had neglected something worth notice, than to be affronted by its indifference; or rather, to

speak candidly, I found pleasure in the literary labors in which I had almost by accident become engaged, and labored less in the hope of pleasing others, though certainly without despair of doing so, than in a pursuit of a new and agreeable amusement to myself."

On the 12th of December Scott had the curiosity to witness the trial of one James Mackean, a shoemaker, for the murder of Buchanan, a carrier, employed to convey money weekly from the Glasgow bank to a manufacturing establishment at Lanark. Mackean invited the carrier to spend the evening in his house; conducted family worship in a style of much seeming fervor; and then, while his friend was occupied, came behind him, and almost severed his head from his body by one stroke of a razor. I have heard Scott describe the sanctimonious air which the murderer maintained during his trial—preserving throughout the aspect of a devout person, who believed himself to have been hurried into his accumulation of crime by an uncontrollable exertion of diabolical influence; and on his copy of the "Life of James Mackean, executed 25th January, 1797," I find the following marginal note:—

"I went to see this wretched man when under sentence of death, along with my friend, Mr. William Clerk, advocate. His great anxiety was to convince us that his diabolical murder was committed from a sudden impulse of revengeful and violent passion, not from deliberate design of plunder. But the contrary was manifest from the accurate preparation of the deadly instrument—a razor strongly lashed to an iron bolt—and also from the evidence on the trial, from which it seems he had invited his victim to drink tea with him on the day he perpetrated the murder, and that this was a reiterated invitation. Mackean was a good-looking elderly man, having a thin face and clear gray eye; such a man as may be ordinarily seen beside a collection-plate at a seceding meeting-house, a post which the said Mackean had occupied in his day. All Mackean's account of the murder is apocryphal. Buchanan was a powerful man, and Mackean slender. It appeared that the latter had engaged Buchanan in writing, then suddenly clapped one hand on his eyes, and struck the fatal blow with the other. The throat of the deceased was cut through his handkerchief to the back bone of the neck, against which the razor was hacked in several places."

In his pursuit of his German studies, Scott acquired, about this time, a very important assistant in Mr. Skene of Rubislaw, in Aberdeenshire—a gentleman considerably his junior, who had just returned to Scotland from a

residence of several years in Saxony, where he had obtained a thorough knowledge of the language, and accumulated a better collection of German books than any to which Scott had, as yet, found access. Shortly after Mr. Skene's arrival in Edinburgh, Scott requested to be introduced to him by a mutual friend, Mr. Edmonstone of Newton; and their fondness for the same literature, with Scott's eagerness to profit by his new acquaintance's superior attainment in it, thus opened an intercourse which general similarity of tastes, and I venture to add, in many of the most important features of character, soon ripened into the familiarity of a tender friendship —"An intimacy," Mr. Skene says, in a paper before me, "of which I shall ever think with so much pride—a friendship so pure and cordial as to have been able to withstand all the vicissitudes of nearly forty years, without ever having sustained even a casual chill from unkind thought or word." Mr. Skene adds, "During the whole progress of his varied life, to that eminent station which he could not but feel he at length held in the estimation, not of his countrymen alone, but of the whole world, I never could perceive the slightest shade of variance from that simplicity of character with which he impressed me on the first hour of our meeting."

Among the common tastes which served to knit these friends together was their love of horsemanship, in which, as in all other manly exercises, Skene highly excelled; and the fears of a French Invasion becoming every day more serious, their thoughts were turned with corresponding zeal to the project of organising a force of mounted volunteers in Scotland. "The London Light Horse had set the example," says Mr. Skene; "but in truth it was to Scott's ardor that this force in the North owed its origin. Unable, by reason of his lameness, to serve amongst his friends on foot, he had nothing for it but to rouse the spirit of the moss-trooper, with which he readily inspired all who possessed the means of substituting the sabre for the musket."

On the 14th February, 1797, these friends and many more met and drew up an offer to serve as a body of volunteer cavalry in Scotland; which offer being transmitted through the Duke of Buccleuch, Lord-Lieutenant of Mid-Lothian, was accepted by Government. The organization of the corps proceeded rapidly; they extended their offer to serve in any part of the island in case of invasion; and this also being accepted, the whole arrangement was shortly completed; when Charles Maitland of Rankeillor was elected Major-Commandant; (Sir) William Rae of St. Catharine's

Captain; James Gordon of Craig, and George Robinson of Clermiston, Lieutenants; (Sir) William Forbes of Pitsligo, and James Skene of Rubislaw, Cornets; Walter Scott, Paymaster, Quartermaster, and Secretary; John Adams, Adjutant. But the treble duties thus devolved on Scott were found to interfere too severely with his other avocations, and Colin Mackenzie of Portmore relieved him soon afterwards from those of paymaster.

"The part of quartermaster," says Mr. Skene, "was purposely selected for him, that he might be spared the rough usage of the ranks; but, notwithstanding his infirmity, he had a remarkably firm seat on horseback, and in all situations a fearless one: no fatigue ever seemed too much for him, and his zeal and animation served to sustain the enthusiasm of the whole corps, while his ready 'mot à rire' kept up, in all, a degree of good-humor and relish for the service, without which the toil and privations of long *daily* drills would not easily have been submitted to by such a body of gentlemen. At every interval of exercise, the order, *sit at ease*, was the signal for the quartermaster to lead the squadron to merriment; every eye was intuitively turned on 'Earl Walter,' as he was familiarly called by his associates of that date, and his ready joke seldom failed to raise the ready laugh. He took his full share in all the labors and duties of the corps, had the highest pride in its progress and proficiency, and was such a trooper himself as only a very powerful frame of body and the warmest zeal in the cause could have enabled any one to be. But his habitual good-humor was the great charm, and at the daily mess (for we all dined together when in quarters) that reigned supreme."

Earl Walter's first charger, by the way, was a tall and powerful animal, named Lenore. These daily drills appear to have been persisted in during the spring and summer of 1797; the corps spending moreover some weeks in quarters at Musselburgh. The majority of the troop having professional duties to attend to, the ordinary hour for drill was five in the morning; and when we reflect, that after some hours of hard work in this way, Scott had to produce himself regularly in the Parliament House with gown and wig, for the space of four or five hours at least, while his chamber practice, though still humble, was on the increase—and that he had found a plentiful source of new social engagements in his troop connections—it certainly could have excited no surprise had his literary studies been found suffering total intermission during this busy period. That such was not the case, however, his correspondence and note-books afford ample evidence.

He had no turn, at this time of his life, for early rising; so that the regular attendance at the morning drills was of itself a strong evidence of his military zeal; but he must have, in spite of them, and of all other circumstances, persisted in what was the usual custom of all his earlier life, namely, the devotion of the best hours of the night to solitary study. In general, both as a young man, and in more advanced age, his constitution required a good allowance of sleep, and he, on principle, indulged in it, saying, "He was but half a man if he had not full seven hours of utter unconsciousness;" but his whole mind and temperament were, at this period, in a state of most fervent exaltation, and spirit triumphed over matter. His translation of Steinberg's Otho of Wittelsbach is marked "1796-7;" from which, I conclude, it was finished in the latter year. The volume containing that of Meier's Wolfred of Dromberg, a drama of Chivalry, is dated 1797; and, I think, the reader will presently see cause to suspect, that though not alluded to in his imperfect note-book, these tasks must have been accomplished in the very season of the daily drills.

The letters addressed to him in March, April, and June, by Kerr of Abbotrule, George Chalmers, and his uncle at Rosebank, indicate his unabated interest in the collection of coins and ballads; and I shall now make a few extracts from his private note-book, some of which will at all events amuse the survivors of the Edinburgh Light Horse;—

"*March 15, 1797.*—Read Stanfield's trial, and the conviction appears very doubtful indeed. Surely no one could seriously believe, in 1688, that the body of the murdered bleeds at the touch of the murderer, and I see little else that directly touches Philip Stanfield. He was a very bad character, however; and tradition says, that having insulted Welsh, the wild preacher, one day in his early life, the saint called from the pulpit that God had revealed to him that this blasphemous youth would die in the sight of as many as were then assembled. It was believed at the time that Lady Stanfield had a hand in the assassination, or was at least privy to her son's plans; but I see nothing inconsistent with the old gentleman's having committed suicide. The ordeal of touching the corpse was observed in Germany. They call it *barrecht*.

"*March 27.*—

'The friers of Fail
Gat never owre hard eggs, or owre thin kale;
For they made their eggs thin wi' butter,
And their kale thick wi' bread.
And the friers of Fail they made gude kale
On Fridays when they fasted;
They never wanted gear enough
As lang as their neighbours' lasted.'

"Fairy-rings.—*N. B.* Delrius says the same appearance occurs wherever the witches have held their Sabbath.

"For the ballad of 'Willie's lady,' compare Apuleius, lib. i. p. 33....

"*April 20.*—The portmanteau to contain the following articles: 2 shirts; 1 black handkerchief; 1 nightcap, woollen; 1 pair pantaloons, blue; 1 flannel shirt with sleeves; 1 pair flannel drawers; 1 waistcoat; 1 pair worsted stockings or socks.

"In the slip, in cover of portmanteau, a case with shaving-things, combs, and a knife, fork, and spoon; a German pipe and tobacco-bag, flint, and steel; pipe-clay and oil, with brush for laying it on; a shoe-brush; a pair of shoes or hussar-boots; a horse-picker, and other loose articles.

"Belt with the flap and portmanteau, currycomb, brush, and mane-comb, with sponge.

"Over the portmanteau, the blue overalls, and a spare jacket for stable; a small horse-sheet, to cover the horse's back with, and a spare girth or two.

"In the cartouche-box, screw-driver and picker for pistol, with three or four spare flints.

"The horse-sheet may be conveniently folded below the saddle, and will save the back in a long march or bad weather. Beside the holster, two forefeet shoes.

"*May 22.*—Apuleius, lib. ii.... Anthony-a-Wood.... Mr. Jenkinson's name (now Lord Liverpool) being proposed as a difficult one to rhyme to, a lady

present hit off this verse extempore.—*N. B.* Both father and son (Lord Hawkesbury) have a peculiarity of vision:—

'Happy Mr. Jenkinson,
Happy Mr. Jenkinson,
I'm sure to you
Your lady's true,
For you have got a winking son.'

"23.—Delrius....

"24—'I, John Bell of Brackenbrig, lies under this stane;

Four of my sons laid it on my wame.
I was man of my meat, and master of my wife,
And lived in mine ain house without meikle strife.
Gif thou be'st a "better man in thy time than I was in mine,
Tak this stane off my wame, and lay it upon thine.'

"25.—Meric Casaubon on Spirits....

"26.—'There saw we learned Maroe's golden tombe;
The way he cut an English mile in length
Thorow a rock of stone in one night's space.'

"Christopher Marlowe's Tragicall History of Dr. Faustus—a very remarkable thing. Grand subject—end grand.... Copied Prophecy of Merlin from Mr. Clerk's MS.

"27.—Read Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business, by Andrew Moreton. This was one of Defoe's many *aliases*—like his pen, in parts....

'To Cuthbert, Car, and Collingwood, to Shafto and to Hall;
To every gallant generous heart that for King James did fall.'

"28.—... Anthony-a-Wood.... Plain Proof of the True Father and Mother of the Pretended Prince of Wales, by W. Fuller. This fellow was pilloried for a forgery some years later.... Began *Nathan der Weise*.

"*June 29*.—Read Introduction to a Compendium on Brief Examination, by W. S.—viz., William Stafford—though it was for a time given to no less a

W. S. than William Shakespeare. A curious treatise—the Political Economy of the Elizabethan Day—worth reprinting....

"*July 1*.—Read Discourse of Military Discipline, by Captain Barry—a very curious account of the famous Low Countries armies—full of military hints worth note.... *Anthony Wood* again.

"3.—*Nathan der Weise. ... Delrius*....

"5.—Geutenberg's *Braut* begun.

"6.—The Bride again. *Delrius*."

The note-book from which I have been copying is chiefly filled with extracts from Apuleius and Anthony-a-Wood—most of them bearing, in some way, on the subject of popular superstitions. It is a pity that many leaves have been torn out; for if unmutilated, the record would probably have enabled one to guess whether he had already planned his Essay on Fairies.

I have mentioned his business at the Bar as increasing at the same time. His *fee-book* is now before me, and it shows that he made by his first year's practice £24 3s.; by the second, £57 15s.; by the third, £84 4s.; by the fourth, £90; and in his fifth year at the Bar—that is, from November, 1796 to July, 1797—£144 10s.; of which £50 were fees from his father's chamber.

His friend, Charles Kerr of Abbotrule, had been residing a good deal about this time in Cumberland: indeed, he was so enraptured with the scenery of the lakes, as to take a house in Keswick with the intention of spending half of all future years there. His letters to Scott (March, April, 1797) abound in expressions of wonder that he should continue to devote so much of his vacations to the Highlands of Scotland, "with every crag and precipice of which," says he, "I should imagine you would be familiar by this time; nay, that the goats themselves might almost claim you for an acquaintance;" while another district lay so near him, at least as well qualified "to give a swell to the fancy."

After the rising of the Court of Session in July, Scott accordingly set out on a tour to the English lakes, accompanied by his brother John, and Adam Ferguson. Their first stage was Halyards in Tweeddale, then inhabited by his friend's father, the philosopher and historian; and they stayed there for a day or two, in the course of which Scott had his first and only interview

with David Ritchie, the original of his Black Dwarf. Proceeding southwards, the tourists visited Carlisle, Penrith,—the vale of the Eamont, including Mayburgh and Brougham Castle,—Ullswater and Windermere; and at length fixed their headquarters at the then peaceful and sequestered little watering-place of Gilsland, making excursions from thence to the various scenes of romantic interest which are commemorated in The Bridal of Triermain, and otherwise leading very much the sort of life depicted among the loungers of St. Ronan's Well. Scott was, on his first arrival in Gilsland, not a little engaged with the beauty of one of the young ladies lodged under the same roof with him; and it was on occasion of a visit in her company to some part of the Roman Wall that he indited his lines—

> "Take these flowers, which, purple waving,
> On the ruined rampart grew," etc.

But this was only a passing glimpse of flirtation. A week or so afterwards commenced a more serious affair.

Riding one day with Ferguson, they met, some miles from Gilsland, a young lady taking the air on horseback, whom neither of them had previously remarked, and whose appearance instantly struck both so much that they kept her in view until they had satisfied themselves that she also was one of the party at Gilsland. The same evening there was a ball, at which Captain Scott produced himself in his regimentals, and Ferguson also thought proper to be equipped in the uniform of the Edinburgh Volunteers. There was no little rivalry among the young travellers as to who should first get presented to the unknown beauty of the morning's ride; but though both the gentlemen in scarlet had the advantage of being dancing partners, their friend succeeded in handing the fair stranger to supper—and such was his first introduction to Charlotte Margaret Carpenter.

Without the features of a regular beauty, she was rich in personal attractions; "a form that was fashioned as light as a fay's;" a complexion of the clearest and lightest olive; eyes large, deep-set and dazzling, of the finest Italian brown; and a profusion of silken tresses, black as the raven's wing; her address hovering between the reserve of a pretty young Englishwoman who has not mingled largely in general society, and a certain natural archness and gayety that suited well with the accompaniment of a French accent. A lovelier vision, as all who remember her in the bloom of

her days have assured me, could hardly have been imagined; and from that hour the fate of the young poet was fixed.

She was the daughter of Jean Charpentier, of Lyons, a devoted royalist, who held an office under Government, and Charlotte Volere, his wife. She and her only brother, Charles Charpentier, had been educated in the Protestant religion of their mother; and when their father died, which occurred in the beginning of the Revolution, Madame Charpentier made her escape with her children, first to Paris, and then to England, where they found a warm friend and protector in the late Marquis of Downshire, who had, in the course of his travels in France, formed an intimate acquaintance with the family, and, indeed, spent some time under their roof. M. Charpentier had, in his first alarm as to the coming Revolution, invested £4000 in English securities—part in a mortgage upon Lord Downshire's estates. On the mother's death, which occurred soon after her arrival in London, this nobleman took on himself the character of sole guardian to her children; and Charles Charpentier received in due time, through his interest, an appointment in the service of the East India Company, in which he had by this time risen to the lucrative situation of Commercial Resident at Salem. His sister was now making a little excursion, under the care of the lady who had superintended her education, Miss Jane Nicolson, a daughter of Dr. Nicolson, Dean of Exeter, and granddaughter of William Nicolson, Bishop of Carlisle, well known as the editor of The English Historical Library. To some connections which the learned prelate's family had ever since his time kept up in the diocese of Carlisle, Miss Carpenter owed the direction of her summer tour.

Scott's father was now in a very feeble state of health, which accounts for his first announcement of this affair being made in a letter to his mother; it is undated;—but by this time the young lady had left Gilsland for Carlisle, where she remained until her destiny was settled,

TO MRS. SCOTT, GEORGE'S SQUARE, EDINBURGH.

My dear Mother,—I should very ill deserve the care and affection with which you have ever regarded me, were I to neglect my duty so far as to omit consulting my father and you in the most important step which I can possibly take in life, and upon the success of which my future happiness must depend. It is with pleasure I think that I can avail myself of your advice and instructions in an affair of so great importance as that which I

have at present on my hands. You will probably guess from this preamble that I am engaged in a matrimonial plan, which is really the case. Though my acquaintance with the young lady has not been of long standing, this circumstance is in some degree counterbalanced by the intimacy in which we have lived, and by the opportunities which that intimacy has afforded me of remarking her conduct and sentiments on many different occasions, some of which were rather of a delicate nature, so that in fact I have seen more of her during the few weeks we have been together than I could have done after a much longer acquaintance, shackled by the common forms of ordinary life. You will not expect from me a description of her person—for which I refer you to my brother, as also for a fuller account of all the circumstances attending the business than can be comprised in the compass of a letter. Without flying into raptures, for I must assure you that my judgment as well as my affections are consulted upon this occasion—without flying into raptures, then, I may safely assure you that her temper is sweet and cheerful, her understanding good, and, what I know will give you pleasure, her principles of religion very serious. I have been very explicit with her upon the nature of my expectations, and she thinks she can accommodate herself to the situation which I should wish her to hold in society as my wife, which, you will easily comprehend, I mean should neither be extravagant nor degrading. Her fortune, though partly dependent upon her brother, who is high in office at Madras, is very considerable—at present £500 a year. This, however, we must, in some degree, regard as precarious—I mean to the full extent; and indeed, when you know her, you will not be surprised that I regard this circumstance chiefly because it removes those prudential considerations which would otherwise render our union impossible for the present. Betwixt her income and my own professional exertions, I have little doubt we will be enabled to hold the rank in society which my family and situation entitle me to fill.

My dear mother, I cannot express to you the anxiety I have that you will not think me flighty nor inconsiderate in this business. Believe me, that experience, in one instance—you cannot fail to know to what I allude—is too recent to permit my being so hasty in my conclusions as the warmth of my temper might have otherwise prompted. I am also most anxious that you should be prepared to show her kindness, which I know the goodness of your own heart will prompt, more especially when I tell you that she is an

orphan, without relations, and almost without friends. Her guardian is—I should say *was*, for she is of age—Lord Downshire, to whom I must write for his consent,—a piece of respect to which he is entitled for his care of her,—and there the matter rests at present. I think I need not tell you that if I assume the new character which I threaten, I shall be happy to find that in that capacity I may make myself more useful to my brothers, and especially to Anne, than I could in any other. On the other hand, I shall certainly expect that my friends will endeavor to show every attention in their power to a woman who forsakes for me prospects much more splendid than what I can offer, and who comes into Scotland without a single friend but myself. I find I could write a great deal more upon this subject, but as it is late, and as I must write to my father, I shall restrain myself. I think (but you are best judge) that in the circumstances in which I stand, you should write to her, Miss Carpenter, under cover to me at Carlisle.

Write to me very fully upon this important subject—send me your opinion, your advice, and, above all, your blessing; you will see the necessity of not delaying a minute in doing so, and in keeping this business *strictly private*, till you hear farther from me, since you are not ignorant that even at this advanced period an objection on the part of Lord Downshire, or many other accidents, may intervene; in which case, I should little wish my disappointment to be public.

Believe me, my dear Mother,
Ever your dutiful and affectionate son,

Walter Scott

Scott remained in Cumberland until the Jedburgh assizes recalled him to his legal duties. On arriving in that town, he immediately sent for his friend Shortreed, whose *memorandum* records that the evening of the 30th September, 1797 was one of the most joyous he ever spent. "Scott," he says, "was *sair* beside himself about Miss Carpenter;—we toasted her twenty times over—and sat together, he raving about her, until it was one in the morning." He soon returned to Cumberland; and the following letters will throw light on the character and conduct of the parties, and on the nature of the difficulties which were presented by the prudence and prejudices of the young advocate's family connections. It appears, that at one stage of the

business, Scott had seriously contemplated leaving the Bar at Edinburgh, and establishing himself with his bride (I know not in what capacity) in one of the colonies.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., ADVOCATE, EDINBURGH.

Carlisle, October 4, 1797.

It is only an hour since I received Lord Downshire's letter. You will say, I hope, that I am indeed very good to write so soon, but I almost fear that all my goodness can never carry me through all this plaguy writing. Lord Downshire will be happy to hear from you. He is the very best man on earth —his letter is kind and affectionate, and full of advice, much in the style of *your last*. I am to consult *most carefully my heart*. Do you believe I did not do it when I gave you my consent? It is true, I don't like to reflect on that subject. I am afraid. It is very awful to think it is for life. How can I ever laugh after such tremendous thoughts? I believe never more. I am hurt to find that your friends don't think the match a prudent one. If it is not agreeable to them all, you must then forget me, for I have too much pride to think of connecting myself in a family were I not equal to them. Pray, my dear sir, write to Lord D. immediately—explain yourself to him as you would to me, and he will, I am sure, do all he can to serve us. If you really love me, you must love him, and write to him as you would to a friend.

Adieu,—au plaisir de vous revoir bientôt.

C. C.

TO ROBERT SHORTREED, ESQ., SHERIFF-SUBSTITUTE, JEDBURGH.

Selkirk, 8th October, 1797.

Dear Bob,—This day a long train of anxieties was put an end to by a letter from Lord Downshire, couched in the most flattering terms, giving his consent to my marriage with his ward. I am thus far on my way to Carlisle —only for a visit—because, betwixt her reluctance to an immediate marriage and the imminent approach of the session, I am afraid I shall be thrown back to the Christmas holidays. I shall be home in about eight days.

Ever yours sincerely,

W. Scott

TO MISS CHRISTIAN RUTHERFORD, ASHESTIEL, BY SELKIRK.

Has it never happened to you, my dear Miss Christy, in the course of your domestic economy, to meet with a drawer stuffed so very, so *extremely* full, that it was very difficult to pull it open, however desirous you might be to exhibit its contents? In case this miraculous event has ever taken place, you may somewhat conceive from thence the cause of my silence, which has really proceeded from my having a very great deal to communicate; so much so, that I really hardly know how to begin. As for my affection and friendship for you, believe me sincerely, they neither slumber nor sleep, and it is only your suspicions of their drowsiness which incline me to write at this period of a business highly interesting to me, rather than when I could have done so with something like certainty—Hem! Hem! It must come out at once—I am in a very fair way of being married to a very amiable young woman, with whom I formed an attachment in the course of my tour. She was born in France—her parents were of English extraction—the name Carpenter. She was left an orphan early in life, and educated in England, and is at present under the care of a Miss Nicolson, a daughter of the late Dean of Exeter, who was on a visit to her relations in Cumberland. Miss Carpenter is of age, but as she lies under great obligations to the Marquis of Downshire, who was her guardian, she cannot take a step of such importance without his consent—and I daily expect his final answer upon the subject. Her fortune is dependent, in a great measure, upon an only and very affectionate brother. He is Commercial Resident at Salem in India, and has settled upon her an annuity of £500. Of her personal accomplishments I shall only say that she possesses very good sense, with uncommon good temper, which I have seen put to most severe trials. I must bespeak your kindness and friendship for her. You may easily believe I shall rest very much both upon Miss R. and you for giving her the *carte de pays*, when she comes to Edinburgh. I may give you a hint that there is no *romance* in her composition—and that, though born in France, she has the sentiments and manners of an Englishwoman, and does not like to be thought otherwise. A very slight tinge in her pronunciation is all which marks the foreigner. She

is at present at Carlisle, where I shall join her as soon as our arrangements are finally made. Some difficulties have occurred in settling matters with my father, owing to certain prepossessions which you can easily conceive his adopting. One main article was the uncertainty of her provision, which has been in part removed by the safe arrival of her remittances for this year, with assurances of their being regular and even larger in future, her brother's situation being extremely lucrative. Another objection was her birth: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" but as it was *birth merely and solely*, this has been abandoned. *You* will be more interested about other points regarding her, and I can only say that—though our acquaintance was shorter than ever I could have thought of forming such a connection upon—it was exceedingly close, and gave me full opportunities for observation—and if I had parted with her, it must have been forever, which both parties began to think would be a disagreeable thing. She has conducted herself through the whole business with so much propriety as to make a strong impression in her favor upon the minds of my father and mother, prejudiced as they were against her, from the circumstances I have mentioned. We shall be your neighbors in the New Town, and intend to live very quietly; Charlotte will need many lessons from Miss R. in housewifery. Pray show this letter to Miss R. with my very best compliments. Nothing can now stand in the way except Lord Downshire, who may not think the match a prudent one for Miss C.; but he will surely think her entitled to judge for herself at her age, in what she would wish to place her happiness. She is not a beauty, by any means, but her person and face are very engaging. She is a brunette; her manners are lively, but when necessary she can be very serious. She was baptized and educated a Protestant of the Church of England. I think I have now said enough upon this subject. Do not write till you hear from me again, which will be when all is settled. I wish this important event may hasten your return to town. I send a goblin story, with best compliments to the misses, and ever am, yours affectionately,

Walter Scott.

THE ERL-KING.

(*The Erl-King is a goblin that haunts the Black Forest in Thuringia.—To be read by a candle particularly long in the*

snuff.)

O, who rides by night thro' the woodland so wild?
It is the fond father embracing his child;
And close the boy nestles within his loved arm,
To hold himself fast, and to keep himself warm.

"O father, see yonder! see yonder!" he says.
"My boy, upon what doest thou fearfully gaze?"—
"O, 't is the Erl-King with his crown and his shroud."—
"No, my son, it is but a dark wreath of the cloud."

(*The Erl-King speaks.*)

"O, come and go with me, thou loveliest child;
By many a gay sport shall thy time be beguiled;
My mother keeps for thee full many a fair toy,
And many a fine flower shall she pluck for my boy."

"O father, my father, and did you not hear
The Erl-King whisper so low in my ear?"
"Be still, my heart's darling—my child, be at ease;
It was but the wild blast as it sung thro' the trees."

Erl-King.

"O wilt thou go with me, thou loveliest boy?
My daughter shall tend thee with care and with joy;
She shall bear thee so lightly thro' wet and thro' wild,
And press thee, and kiss thee, and sing to my child."

"O father, my father, and saw you not plain
The Erl-King's pale daughter glide past thro' the rain?"—
"O yes, my loved treasure, I knew it full soon;
It was the gray willow that danced to the moon."

Erl-King.

"O, come and go with me, no longer delay,
Or else, silly child, I will drag thee away."—

"O Father! O father! now, now keep your hold,
The Erl-King has seized me—his grasp is so cold!"

Sore trembled the father; he spurr'd thro' the wild,
Clasping close to his bosom his shuddering child;
He reaches his dwelling in doubt and in dread,
But, clasp'd to his bosom, the infant was *dead*!

You see I have not altogether lost the faculty of rhyming. I assure you, there is no small impudence in attempting a version of that ballad, as it has been translated by *Lewis*.—All good things be with you.

W. S.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., ADVOCATE, EDINBURGH.

London, October 15, 1797.

Sir,—I received your letter with pleasure, instead of considering it as an intrusion. One thing more being fully stated would have made it perfectly satisfactory,—namely, the sort of income you immediately possess, and the sort of maintenance Miss Carpenter, in case of your demise, might reasonably expect. Though she is of an age to judge for herself in the choice of an object that she would like to run the race of life with, she has referred the subject to me. As her friend and guardian, I in duty must try to secure her happiness, by endeavoring to keep her comfortable immediately, and to prevent her being left destitute, in case of any unhappy contingency. Her good sense and good education are her chief fortune; therefore, in the worldly way of talking, she is not entitled to much. Her brother, who was also left under my care at an early period, is excessively fond of her; he has no person to think of but her as yet; and will certainly be enabled to make her very handsome presents, as he is doing very well in India, where I sent him some years ago, and where he bears a very high character, I am happy to say. I do not throw out this to induce you to make any proposal beyond what prudence and discretion recommend; but I hope I shall hear from you by return of post, as I may be shortly called out of town to some distance. As children are in general the consequence of an happy union, I should wish to know what may be your thoughts or wishes upon that subject. I trust you will not think me too particular; indeed I am sure you will not, when

you consider that I am endeavoring to secure the happiness and welfare of an estimable young woman whom you admire and profess to be partial and attached to, and for whom I have the highest regard, esteem, and respect.

I am, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

Downshire.

TO THE SAME.

Carlisle, October 22.

Your last letter, my dear sir, contains a very fine train of *perhaps*, and of so many pretty conjectures, that it is not flattering you to say you excel in the art of tormenting yourself. As it happens, you are quite wrong in all your suppositions. I have been waiting for Lord D.'s answer to your letter, to give a full answer to your very proper inquiries about my family. Miss Nicolson says, that when she did offer to give you some information, you refused it—and advises me *now* to wait for Lord D.'s letter. Don't believe I have been idle; I have been writing very long letters to him, and all about you. How can you think that I will give an answer about the house until I hear from London?—that is quite impossible; and I believe you are a little out of your senses to imagine I can be in Edinburgh before the twelfth of next month. O, my dear sir, no—you must not think of it this *great while*. I am much flattered by your mother's remembrance; present my respectful compliments to her. You don't mention your father in your last *anxious* letter—I hope he is better. I am expecting every day to hear from my brother. You may tell your uncle he is Commercial Resident at Salem. He will find the name of Charles C. in his India list. My compliments to Captain Scott. *Sans adieu*,

C. C.

TO THE SAME.

Carlisle, October 25.

Indeed, Mr. Scott, I am by no means pleased with all this writing. I have told you how much I dislike it, and yet you still persist in asking me to write, and that by return of post. O, you really are quite out of your senses. I

should not have indulged you in that whim of yours, had you not given me that hint that my silence gives an air of mystery. I have no reason that can detain me in acquainting you that my father and mother were French, of the name of Charpentier; he had a place under government; their residence was at Lyons, where you would find on inquiries that they lived in good repute and in *very good style*. I had the misfortune of losing my father before I could know the value of such a parent. At his death we were left to the care of Lord D., who was his very great friend; and very soon after I had the affliction of losing my mother. Our taking the name of Carpenter was on my brother's going to India, to prevent any little difficulties that might have occurred. I hope now you are pleased. Lord D. could have given you every information, as he has been acquainted with all my family. You say you almost love *him*; but until your *almost* comes to a *quite*, I cannot love *you*. Before I conclude this famous epistle, I will give you a little hint—that is, not to put so many *musts* in your letters—it is beginning *rather too soon*; and another thing is, that I take the liberty not to mind them much, but I expect you mind me. You *must* take care of yourself; you *must* think of me, and believe me yours sincerely,

C. C.

TO THE SAME.

Carlisle, October 26.

I have only a minute before the post goes, to assure you, my dear sir, of the welcome reception of the stranger. The very great likeness to a friend of mine will endear him to me; he shall be my constant companion, but I wish he could give me an answer to a thousand questions I have to make—one in particular, what reason have you for so many fears you express? Have your friends changed? Pray let me know the truth—they perhaps don't like me *being French*. Do write immediately—let it be in better spirits. Et croyez-moi toujours votre sincère

C. C.

TO THE SAME.

October 31.

... All your apprehensions about your friends make me very uneasy. At your father's age, prejudices are not easily overcome—old people have, you know, so much more wisdom and experience, that we must be guided by them. If he has an objection on my being *French*, I excuse him with all my heart, as I don't love them myself. O how all these things plague me!—when will it end? And to complete the matter, you talk of going to the West Indies. I am certain your father and uncle say you are a hot *heady* young man, quite mad, and I assure you I join with them; and I must believe, that when you have such an idea, you have then determined to think no more of me. I begin to repent of having accepted your picture. I will send it *back again*, if you ever think again about the West Indies. Your family then would *love me* very much—to forsake them for a *stranger*, a person who does not possess half the charms and good qualities that you *imagine*. I think I hear your uncle calling you a hot heady young man. I am certain of it, and I am *generally right* in my conjectures. What does your sister say about it? I suspect that she thinks on the matter as I should do, with fears and anxieties for the happiness of her brother. If it be proper, and you think it would be *acceptable*, present my best compliments to your mother; and to my old acquaintance Captain Scott I beg to be remembered. This evening is the first ball—don't you wish to be of our party? I guess your answer—it would give me infinite pleasure. En attendant le plaisir de vous revoir, je suis toujours votre constante

Charlotte.

TO THE SAME.

The Castle, Hartford, October 29, 1797.

Sir,—I received the favor of your letter. It was so manly, honorable, candid, and so full of good sense, that I think Miss Carpenter's friends cannot in any way object to the union you propose. Its taking place, when or where, will depend upon herself, as I shall write to her by this night's post. Any provision that may be given to her by her brother, you will have settled upon her and her children; and I hope, with all my heart, that every earthly happiness may attend you both. I shall be always happy to hear it, and to subscribe myself your faithful friend and obedient humble servant,

Downshire.

(ON THE SAME SHEET.)

Carlisle, November 4.

Last night I received the enclosed for you from Lord Downshire. If it has your approbation, I shall be very glad to see you as soon as will be convenient. I have a thousand things to tell you; but let me beg of you not to think for some time of a house. I am sure I can convince you of the propriety and prudence of waiting until your father will settle things more to your satisfaction, and until I have heard from my brother. You *must* be of my way of thinking.—Adieu.

C. C.

Scott obeyed this summons, and I suppose remained in Carlisle until the Court of Session met, which is always on the 12th of November.

TO W. SCOTT, ESQ., ADVOCATE, EDINBURGH.

Carlisle, November 14.

Your letter never could have come in a more favorable moment. Anything you could have said would have been well received. You surprise me much at the regret you express you had of leaving Carlisle. Indeed, I can't believe it was on my account, I was so uncommonly stupid. I don't know what could be the matter with me, I was so very low, and felt really ill: it was even a trouble to speak. The settling of our little plans—all looked so much in earnest—that I began reflecting more seriously than I generally do, or *approve of*. I don't think that very thoughtful people ever can be happy. As this is my maxim, adieu to all thoughts. I have made a determination of being pleased with everything, and with everybody in Edinburgh; a wise system for happiness, is it not? I enclose the lock. I have had almost all my hair cut off. Miss Nicolson has taken some, which she sends to London to be made to something, but this you are not to know of, as she intends to present it to you.... I am happy to hear of your father's being better pleased as to money matters; it will come at last; don't let that trifle disturb you. Adieu, Monsieur. J'ai l'honneur d'être votre très humble et très

Obéissante C. C.

Carlisle, November 27.

You have made me very *triste* all day. Pray never more complain of being poor. Are you not ten times richer than I am? Depend on yourself and your profession. I have no doubt you will rise very high, and be a *great rich man*, but we should look down to be contented with our lot, and banish all disagreeable thoughts. We shall do very well. I am very sorry to hear you have such a *bad head*. I hope I shall nurse away all your aches. I think you write too much. When I am *mistress* I shall not allow it. How very angry I should be with you if you were to part with Lenore. Do you really believe I should think it an *unnecessary expense* where your health and pleasure can be concerned? I have a better opinion of you, and I am very glad you don't give up the cavalry, as I love anything that is *stylish*. Don't forget to find a stand for the old carriage, as I shall like to keep it, in case we should have to go any journey; it is so much more convenient than the post-chaises, and will do very well till we can keep *our carriage*. What an idea of yours was that to mention where you wish to have your *bones laid*! If you were married, I should think you were tired of me. A very pretty compliment *before marriage*. I hope sincerely that I shall not live to see that day. If you always have those cheerful thoughts, how very pleasant and gay you must be.

Adieu, my dearest friend. Take care of yourself if you love me, as I have *no wish* that you should *visit* that *beautiful* and *romantic* scene, the burying-place. Adieu, once more, and believe that you are loved very sincerely by

C. C.

December 10.

If I could but really believe that my letter gave you only half the pleasure you express, I should almost think, my dearest Scott, that I should get very fond of writing merely for the pleasure to *indulge* you—that is saying a great deal. I hope you are sensible of the compliment I pay you, and don't expect I shall *always* be so pretty behaved. You may depend on me, my dearest friend, for fixing as *early* a day as I possibly can; and if it happens to be not quite so soon as you wish, you must not be angry with me. It is very unlucky you are such a bad housekeeper—as I am no better. I shall try. I hope to have very soon the pleasure of seeing you, and to tell you how

much I love you; but I wish the first fortnight was over. With all my love, and those sort of pretty things—adieu.

Charlotte

P.S.—*Étudiez votre Français*. Remember you are to teach me Italian in return, but I shall be but a stupid scholar. *Aimez Charlotte.*

Carlisle, December 14.

... I heard last night from my friends in London, and I shall certainly have the deed this week. I will send it to you directly; but not to lose so much time, as you have been reckoning, I will prevent any little delay that might happen by the post, by fixing already next Wednesday for your coming here, and on Thursday the 21st—Oh, my dear Scott, on that day I shall be yours forever.

C. C.

P.S.—Arrange it so that we shall see none of your family the night of our arrival. I shall be so tired, and such a fright, I should not be seen to advantage.

To these extracts I may add the following from the first leaf of an old black-letter Bible at Abbotsford:—

"*Secundum morem majorum hæc de familiâ Gualteri Scott, Jurisconsulti Edinensis, in librum hunc sacrum manu suâ conscripta sunt.*

"*Gualterus Scott, filius Gualteri Scott et Annæ Rutherford, natus erat apud Edinam 15mo die Augusti, A. D. 1771.*

"*Socius Facultatis Juridicæ Edinensis receptus erat 11mo die Julii, A. D. 1792.*

"*In ecclesiam Sanctæ Mariæ apud Carlisle, uxorem duxit Margaretam Charlottam Carpenter, filiam quondam Joannis Charpentier et Charlottæ Volere, Lugdunensem, 24to die Decembris, 1797.*"

Chapter XXV

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1812-1813

Towards the end of May, 1812, the Sheriff finally removed from Ashestiel to Abbotsford. The day when this occurred was a sad one for many a poor neighbor—for they lost, both in him and his wife, very generous protectors. In such a place, among the few evils which counterbalance so many good things in the condition of the peasantry, the most afflicting is the want of access to medical advice. As far as their means and skill would go, they had both done their utmost to supply this want; and Mrs. Scott, in particular, had made it so much her business to visit the sick in their scattered cottages, and bestowed on them the contents of her medicine-chest as well as of the larder and cellar, with such unwearied kindness, that her name is never mentioned there to this day without some expression of tenderness. Scott's children remember the parting scene as one of unmixed affliction—but it had had, as we shall see, its lighter features.

Among the many amiable English friends whom he owed to his frequent visits at Rokeby Park, there was, I believe, none that had a higher place in his regard than the late Anne, Lady Alvanley, the widow of the celebrated Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. He was fond of female society in general; but her ladyship was a woman after his heart; well born and highly bred, but without the slightest tinge of the frivolities of modern fashion; soundly informed, and a warm lover of literature and the arts, but holding in as great horror as himself the imbecile chatter and affected ecstasies of the bluestocking generation. Her ladyship had written to him early in May, by Miss Sarah Smith (now Mrs. Bartley), whom I have already mentioned as one of his theatrical favorites; and his answer contains, among other matters, a sketch of the "Forest Flitting."

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LADY ALVANLEY.

Ashestiel, 25th May, 1812.

I was honored, my dear Lady Alvanley, by the kind letter which you sent me with our friend Miss Smith, whose talents are, I hope, receiving at Edinburgh the full meed of honorable applause which they so highly merit. It is very much against my will that I am forced to speak of them by report alone, for this being the term of removing, I am under the necessity of being at this farm to superintend the transference of my goods and chattels, a most miscellaneous collection, to a small property, about five miles down the Tweed, which I purchased last year. The neighbors have been much delighted with the procession of my furniture, in which old swords, bows, targets, and lances, made a very conspicuous show. A family of turkeys was accommodated within the helmet of some *preux chevalier* of ancient Border fame; and the very cows, for aught I know, were bearing banners and muskets. I assure your ladyship that this caravan, attended by a dozen of ragged rosy peasant children, carrying fishing-rods and spears, and leading ponies, greyhounds, and spaniels, would, as it crossed the Tweed, have furnished no bad subject for the pencil, and really reminded me of one of the gypsy groups of Callot upon their march.

Edinburgh, 28th May.

I have got here at length, and had the pleasure to hear Miss Smith speak the Ode on the Passions charmingly last night. It was her benefit, and the house was tolerable, though not so good as she deserves, being a very good girl, as well as an excellent performer.

I have read Lord Byron with great pleasure, though pleasure is not quite the appropriate word. I should say admiration—mixed with regret, that the author should have adopted such an unamiable misanthropical tone.—The reconciliation with Holland House is extremely edifying, and may teach young authors to be in no hurry to exercise their satirical vein. I remember an honest old Presbyterian, who thought it right to speak with respect even of the devil himself, since no one knew in what corner he might one day want a friend. But Lord Byron is young, and certainly has great genius, and has both time and capacity to make amends for his errors. I wonder if he

will pardon the Edinburgh Reviewers, who have read their recantation of their former strictures.

Mrs. Scott begs to offer her kindest and most respectful compliments to your ladyship and the young ladies. I hope we shall get into Yorkshire this season to see Morritt: he and his lady are really delightful persons. Believe me, with great respect, dear Lady Alvanley, your much honored and obliged

Walter Scott.

A week later, in answer to a letter, mentioning the approach of the celebrated sale of books in which the Roxburghe Club originated, Scott says to his trusty ally, Daniel Terry:—

Edinburgh, 9th June, 1812.

My dear Terry,—I wish you joy of your success, which, although all reports state it as most highly flattering, does not exceed what I had hoped for you. I think I shall do you a sensible pleasure in requesting that you will take a walk over the fields to Hampstead one of these fine days, and deliver the enclosed to my friend Miss Baillie, with whom, I flatter myself, you will be much pleased, as she has all the simplicity of real genius. I mentioned to her some time ago that I wished to make you acquainted, so that the sooner you can call upon her, the compliment will be the more gracious. As I suppose you will sometimes look in at the Roxburghe sale, a memorandum respecting any remarkable articles will be a great favor.

Abbotsford was looking charming, when I was obliged to mount my wheel in this court, too fortunate that I have at length some share in the roast meat I am daily engaged in turning. Our flitting and removal from Ashestiel baffled all description; we had twenty-four cart-loads of the veriest trash in nature, besides dogs, pigs, ponies, poultry, cows, calves, bare-headed wenches, and bare-breeched boys. In other respects we are going on in the old way, only poor Percy is dead. I intend to have an old stone set up by his grave, with "*Cy gist li preux Percie,*" and I hope future antiquaries will debate which hero of the house of Northumberland has left his bones in Teviotdale.

Believe me yours very truly,

This was one of the busiest summers of Scott's busy life. Till the 12th of July he was at his post in the Court of Session five days every week; but every Saturday evening found him at Abbotsford, to observe the progress his laborers had made within doors and without in his absence; and on Monday night he returned to Edinburgh. Even before the Summer Session commenced, he appears to have made some advance in his Rokeby, for he writes to Mr. Morritt, from Abbotsford, on the 4th of May: "As for the house and the poem, there are twelve masons hammering at the one, and one poor noddle at the other—so they are both in progress;"—and his literary labors throughout the long vacation were continued under the same sort of disadvantage. That autumn he had, in fact, no room at all for himself. The only parlor which had been hammered into anything like habitable condition served at once for dining-room, drawing-room, school-room, and study. A window looking to the river was kept sacred to his desk; an old bed-curtain was nailed up across the room close behind his chair, and there, whenever the spade, the dibble, or the chisel (for he took his full share in all the work on hand) was laid aside, he pursued his poetical tasks, apparently undisturbed and unannoyed by the surrounding confusion of masons and carpenters, to say nothing of the lady's small talk, the children's babble among themselves, or their repetition of their lessons. The truth no doubt was, that when at his desk he did little more, as far as regarded *poetry*, than write down the lines which he had fashioned in his mind while pursuing his vocation as a planter, upon that bank which received originally, by way of joke, the title of *the thicket*. "I am now," he says to Ellis (October 17), "adorning a patch of naked land with trees *facturis nepotibus umbram*, for I shall never live to enjoy their shade myself otherwise than in the recumbent posture of Tityrus or Menalcas." But he did live to see *the thicket* deserve not only that name, but a nobler one; and to fell with his own hand many a well-grown tree that he had planted there.

Another plantation of the same date, by his eastern boundary, was less successful. For this he had asked and received from his early friend, the Marchioness of Stafford, a supply of acorns from Trentham, and it was named in consequence *Sutherland bower*; but the field-mice, in the course of the ensuing winter, contrived to root up and devour the whole of her ladyship's goodly benefaction. A third space had been set apart, and duly

enclosed, for the reception of some Spanish chestnuts offered to him by an admirer established in merchandise at Seville; but that gentleman had not been a very knowing ally as to such matters, for when the chestnuts arrived, it turned out that they had been boiled.

Scott writes thus to Terry, in September, while the Roxburghe sale was still going on:—

I have lacked your assistance, my dear Sir, for twenty whimsicalities this autumn. Abbotsford, as you will readily conceive, has considerably changed its face since the auspices of Mother Retford were exchanged for ours. We have got up a good garden wall, complete stables in the haugh, according to Stark's plan, and the old farmyard being enclosed with a wall, with some little picturesque additions in front, has much relieved the stupendous height of the Doctor's barn. The new plantations have thriven amazingly well, the acorns are coming up fast, and Tom Purdie is the happiest and most consequential person in the world. My present work is building up the well with some debris from the Abbey. Oh, for your assistance, for I am afraid we shall make but a botched job of it, especially as our materials are of a very miscellaneous complexion. The worst of all is, that while my trees grow and my fountain fills, my purse, in an inverse ratio, sinks to zero. This last circumstance will, I fear, make me a very poor guest at the literary entertainment your researches hold out for me. I should, however, like much to have the Treatise on Dreams, by the author of the New Jerusalem, which, as John Cuthbertson the smith said of the minister's sermon, must be neat work. The Loyal Poems, by N. T., are probably by poor Nahum Tate, who associated with Brady in versifying the Psalms, and more honorably with Dryden in the second part of Absalom and Achitophel. I never saw them, however, but would give a guinea or thirty shillings for the collection. Our friend John Ballantyne has, I learn, made a sudden sally to London, and doubtless you will crush a quart with him or a pottle pot; he will satisfy your bookseller for The Dreamer, or any other little purchase you may recommend for me. You have pleased Miss Baillie very much both in public and in society, and though not fastidious, she is not, I think, particularly lavish of applause either way. A most valuable person is she, and as warm-hearted as she is brilliant.—Mrs. Scott and all our little folks are well. I am relieved of the labor of hearing Walter's lesson by a gallant son of the church, who, with one leg of wood and another of oak, walks to and fro

from Melrose every day for that purpose. Pray stick to the dramatic work, and never suppose either that you can be intrusive, or that I can be uninterested in whatever concerns you.

Yours,

W. S.

The tutor alluded to at the close of this letter was Mr. George Thomson, son of the minister of Melrose, who, when the house afforded better accommodation, was and continued for many years to be domesticated at Abbotsford. Scott had always a particular tenderness towards persons afflicted with any bodily misfortune; and Thomson, whose leg had been amputated in consequence of a rough casualty of his boyhood, had a special share in his favor from the high spirit with which he refused at the time to betray the name of the companion that had occasioned his mishap, and continued ever afterwards to struggle against its disadvantages. Tall, vigorous, athletic, a dauntless horseman, and expert at the singlestick, George formed a valuable as well as picturesque addition to the *tail* of the new laird, who often said, "In the Dominie, like myself, accident has spoiled a capital lifeguardsman." His many oddities and eccentricities in no degree interfered with the respect due to his amiable feelings, upright principles, and sound learning; nor did *Dominie Thomson* at all quarrel in after-times with the universal credence of the neighborhood that he had furnished many features for the inimitable personage whose designation so nearly resembled his own; and if he has not yet "wagged his head" in a "pulpit o' his ain," he well knows it has not been so for want of earnest and long-continued intercession on the part of the author of Guy Mannering.

For many years Scott had accustomed himself to proceed in the composition of poetry along with that of prose essays of various descriptions; but it is a remarkable fact that he chose this period of perpetual noise and bustle, when he had not even a summer-house to himself, for the new experiment of carrying on two poems at the same time —and this, too, without suspending the heavy labor of his edition of Swift, to say nothing of the various lesser matters in which the Ballantynes were, from day to day, calling for the assistance of his judgment and his pen. In the same letter in which William Erskine acknowledges the receipt of the first four pages of Rokeby, he adverts also to The Bridal of Triermain as

being already in rapid progress. The fragments of this second poem, inserted in the Register of the preceding year, had attracted considerable notice; the secret of their authorship had been well kept; and by some means, even in the shrewdest circles of Edinburgh, the belief had become prevalent that they proceeded not from Scott, but from Erskine. Scott had no sooner completed his bargain as to the copyright of the unwritten Rokeby, than he resolved to pause from time to time in its composition, and weave those fragments into a shorter and lighter romance, executed in a different metre, and to be published anonymously, in a small pocket volume, as nearly as possible on the same day with the avowed quarto. He expected great amusement from the comparisons which the critics would no doubt indulge themselves in drawing between himself and this humble candidate; and Erskine good-humoredly entered into the scheme, undertaking to do nothing which should effectually suppress the notion of his having set himself up as a modest rival to his friend. Nay, he suggested a further refinement, which in the sequel had no small share in the success of this little plot upon the sagacity of the reviewers. Having said that he much admired the opening of the first canto of Rokeby, Erskine adds, "I shall request your *accoucheur* to send me your *little Dugald* too as he gradually makes his progress. What I have seen is delightful. You are aware how difficult it is to form any opinion of a work, the general plan of which is unknown, transmitted merely in legs and wings as they are formed and feathered. Any remarks must be of the most minute and superficial kind, confined chiefly to the language, and other such subordinate matters. I shall be very much amused if the secret is kept and the knowing ones taken in. To prevent any discovery from your prose, what think you of putting down your ideas of what the preface ought to contain, and allowing me to write it over? And perhaps a quizzing review might be concocted."

This last hint was welcome; and among other parts of the preface to Triermain which threw out "the knowing ones," certain Greek quotations interspersed in it are now accounted for. Scott, on his part, appears to have studiously interwoven into the piece allusions to personal feelings and experiences more akin to his friend's history and character than to his own; and he did so still more largely, when repeating this experiment, in the introductory parts of Harold the Dauntless.

The same post which conveyed William Erskine's letter, above quoted, brought him an equally wise and kind one from Mr. Morritt, in answer to a

fresh application for some minute details about the scenery and local traditions of the Valley of the Tees. Scott had promised to spend part of this autumn at Rokeby Park himself; but now, busied as he was with his planting operations at home, and continually urged by Ballantyne to have the poem ready for publication by Christmas, he would willingly have trusted his friend's knowledge in place of his own observation and research. Mr. Morritt gave him in reply various particulars, which I need not here repeat, but added,—

I am really sorry, my dear Scott, at your abandonment of your kind intention of visiting Rokeby, and my sorrow is not quite selfish, for seriously, I wish you could have come, if but for a few days, in order, on the spot, to settle accurately in your mind the localities of the new poem, and all their petty circumstances, of which there are many that would give interest and ornament to your descriptions. I am too much flattered by your proposal of inscribing the poem to me, not to accept it with gratitude and pleasure. I shall always feel your friendship as an honor—we all wish our honors to be permanent—and yours promises mine at least a fair chance of immortality. I hope, however, you will not be obliged to write in a hurry on account of the impatience of your booksellers. They are, I think, ill advised in their proceeding, for surely the book will be the more likely to succeed from not being forced prematurely into this critical world. Do not be persuaded to risk your established fame on this hazardous experiment. If you want a few hundreds independent of these booksellers, your credit is so very good, now that you have got rid of your Old Man of the Sea, that it is no great merit to trust you, and I happen at this moment to have five or six for which I have no sort of demand—so rather than be obliged to spur Pegasus beyond the power of pulling him up when he is going too fast, do consult your own judgment and set the midwives of the trade at defiance. Don't be scrupulous to the disadvantage of your muse, and above all be not offended at me for a proposition which is meant in the true spirit of friendship. I am more than ever anxious for your success—The Lady of the Lake more than succeeded—I think Don Roderick is less popular—I want this work to be another Lady at the least. Surely it would be worth your while for such an object to spend a week of your time, and a portion of your Old Man's salary, in a mail-coach flight hither, were it merely to renew your

acquaintance with the country, and to rectify the little misconceptions of a cursory view. Ever affectionately yours,

J. B. S. M.

This appeal was not to be resisted. Scott, I believe, accepted Mr. Morritt's friendly offer so far as to ask his assistance in having some of Ballantyne's bills discounted; and he proceeded the week after to Rokeby, by the way of Flodden and Hexham, travelling on horseback, his eldest boy and girl on their ponies, while Mrs. Scott followed them in the carriage. Two little incidents that diversified this ride through Northumberland have found their way into print already; but, as he was fond of telling them both down to the end of his days, I must give them a place here also. Halting at Flodden to expound the field of battle to his young folks, he found that Marmion had, as might have been expected, benefited the keeper of the public house there very largely; and the village Boniface, overflowing with gratitude, expressed his anxiety to have a *Scott's Head* for his sign-post. The poet demurred to this proposal, and assured mine host that nothing could be more appropriate than the portraiture of a foaming tankard, which already surmounted his doorway. "Why, the painter-man has not made an ill job," said the landlord, "but I would fain have something more connected with the book that has brought me so much good custom." He produced a well-thumbed copy, and handing it to the author, begged he would at least suggest a motto from the tale of Flodden Field. Scott opened the book at the death scene of the hero, and his eye was immediately caught by the "inscription" in black-letter,—

> "Drink, weary pilgrim, drink, and pray
> For the kind soul of Sibyl Grey," etc.

"Well, my friend," said he, "what more would you have? You need but strike out one letter in the first of these lines, and make your painter-man, the next time he comes this way, print between the jolly tankard and your own name,—

> "Drink, weary pilgrim, drink and PAY."

Scott was delighted to find, on his return, that this suggestion had been adopted, and, for aught I know, the romantic legend may still be visible.

The other story I shall give in the words of Mr. Gillies:—

> "It happened at a small country town that Scott suddenly required medical advice for one of his servants, and, on inquiring if there was any doctor at the place, was told that there were two,—one long established, and the other a newcomer. The latter gentleman, being luckily found at home, soon made his appearance;—a grave, sagacious-looking personage, attired in black, with a shovel hat, in whom, to his utter astonishment, Sir Walter recognized a Scotch blacksmith, who had formerly practised, with tolerable success, as a veterinary operator in the neighborhood of Ashestiel.—'How, in all the world,' exclaimed he, 'can it be possible that this is John Lundie?'—'In troth is it, your honor—just *a' that's for him*.'—'Well, but let us hear; you were a *horse*-doctor before; now, it seems, you are a *man*-doctor; how do you get on?'—'Ou, just extraordinar weel; for your honor maun ken my practice is vera sure and orthodox. I depend entirely upon twa *simples*.'—'And what may their names be? Perhaps it is a secret?'—'I'll tell your honor,' in a low tone; 'my twa simples are just *laudamy* and *calamy*!'—'Simples with a vengeance!' replied Scott. 'But, John, do you never happen to *kill* any of your patients?'—'Kill? Ou ay, may be sae! Whiles they die, and whiles no;—but it's the will o' Providence. *Ony how, your honor, it wad be lang before it makes up for Flodden!*'"

It was also in the course of this expedition that Scott first made acquaintance with the late excellent and venerable Shute Barrington, Bishop of Durham. The travellers having reached Auckland over night were seeing the public rooms of the Castle at an early hour next morning, when the Bishop happened, in passing through one of them, to catch a glimpse of Scott's person, and immediately recognizing him, from the likeness of the engravings by this time multiplied, introduced himself to the party, and insisted upon acting as cicerone. After showing them the picture-gallery and so forth, his Lordship invited them to join the morning service of the chapel, and when that was over, insisted on their remaining to breakfast. But Scott and his Lordship were by this time so much pleased with each other that they could not part so easily. The good Bishop ordered his horse,

nor did Scott observe without admiration the proud curvetting of the animal on which his Lordship proposed to accompany him during the next stage of his progress. "Why, yes, Mr. Scott," said the gentle but high-spirited old man, "I still like to feel my horse under me." He was then in his seventy-ninth year, and survived to the age of ninety-two, the model in all things of a real prince of the Church. They parted after a ride of ten miles, with mutual regret; and on all subsequent rides in that direction, Bishop-Auckland was one of the poet's regular halting-places.

At Rokeby, on this occasion, Scott remained about a week; and I transcribe the following brief account of his proceedings while there from Mr. Morritt's *Memorandum*:—

> "I had, of course," he says, "had many previous opportunities of testing the almost conscientious fidelity of his local descriptions; but I could not help being singularly struck with the lights which this visit threw on that characteristic of his compositions. The morning after he arrived he said, 'You have often given me materials for romance—now I want a good robber's cave, and an old church of the right sort.' We rode out, and he found what he wanted in the ancient slate quarries of Brignall and the ruined Abbey of Egglestone. I observed him noting down even the peculiar little wild flowers and herbs that accidentally grew round and on the side of a bold crag near his intended cave of Guy Denzil; and could not help saying, that as he was not to be upon oath in his work, daisies, violets, and primroses would be as poetical as any of the humble plants he was examining. I laughed, in short, at his scrupulousness; but I understood him when he replied, 'that in nature herself no two scenes were exactly alike, and that whoever copied truly what was before his eyes would possess the same variety in his descriptions, and exhibit apparently an imagination as boundless as the range of nature in the scenes he recorded; whereas, whoever trusted to imagination would soon find his own mind circumscribed, and contracted to a few favorite images, and the repetition of these would sooner or later produce that very monotony and barrenness which had always haunted descriptive poetry in the hands of any but the patient

> worshippers of truth. Besides which,' he said, 'local names and peculiarities make a fictitious story look so much better in the face.' In fact, from his boyish habits, he was but half satisfied with the most beautiful scenery when he could not connect with it some local legend, and when I was forced sometimes to confess with the Knife-grinder, 'Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, sir,'—he would laugh and say, 'Then let us make one—nothing so easy as to make a tradition.'"

Mr. Morritt adds, that he had brought with him about half The Bridal of Triermain—told him that he meant to bring it out the same week with Rokeby—and promised himself particular satisfaction in *laying a trap for Jeffrey*; who, however, as we shall see, escaped the snare.

Some of the following letters will show with what rapidity, after having refreshed and stored his memory with the localities of Rokeby, he proceeded in the composition of the romance:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ.

Abbotsford, 12th October, 1812.

My dear Morritt,—I have this morning returned from Dalkeith House, to which I was whisked amid the fury of an election tempest, and I found your letter on my table. More on such a subject cannot be said among friends who give each other credit for feeling as they ought.

We peregrinated over Stanmore, and visited the Castles of Bowes, Brough, Appleby, and Brougham with great interest. Lest our spirit of chivalry thus excited should lack employment, we found ourselves, that is, *I* did, at Carlisle, engaged in the service of two distressed ladies, being no other than our friends Lady Douglas and Lady Louisa Stuart, who overtook us there, and who would have had great trouble in finding quarters, the election being in full vigor, if we had not anticipated their puzzle, and secured a private house capable of holding us all. Some distress occurred, I believe, among the waiting damsels, whose case I had not so carefully considered, for I heard a sentimental exclamation—"Am I to sleep with the greyhounds?" which I conceived to proceed from Lady Douglas's *suivante*, from the exquisite sensibility of tone with which it was uttered, especially as I beheld the fair one descend from the carriage with three half-bound

volumes of a novel in her hand. Not having it in my power to alleviate her woes, by offering her either a part or the whole of my own couch. —"*Transeat*," quoth I, "*cum cæteris erroribus*."

I am delighted with your Cumberland admirer, and give him credit for his visit to the vindicator of Homer; but you missed one of another description, who passed Rokeby with great regret, I mean General John Malcolm, the Persian envoy, the Delhi resident, the poet, the warrior, the polite man, and the Borderer. He is really a fine fellow. I met him at Dalkeith, and we returned together;—he has just left me, after drinking his coffee. A fine time we had of it, talking of Troy town, and Babel, and Persepolis, and Delhi, and Langholm, and Burnfoot; with all manner of episodes about Iskendiar, Rustan, and Johnny Armstrong. Do you know, that poem of Ferdusi's must be beautiful. He read me some very splendid extracts which he had himself translated. Should you meet him in London, I have given him charge to be acquainted with you, for I am sure you will like each other. To be sure, I know him little, but I like his frankness and his sound ideas of morality and policy; and I have observed, that when I have had no great liking to persons at the beginning, it has usually pleased Heaven, as Slender says, to decrease it on further acquaintance. Adieu, I must mount my horse. Our last journey was so delightful that we have every temptation to repeat it. Pray give our kind love to the lady, and believe me ever yours,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, 29th November, 1812.

My dear Morritt,—I have been, and still am, working very hard, in hopes to face the public by Christmas, and I think I have hitherto succeeded in throwing some interest into the piece. It is, however, a darker and more gloomy interest than I intended; but involving one's self with bad company, whether in fiction or in reality, is the way not to get out of it easily; so I have been obliged to bestow more pains and trouble upon Bertram, and one or two blackguards whom he picks up in the slate quarries, than what I originally designed. I am very desirous to have your opinion of the three first Cantos, for which purpose, so soon as I can get them collected, I will send the sheets under cover to Mr. Freeling, whose omnipotent frank will

transmit them to Rokeby, where, I presume, you have been long since comfortably settled—

"So York may overlook the town of York."

I trust you will read it with some partiality, because, if I have not been so successful as I could wish in describing your lovely and romantic glens, it has partly arisen from my great anxiety to do it well, which is often attended with the very contrary effect. There are two or three songs, and particularly one in praise of Brignall Banks, which I trust you will like—because, *entre nous*, I like them myself. One of them is a little dashing banditti song, called and entitled Allen-a-Dale. I think you will be able to judge for yourself in about a week. Pray, how shall I send you the *entire goose*, which will be too heavy to travel the same way with its *giblets*—for the Carlisle coach is terribly inaccurate about parcels? I fear I have made one blunder in mentioning the brooks which flow into the Tees. I have made the Balder distinct from that which comes down Thorsgill—I hope I am not mistaken. You will see the passage; and if they are the same rivulet, the leaf must be cancelled.

I trust this will find Mrs. Morritt pretty well; and I am glad to find she has been better for her little tour. We were delighted with ours, except in respect of its short duration, and Sophia and Walter hold their heads very high among their untravelled companions, from the predominance acquired by their visit to England. You are not perhaps aware of the polish which is supposed to be acquired by the most transitory intercourse with your more refined side of the Tweed. There was an honest carter who once applied to me respecting a plan which he had formed of breeding his son, a great booby of twenty, to the Church. As the best way of evading the scrape, I asked him whether he thought his son's language was quite adapted for the use of a public speaker?—to which he answered, with great readiness, that he could knap English with any one, having twice driven his father's cart to Etal coal-hill.

I have called my heroine Matilda. I don't much like Agnes, though I can't tell why, unless it is because it begins like Agag. Matilda is a name of unmanageable length; but, after all, is better than none, and my poor damsel was likely to go without one in my indecision.

We are all hungering and thirsting for news from Russia. If Boney's devil does not help him, he is in a poor way. The Leith letters talk of the unanimity of the Russians as being most exemplary; and troops pour in from all quarters of their immense empire. Their commissariat is well managed under the Prince Duke of Oldenburgh. This was their weak point in former wars.

Adieu! Mrs. Scott and the little people send love to Mrs. Morritt and you. Ever yours,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, Thursday, 10th December, 1812.

My dear Morritt,—I have just time to say that I have received your letters, and am delighted that Rokeby pleases the owner. As I hope the whole will be printed off before Christmas, it will scarce be worth while to send you the other sheets till it reaches you altogether. Your criticisms are the best proof of your kind attention to the poem. I need not say I will pay them every attention in the next edition. But some of the faults are so interwoven with the story, that they must stand. Denzil, for instance, is essential to me, though, as you say, not very interesting; and I assure you that, generally speaking, the *poeta loquitur* has a bad effect in narrative; and when you have twenty things to tell, it is better to be slatternly than tedious. The fact is, that the tediousness of many really good poems arises from an attempt to support the same tone throughout, which often occasions periphrasis, and always stiffness. I am quite sensible that I have often carried the opposite custom too far; but I am apt to impute it partly to not being able to bring out my own ideas well, and partly to haste—not to error in the system. This would, however, lead to a long discussion, more fit for the fireside than for a letter. I need not say that, the poem being in fact your own, you are at perfect liberty to dispose of the sheets as you please. I am glad my geography is pretty correct. It is too late to inquire if Rokeby is insured, for I have burned it down in Canto V.; but I suspect you will bear me no greater grudge than at the noble Russian who burned Moscow. Glorious news to-day from the North—*pereat iste*! Mrs. Scott, Sophia, and Walter, join in

best compliments to Mrs. Morritt; and I am, in great haste, ever faithfully yours,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—I have heard of Lady Hood by a letter from herself. She is well, and in high spirits, and sends me a pretty topaz seal, with a talisman which secures this letter, and signifies (it seems), which one would scarce have expected from its appearance, my name.

We are now close upon the end of this busy twelvemonth; but I must not turn the leaf to 1813, without noticing one of its miscellaneous incidents—his first intercourse by letter with the poet Crabbe. Mr. Hatchard, the publisher of his Tales, forwarded a copy of the book to Scott as soon as it was ready; and, the bookseller having communicated to his author some flattering expressions in Scott's letter of acknowledgment, Mr. Crabbe addressed him as follows:—

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., EDINBURGH.

Muston, Grantham, 13th October, 1812.

Sir,—Mr. Hatchard, judging rightly of the satisfaction it would afford me, has been so obliging as to communicate your two letters, in one of which you desire my Tales to be sent; in the other, you acknowledge the receipt of them; and in both you mention my verses in such terms, that it would be affected in me were I to deny, and I think unjust if I were to conceal, the pleasure you give me. I am indeed highly gratified.

I have long entertained a hearty wish to be made known to a poet whose works are so greatly and so universally admired; and I continued to hope that I might at some time find a common friend, by whose intervention I might obtain that honor; but I am confined by duties near my home, and by sickness in it. It may be long before I be in town, and then no such opportunity might offer. Excuse me, then, sir, if I gladly seize this which now occurs to express my thanks for the politeness of your expressions, as well as my desire of being known to a gentleman who has delighted and affected me, and moved all the passions and feelings in turn, I believe—Envy surely excepted—certainly, if I know myself, but in a moderate degree. I truly rejoice in your success; and while I am entertaining, in my way, a certain set of readers, for the most part, probably, of peculiar turn and habit, I can with pleasure see the effect you produce on all. Mr. Hatchard tells me that he hopes or expects that thousands will read my Tales, and I am convinced that your publisher might, in like manner, so speak of your ten thousands; but this, though it calls to mind the passage, is no true comparison with the related prowess of David and Saul, because I have no evil spirit to arise and trouble me on the occasion; though, if I had, I know no David whose skill is so likely to allay it. Once more, sir, accept my best thanks, with my hearty wishes for your health and happiness, who am, with great esteem, and true respect,

Dear Sir, your obedient servant,

George Crabbe.

I cannot produce Scott's reply to this communication. Mr. Crabbe appears to have, in the course of the year, sent him a copy of all his works, "ex dono

auctoris," and there passed between them several letters, one or two of which I must quote.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., EDINBURGH.

Know you, sir, a gentleman in Edinburgh, A. Brunton (the Rev.), who dates St. John Street, and who asks my assistance in furnishing hymns which have relation to the Old or New Testament—anything which might suit the purpose of those who are cooking up a book of Scotch Psalmody? Who is Mr. Brunton? What is his situation? If I could help one who needed help, I would do it cheerfully—but have no great opinion of this undertaking....

With every good wish, yours sincerely,

George Crabbe.

Scott's answer to this letter expresses the opinions he always held in conversation on the important subject to which it refers; and acting upon which, he himself at various times declined taking any part in the business advocated by Dr. Brunton:—

TO THE REV. GEORGE CRABBE, MUSTON, GRANTHAM.

My dear Sir,—I was favored with your kind letter some time ago. Of all people in the world, I am least entitled to demand regularity of correspondence; for being, one way and another, doomed to a great deal more writing than suits my indolence, I am sometimes tempted to envy the reverend hermit of Prague, confessor to the niece of Queen Gorboduc, who never saw either pen or ink. Mr. Brunton is a very respectable clergyman of Edinburgh, and I believe the work in which he has solicited your assistance is one adopted by the General Assembly, or Convocation of the Kirk. I have no notion that he has any individual interest in it; he is a well-educated and liberal-minded man, and generally esteemed. I have no particular acquaintance with him myself, though we speak together. He is at this very moment sitting on the outside of the bar of our Supreme Court, within which I am fagging as a clerk; but as he is hearing the opinion of the Judges upon an action for augmentation of stipend to him and to his brethren, it would not, I conceive, be a very favorable time to canvass a literary topic. But you are quite safe with him; and having so much command of scriptural language, which appears to me essential to the devotional poetry of

Christians, I am sure you can assist his purpose much more than any man alive.

I think those hymns which do not immediately recall the warm and exalted language of the Bible are apt to be, however elegant, rather cold and flat for the purposes of devotion. You will readily believe that I do not approve of the vague and indiscriminate Scripture language which the fanatics of old and the modern Methodists have adopted, but merely that solemnity and peculiarity of diction, which at once puts the reader and hearer upon his guard as to the purpose of the poetry. To my Gothic ear, indeed, the *Stabat Mater*, the *Dies Iræ*, and some of the other hymns of the Catholic Church, are more solemn and affecting than the fine classical poetry of Buchanan; the one has the gloomy dignity of a Gothic church, and reminds us instantly of the worship to which it is dedicated; the other is more like a Pagan temple, recalling to our memory the classical and fabulous deities. This is, probably, all referable to the association of ideas—that is, if the "association of ideas" continues to be the universal pick-lock of all metaphysical difficulties, as it was when I studied moral philosophy—or to any other more fashionable universal solvent which may have succeeded to it in reputation. Adieu, my dear sir,—I hope you and your family will long enjoy all happiness and prosperity. Never be discouraged from the constant use of your charming talent. The opinions of reviewers are really too contradictory to found anything upon them, whether they are favorable or otherwise; for it is usually their principal object to display the abilities of the writers of the critical lucubrations themselves. Your Tales are universally admired here. I go but little out, but the few judges whose opinions I have been accustomed to look up to, are unanimous. Ever yours, most truly,

Walter Scott.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., EDINBURGH.

My dear Sir,—Law, then, is your profession—I mean a profession you give your mind and time to—but how "fag as a *clerk*"? Clerk is a name for a learned person, I know, in our Church; but how the same hand which held the pen of Marmion holds that with which a clerk fags, unless a clerk means something vastly more than I understand, is not to be comprehended. I wait for elucidation. Know you, dear sir, I have often thought I should love to

read *reports*—that is, brief histories of extraordinary cases, with the judgments. If that is what is meant by *reports*, such reading must be pleasant; but, probably, I entertain wrong ideas, and could not understand the books I think so engaging. Yet I conclude there are *histories of cases*, and have often thought of consulting Hatchard whether he knew of such kind of reading, but hitherto I have rested in ignorance.... Yours truly,

George Crabbe.

TO THE REV. GEORGE CRABBE.

My dear Sir,—I have too long delayed to thank you for the most kind and acceptable present of your three volumes. Now am I doubly armed, since I have a set for my cabin at Abbotsford as well as in town; and, to say truth, the auxiliary copy arrived in good time, for my original one suffers as much by its general popularity among my young people, as a popular candidate from the hugs and embraces of his democratical admirers. The clearness and accuracy of your painting, whether natural or moral, renders, I have often remarked, your works generally delightful to those whose youth might render them insensible to the other beauties with which they abound. There are a sort of pictures—surely the most valuable, were it but for that reason—which strike the uninitiated as much as they do the connoisseur, though the last alone can render reason for his admiration. Indeed our old friend Horace knew what he was saying when he chose to address his ode, "*Virginibus puerisque*," and so did Pope when he told somebody he had the mob on the side of his version of Homer, and did not mind the high-flying critics at Button's. After all, if a faultless poem could be produced, I am satisfied it would tire the critics themselves, and annoy the whole reading world with the spleen.

You must be delightfully situated in the Vale of Belvoir—a part of England for which I entertain a special kindness, for the sake of the gallant hero, Robin Hood, who, as probably you will readily guess, is no small favorite of mine; his indistinct ideas concerning the doctrine of *meum* and *tuum* being no great objection to an outriding Borderer. I am happy to think that your station is under the protection of the Rutland family, of whom fame speaks highly. Our lord of the "cairn and the scaur," waste wilderness and hungry hills, for many a league around, is the Duke of Buccleuch, the head

of my clan; a kind and benevolent landlord, a warm and zealous friend, and the husband of a lady—*comme il y en a peu*. They are both great admirers of Mr. Crabbe's poetry, and would be happy to know him, should he ever come to Scotland, and venture into the Gothic halls of a Border chief. The early and uniform kindness of this family, with the friendship of the late and present Lord Melville, enabled me, some years ago, to exchange my toils as a barrister, for the lucrative and respectable situation of one of the Clerks of our Supreme Court, which only requires a certain routine of official duty, neither laborious nor calling for any exertion of the mind; so that my time is entirely at my own command, except when I am attending the Court, which seldom occupies more than two hours of the morning during sitting. I besides hold *in commendam* the Sheriffdom of Ettrick Forest, which is now no forest; so that I am a pluralist as to law appointments, and have, as Dogberry says, "two gowns, and everything handsome about me."

I have often thought it is the most fortunate thing for bards like you and me to have an established profession, and professional character, to render us independent of those worthy gentlemen, the retailers, or, as some have called them, the midwives of literature, who are so much taken up with the abortions they bring into the world, that they are scarcely able to bestow the proper care upon young and flourishing babes like ours. That, however, is only a mercantile way of looking at the matter; but did any of my sons show poetical talent, of which, to my great satisfaction, there are no appearances, the first thing I should do would be to inculcate upon him the duty of cultivating some honorable profession, and qualifying himself to play a more respectable part in society than the mere poet. And as the best corollary of my doctrine, I would make him get your tale of The Patron by heart from beginning to end. It is curious enough that you should have republished The Village for the purpose of sending your young men to college, and I should have written The Lay of the Last Minstrel for the purpose of buying a new horse for the Volunteer Cavalry. I must now send this scrawl into town to get a frank, for, God knows, it is not worthy of postage. With the warmest wishes for your health, prosperity, and increase of fame—though it needs not—I remain most sincerely and affectionately yours,

Walter Scott.

The contrast of the two poets' epistolary styles is highly amusing; but I have introduced these specimens less on that account, than as marking the cordial confidence which a very little intercourse was sufficient to establish between men so different from each other in most of the habits of life. It will always be considered as one of the most pleasing peculiarities in Scott's history, that he was the friend of every great contemporary poet: Crabbe, as we shall see more largely in the sequel, was no exception to the rule: yet I could hardly name one of them who, manly principles and the cultivation of literature apart, had many points of resemblance to him; and surely not one who had fewer than Crabbe.

Scott continued, this year, his care for the Edinburgh Annual Register—the historical department of which was again supplied by Mr. Southey. The poetical miscellany owed its opening piece, the Ballad of Polydore, to the readiness with which Scott entered into correspondence with its author, who sent it to him anonymously, with a letter which, like the verses, might well have excited much interest in his mind, even had it not concluded with stating the writer's age to be *fifteen*. Scott invited the youth to visit him in the country, was greatly pleased with the modesty of his manners and the originality of his conversation, and wrote to Joanna Baillie, that, "though not one of the crimps for the muses," he thought he could hardly be mistaken in believing that in the boyish author of Polydore he had discovered a true genius. When I mention the name of my friend William Howison of Clydegrove, it will be allowed that he prognosticated wisely. He continued to correspond with this young gentleman and his father, and gave both much advice, for which both were most grateful. There was inserted in the same volume a set of beautiful stanzas, inscribed to Scott by Mr. Wilson, under the title of The Magic Mirror, in which that enthusiastic young poet also bears a lofty and lasting testimony to the gentle kindness with which his earlier efforts had been encouraged by him whom he designates, for the first time, by what afterwards became one of his standing titles, that of The Great Magician.

"Onwards a figure came, with stately brow,
And, as he glanced upon the ruin'd pile
A look of regal pride, 'Say, who art thou'
(His countenance bright'ning with a scornful smile,

He sternly cried), 'whose footsteps rash profane
The wild romantic realm where I have willed to reign?'

"But ere to these proud words I could reply,
How changed that scornful face to soft and mild!
A witching frenzy glitter'd in his eye,
Harmless, withal, as that of playful child.
And when once more the gracious vision spoke,
I felt the voice familiar to mine ear;
While many a faded dream of earth awoke,
Connected strangely with that unknown seer,
Who now stretch'd forth his arm, and on the sand
A circle round me traced, as with magician's wand," etc.

Scott's own chief contribution to this volume was a brief account of the Life and Poems (hitherto unpublished) of Patrick Carey, whom he pronounces to have been not only as stout a Cavalier, but almost as good a poet as his contemporary Lovelace. That Essay was expanded, and prefixed to an edition of Carey's Trivial Poems and Triolets, which Scott published in 1820; but its circulation in either shape has been limited: and I believe I shall be gratifying the majority of my readers by here transcribing some paragraphs of his beautiful and highly characteristic introduction of this forgotten poet of the seventeenth century.

"The present age has been so distinguished for research into poetical antiquities, that the discovery of an unknown bard is, in certain chosen literary circles, held as curious as an augmentation of the number of fixed stars would be esteemed by astronomers. It is true, these 'blessed twinklers of the night' are so far removed from us, that they afford no more light than serves barely to evince their existence to the curious investigator; and in like manner the pleasure derived from the revival of an obscure poet is rather in proportion to the rarity of his volume than to its merit; yet this pleasure is not inconsistent with reason and principle. We know by every day's experience the peculiar interest which the lapse of ages confers upon works of human art. The clumsy strength of the ancient castles, which, when raw from the hand of the builder, inferred only the oppressive power of the barons who reared them, is now broken by partial ruin into proper

subjects for the poet or the painter; and as Mason has beautifully described the change,

> 'Time
> Has mouldered into beauty many a tower,
> Which, when it frowned with all its battlements,
> Was only terrible.'

"The monastery, too, which was at first but a fantastic monument of the superstitious devotion of monarchs, or of the purple pride of fattened abbots, has gained by the silent influence of antiquity the power of impressing awe and devotion. Even the stains and weather-taints upon the battlements of such buildings add, like the scars of a veteran, to the affecting impression:—

> 'For time has softened what was harsh when new,
> And now the stains are all of sober hue;
> The living stains which nature's hand alone,
> Profuse of life, pours forth upon the stone.'—*Crabbe.*

"If such is the effect of Time in adding interest to the labors of the architect, if partial destruction is compensated by the additional interest of that which remains, can we deny his exerting a similar influence upon those subjects which are sought after by the bibliographer and poetical antiquary? The obscure poet, who is detected by their keen research, may indeed have possessed but a slender portion of that spirit which has buoyed up the works of distinguished contemporaries during the course of centuries, yet still his verses shall, in the lapse of time, acquire an interest, which they did not possess in the eyes of his own generation. The wrath of the critic, like that of the son of Ossian, flies from the foe that is low. Envy, base as she is, has one property of the lion, and cannot prey on carcases; she must drink the blood of a sentient victim, and tear the limbs that are yet warm with vital life. Faction, if the ancient has suffered her persecution, serves only to endear him to the recollection of posterity, whose generous compassion overpays him for the injuries he sustained while in life. And thus freed from the operation of all unfavorable prepossessions, his merit, if he can boast any, has more than fair credit with his readers. This, however, is but part of his advantages. The mere attribute of antiquity is of itself sufficient to

interest the fancy by the lively and powerful train of associations which it awakens. Had the pyramids of Egypt, equally disagreeable in form and senseless as to utility, been the work of any living tyrant, with what feelings, save those of scorn and derision, could we have regarded such a waste of labor? But the sight, nay, the very mention of these wonderful monuments, is associated with the dark and sublime ideas which vary their tinge according to the favorite hue of our studies. The Christian divine recollects the land of banishment and of refuge; to the eyes of the historian's fancy, they excite the shades of Pharaohs and of Ptolemies, of Cheops and Merops, and Sesostris drawn in triumph by his sceptred slaves; the philosopher beholds the first rays of moral truth as they dawned on the hieroglyphic sculptures of Thebes and Memphis; and the poet sees the fires of magic blazing upon the mystic altars of a land of incantation. Nor is the grandeur of size essential to such feelings, any more than the properties of grace and utility. Even the rudest remnant of a feudal tower, even the obscure and almost indistinguishable vestige of an altogether unknown edifice, has power to awaken such trains of fancy. We have a fellow interest with the 'son of the winged days,' over whose fallen habitation we tread:—

> 'The massy stones, though hewn most roughly, show
> The hand of man had once at least been there.'—*Wordsworth.*

"Similar combinations give a great part of the delight we receive from ancient poetry. In the rude song of the Scald, we regard less the strained imagery and extravagance of epithet, than the wild impressions which it conveys of the dauntless resolution, savage superstition, rude festivity, and ceaseless depredation of the ancient Scandinavians. In the metrical romance, we pardon the long, tedious, and bald enumeration of trifling particulars; the reiterated sameness of the eternal combats between knights and giants; the overpowering languor of the love speeches, and the merciless length and similarity of description—when Fancy whispers to us that such strains may have cheered the sleepless pillow of the Black Prince on the memorable eves of Cressy or Poictiers. There is a certain romance of Ferumbras, which Robert the Bruce read to his few followers, to divert their thoughts from the desperate circumstances in which they were placed, after an unsuccessful attempt to rise against the English. Is there a true Scotsman who, being aware of this anecdote, would be disposed to yawn over the romance of Ferumbras? Or, on the contrary, would not the image of the

dauntless hero, inflexible in defeat, beguiling the anxiety of his war-worn attendants by the lays of the minstrel, give to these rude lays themselves an interest beyond Greek and Roman fame?"

The year 1812 had the usual share of minor literary labors—such as contributions to the journals; and before it closed, the Romance of Rokeby was finished. Though it had been long in hand, the MS. sent to the printer bears abundant evidence of its being the *prima cura*: three cantos at least reached Ballantyne through the Melrose post—written on paper of various sorts and sizes—full of blots and interlineations—the closing couplets of a despatch now and then encircling the page, and mutilated by the breaking of the seal.

According to the recollection of Mr. Cadell, though James Ballantyne read the poem, as the sheets were advancing through the press, to his usual circle of literary *dilettanti*, their whispers were far from exciting in Edinburgh such an intensity of expectation as had been witnessed in the case of The Lady of the Lake. He adds, however, that it was looked for with undiminished anxiety in the south. "Send me *Rokeby*," Byron writes to Murray on seeing it advertised,—"Who the devil is he? No matter—he has good connections, and will be well introduced." Such, I suppose, was the general feeling in London. I well remember, being in those days a young student at Oxford, how the booksellers' shops there were beleaguered for the earliest copies, and how he that had been so fortunate as to secure one was followed to his chambers by a tribe of friends, all as eager to hear it read as ever horse-jockeys were to see the conclusion of a match at Newmarket; and indeed not a few of those enthusiastic academics had bets depending on the issue of the struggle, which they considered the elder favorite as making, to keep his own ground against the fiery rivalry of Childe Harold.

The poem was published a day or two before Scott returned to Edinburgh from Abbotsford, between which place and Mertoun he had divided his Christmas vacation. On the 9th and 10th of January, 1813, he thus addresses his friends at Sunning Hill and Hampstead:—

TO GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.

My dear Ellis,—I am sure you will place it to anything rather than want of kindness that I have been so long silent—so very long, indeed, that I am not

quite sure whether the fault is on my side or yours—but, be it what it may, it can never, I am sure, be laid to forgetfulness in either. This comes to train you on to the merciful reception of a Tale of the Civil Wars; not political, however, but merely a pseudo-romance of pseudo-chivalry. I have converted a lusty buccaneer into a hero with some effect; but the worst of all my undertakings is, that my rogue always, in despite of me, turns out my hero. I know not how this should be. I am myself, as Hamlet says, "indifferent honest;" and my father, though an attorney (as you will call him), was one of the most honest men, as well as gentlemanlike, that ever breathed. I am sure I can bear witness to that—for if he had at all *smacked*, or *grown to*, like the son of Lancelot Gobbo, he might have left us all as rich as Crœsus, besides having the pleasure of taking a fine primrose path himself, instead of squeezing himself through a tight gate and up a steep ascent, and leaving us the decent competence of an honest man's children. As to our more ancient pedigree, I should be loath to vouch for them. My grandfather was a horse-jockey and cattle-dealer, and made a fortune; my great-grandfather a Jacobite and traitor (as the times called him), and lost one; and after him intervened one or two half-starved lairds, who rode a lean horse, and were followed by leaner greyhounds; gathered with difficulty a hundred pounds from a hundred tenants; fought duels; cocked their hats,—and called themselves gentlemen. Then we come to the old Border times, cattle-driving, halters, and so forth, for which, in the matter of honesty, very little I suppose can be said—at least in modern acceptation of the word. Upon the whole, I am inclined to think it is owing to the earlier part of this inauspicious generation that I uniformly find myself in the same scrape in my fables, and that, in spite of the most obstinate determination to the contrary, the greatest rogue in my canvas always stands out as the most conspicuous and prominent figure. All this will be a riddle to you, unless you have received a certain packet, which the Ballantynes were to have sent under Freeling's or Croker's cover, so soon as they could get a copy done up.

And now let me gratulate you upon the renovated vigor of your fine old friends the Russians. By the Lord, sir! it is most famous, this campaign of theirs. I was not one of the very sanguine persons who anticipated the actual capture of Buonaparte—a hope which rather proceeded from the ignorance of those who cannot conceive that military movements, upon a large scale,

admit of such a force being accumulated upon any particular point as may, by abandonment of other considerations, always insure the escape of an individual. But I had no hope, in my time, of seeing the dry bones of the Continent so warm with life again, as this revivification of the Russians proves them to be. I look anxiously for the effect of these great events on Prussia, and even upon Saxony; for I think Boney will hardly trust himself again in Germany, now that he has been plainly shown, both in Spain and Russia, that protracted, stubborn, unaccommodating resistance will foil those grand exertions in the long run. All laud be to Lord Wellington, who first taught that great lesson.

Charlotte is with me just now at this little scrub habitation, where we weary ourselves all day in looking at our projected improvements, and then slumber over the fire, I pretending to read, and she to work trout-nets, or cabbage-nets, or some such article. What is Canning about? Is there any chance of our getting him in? Surely Ministers cannot hope to do without him. Believe me, dear Ellis, ever truly yours,

W. Scott.

Abbotsford, 9th January, 1813.

TO MISS JOANNA BAILLIE.

Abbotsford, January 10, 1813.

Your kind encouragement, my dear friend, has given me spirits to complete the lumbering quarto, which I hope has reached you by this time. I have gone on with my story *forth right*, without troubling myself excessively about the development of the plot and other critical matters—

> "But shall we go mourn for that, my dear?
> The pale moon shines by night;
> And when we wander here and there,
> We then do go most right."

I hope you will like Bertram to the end; he is a Caravaggio sketch, which, I may acknowledge to you—but tell it not in Gath—I rather pique myself upon; and he is within the keeping of Nature, though critics will say to the contrary. It may be difficult to fancy that any one should take a sort of

pleasure in bringing out such a character, but I suppose it is partly owing to bad reading, and ill-directed reading, when I was young. No sooner had I corrected the last sheet of Rokeby, than I escaped to this Patmos as blithe as bird on tree, and have been ever since most decidedly idle—that is to say, with busy idleness. I have been banking, and securing, and diking against the river, and planting willows, and aspens, and weeping-birches, around my new old well, which I think I told you I had constructed last summer. I have now laid the foundations of a famous background of copse, with pendent trees in front; and I have only to beg a few years to see how my colors will come out of the canvas. Alas, who can promise that? But somebody will take my place—and enjoy them, whether I do or no. My old friend and pastor, Principal Robertson (the historian), when he was not expected to survive many weeks, still watched the setting of the blossom upon some fruit-trees in the garden with as much interest as if it was possible he could have seen the fruit come to maturity, and moralized on his own conduct, by observing that we act upon the same inconsistent motive throughout life. It is well we do so for those that are to come after us. I could almost dislike the man who refuses to plant walnut-trees, because they do not bear fruit till the second generation; and so—many thanks to our ancestors, and much joy to our successors, and truce to my fine and very new strain of morality. Yours ever,

W. S.

The following letter lets us completely behind the scenes at the publication of Rokeby. The "horrid story" it alludes to was that of a young woman found murdered on New Year's Day in the highway between Greta Bridge and Barnard Castle—a crime, the perpetrator of which was never discovered. The account of a parallel atrocity in Galloway, and the mode of its detection, will show the reader from what source Scott drew one of the most striking incidents in his Guy Mannering:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., ROKEBY PARK.

Edinburgh, 12th January, 1813.

Dear Morritt,—Yours I have just received in mine office at the Register-House, which will excuse this queer sheet of paper. The publication of Rokeby was delayed till Monday, to give the London publishers a fair start.

My copies, that is, my friends', were all to be got off about Friday or Saturday; but yours may have been a little later, as it was to be what they call a picked one. I will call at Ballantyne's as I return from this place, and close the letter with such news as I can get about it there. The book has gone off here very bobbishly, for the impression of 3000 and upwards is within two or three score of being exhausted, and the demand for these continuing faster than they can be boarded. I am heartily glad of this, for now I have nothing to fear but a bankruptcy in the Gazette of Parnassus; but the loss of five or six thousand pounds to my good friends and school-companions would have afflicted me very much. I wish we could whistle you here to-day. Ballantyne always gives a christening dinner, at which the Duke of Buccleuch, and a great many of my friends, are formally feasted. He has always the best singing that can be heard in Edinburgh, and we have usually a very pleasant party, at which your health as patron and proprietor of Rokeby will be faithfully and honorably remembered.

Your horrid story reminds me of one in Galloway, where the perpetrator of a similar enormity on a poor idiot girl was discovered by means of the print of his foot which he left upon the clay floor of the cottage in the death struggle. It pleased Heaven (for nothing short of a miracle could have done it) to enlighten the understanding of an old ram-headed sheriff, who was usually nicknamed Leather-head. The steps which he took to discover the murderer were most sagacious. As the poor girl was pregnant (for it was not a case of violation), it was pretty clear that her paramour had done the deed, and equally so that he must be a native of the district. The sheriff caused the minister to advertise from the pulpit that the girl would be buried on a particular day, and that all persons in the neighborhood were invited to attend the funeral, to show their detestation of such an enormous crime, as well as to evince their own innocence. This was sure to bring the murderer to the funeral. When the people were assembled in the kirk, the doors were locked by the sheriff's order, and the shoes of all the men were examined; that of the murderer was detected by the measure of the foot, tread, etc., and a peculiarity in the mode in which the sole of one of them had been patched. The remainder of the curious chain of evidence upon which he was convicted will suit best with twilight, or a blinking candle, being too long for a letter. The fellow bore a most excellent character, and had committed this crime for no other reason that could be alleged, than that, having been

led accidentally into an intrigue with this poor wretch, his pride revolted at the ridicule which was likely to attend the discovery.

On calling at Ballantyne's, I find, as I had anticipated, that your copy, being of royal size, requires some particular nicety in hot-pressing. It will be sent by the Carlisle mail *quam primum*.—Ever yours,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—Love to Mrs. Morritt. John Ballantyne says he has just about eighty copies left, out of 3250, this being the second day of publication, and the book a two-guinea one.

It will surprise no one to hear that Mr. Morritt assured his friend he considered Rokeby as the best of all his poems. The admirable, perhaps the unique fidelity of the local descriptions, might alone have swayed, for I will not say it perverted, the judgment of the lord of that beautiful and thenceforth classical domain; and, indeed, I must admit that I never understood or appreciated half the charm of this poem until I had become familiar with its scenery. But Scott himself had not designed to rest his strength on these descriptions. He said to James Ballantyne while the work was in progress (September 2), "I hope the thing will do, chiefly because the world will not expect from *me* a poem of which the interest turns upon *character*;" and in another letter (October 28, 1812), "I think you will see the same sort of difference taken in all my former poems,—of which I would say, if it is fair for me to say anything, that the force in the Lay is thrown on style—in Marmion, on description—and in The Lady of the Lake, on incident." I suspect some of these distinctions may have been matters of afterthought; but as to Rokeby, there can be no mistake. His own original conceptions of some of its principal characters have been explained in letters already cited; and I believe no one who compares the poem with his novels will doubt that, had he undertaken their portraiture in prose, they would have come forth with effect hardly inferior to any of all the groups he ever created. As it is, I question whether even in his prose there is anything more exquisitely wrought out, as well as fancied, than the whole contrast of the two rivals for the love of the heroine in Rokeby; and that heroine herself, too, has a very particular interest attached to her. Writing to Miss Edgeworth five years after this time (10th May, 1818), he says, "I have not

read one of my poems since they were printed, excepting last year The Lady of the Lake, which I liked better than I expected, but not well enough to induce me to go through the rest—so I may truly say with Macbeth—

> 'I am afraid to think what I have done—
> Look on 't again I dare not.'

"This much of *Matilda* I recollect—(for that is not so easily forgotten)—that she was attempted for the existing person of a lady who is now no more, so that I am particularly flattered with your distinguishing it from the others, which are in general mere shadows." I can have no doubt that the lady he here alludes to was the object of his own unfortunate first love; and as little, that in the romantic generosity, both of the youthful poet who fails to win her higher favor, and of his chivalrous competitor, we have before us something more than "a mere shadow."

In spite of these graceful characters, the inimitable scenery on which they are presented, and the splendid vivacity and thrilling interest of several chapters in the story—such as the opening interview of Bertram and Wycliffe—the flight up the cliff on the Greta—the first entrance of the cave at Brignall—the firing of Rokeby Castle—and the catastrophe in Eglistone Abbey;—in spite certainly of exquisitely happy lines profusely scattered throughout the whole composition, and of some detached images—that of the setting of the tropical sun, for example—which were never surpassed by any poet; in spite of all these merits, the immediate success of Rokeby was greatly inferior to that of The Lady of the Lake; nor has it ever since been so much a favorite with the public at large as any other of his poetical romances. He ascribes this failure, in his Introduction of 1830, partly to the radically unpoetical character of the Roundheads; but surely their character has its poetical side also, had his prejudices allowed him to enter upon its study with impartial sympathy; and I doubt not, Mr. Morritt suggested the difficulty on this score, when the outline of the story was as yet undetermined, from consideration rather of the poet's peculiar feelings, and powers as hitherto exhibited, than of the subject absolutely. Partly he blames the satiety of the public ear, which had had so much of his rhythm, not only from himself, but from dozens of mocking-birds, male and female, all more or less applauded in their day, and now all equally forgotten. This circumstance, too, had probably no slender effect; the more that, in defiance of all the hints of his friends, he now, in his narrative, repeated (with more

negligence) the uniform octosyllabic couplets of The Lady of the Lake, instead of recurring to the more varied cadence of the Lay or Marmion. It is fair to add that, among the London circles at least, some sarcastic flings in Mr. Moore's Twopenny Post Bag must have had an unfavorable influence on this occasion. But the cause of failure which the poet himself places last was unquestionably the main one. The deeper and darker passion of Childe Harold, the audacity of its morbid voluptuousness, and the melancholy majesty of the numbers in which it defied the world, had taken the general imagination by storm; and Rokeby, with many beauties and some sublimities, was pitched, as a whole, on a key which seemed tame in the comparison.

I have already adverted to the fact that Scott felt it a relief, not a fatigue, to compose The Bridal of Triermain *pari passu* with Rokeby. In answer, for example, to one of James Ballantyne's letters, urging accelerated speed with the weightier romance, he says, "I fully share in your anxiety to get forward the grand work; but, I assure you, I feel the more confidence from coquetting with the guerilla."

The quarto of Rokeby was followed, within two months, by the small volume which had been designed for a twin birth;—the MS. had been transcribed by one of the Ballantynes themselves, in order to guard against any indiscretion of the press-people; and the mystification, aided and abetted by Erskine, in no small degree heightened the interest of its reception. Except Mr. Morritt, Scott had, so far as I am aware, no English confidant upon this occasion. Whether any of his daily companions in the Parliament House were in the secret, I have never heard; but I can scarcely believe that any of those intimate friends, who had known him and Erskine from their youth upwards, could have for a moment believed the latter capable either of the invention or the execution of this airy and fascinating romance in little. Mr. Jeffrey, for whom chiefly "the trap had been set," was far too sagacious to be caught in it; but, as it happened, he made a voyage that year to America, and thus lost the opportunity of immediately expressing his opinion either of Rokeby or of The Bridal of Triermain. The writer in the Quarterly Review (July, 1813) seems to have been completely deceived.

> "We have already spoken of it," says the critic, "as an imitation of Mr. Scott's style of composition; and if we are compelled to

> make the general approbation more precise and specific, we should say, that if it be inferior in vigor to some of his productions, it equals or surpasses them in elegance and beauty; that it is more uniformly tender, and far less infected with the unnatural prodigies and coarseness of the earlier romances. In estimating its merits, however, we should forget that it is offered as an imitation. The diction undoubtedly reminds us of a rhythm and cadence we have heard before; but the sentiments, descriptions, and characters, have qualities that are native and unborrowed."

If this writer was, as I suppose, Ellis, he probably considered it as a thing impossible that Scott should have engaged in such a scheme without giving him a hint of it; but to have admitted into the secret any one who was likely to criticise the piece, would have been to sacrifice the very object of the device. Erskine's own suggestion, that "perhaps a quizzical review might be got up," led, I believe, to nothing more important than a paragraph in one of the Edinburgh newspapers. He may be pardoned for having been not a little flattered to find it generally considered as not impossible that he should have written such a poem; and I have heard James Ballantyne say that nothing could be more amusing than the style of his coquetting on the subject while it was yet fresh; but when this first excitement was over, his natural feeling of what was due to himself, as well as to his friend, dictated many a remonstrance; and, though he ultimately acquiesced in permitting another minor romance to be put forth in the same manner, he did so reluctantly, and was far from acting his part so well.

Scott says, in the Introduction to The Lord of the Isles, "As Mr. Erskine was more than suspected of a taste for poetry, and as I took care, in several places, to mix something that might resemble (as far as was in my power) my friend's feeling and manner, the train easily caught, and two large editions were sold." Among the passages to which he here alludes are no doubt those in which the character of the minstrel Arthur is shaded with the colorings of an almost effeminate gentleness. Yet, in the midst of them, the "mighty minstrel" himself, from time to time, escapes; as, for instance, where the lover bids Lucy, in that exquisite picture of crossing a mountain stream, trust to his "stalwart arm"—

> "Which could yon oak's prone trunk uprear."

Nor can I pass the compliment to Scott's own fair patroness, where Lucy's admirer is made to confess, with some momentary lapse of gallantry, that he

> "Ne'er won—best meed to minstrel true—
> One favoring smile from fair Buccleuch;"

nor the burst of genuine Borderism,—

> "Bewcastle now must keep the hold,
> Speir-Adam's steeds must bide in stall,
> Of Hartley-burn the bowmen bold
> Must only shoot from battled wall;
> And Liddesdale may buckle spur,
> And Teviot now may belt the brand,
> Tarras and Ewes keep nightly stir,
> And Eskdale foray Cumberland."

But, above all, the choice of the scenery, both of the Introductions and of the story itself, reveals the early and treasured predilections of the poet. For who that remembers the circumstances of his first visit to the vale of St. John, but must see throughout the impress of his own real romance? I own I am not without a suspicion that, in one passage, which always seemed to me a blot upon the composition—that in which Arthur derides the military coxcombries of his rival—

> "Who comes in foreign trashery
> Of tinkling chain and spur,
> A walking haberdashery
> Of feathers, lace, and fur;
> In Rowley's antiquated phrase,
> Horse-milliner of modern days"—

there is a sly reference to the incidents of a certain ball, of August, 1797, at the Gilsland Spa.

Among the more prominent Erskinisms, are the eulogistic mention of Glasgow, the scene of Erskine's education; and the lines on Collins—a supplement to whose Ode on the Highland Superstitions is, as far as I know, the only specimen that ever was published of Erskine's verse.

As a whole, The Bridal of Triermain appears to me as characteristic of Scott as any of his larger poems. His genius pervades and animates it beneath a thin and playful veil, which perhaps adds as much of grace as it takes away of splendor. As Wordsworth says of the eclipse on the lake of Lugano—

> "'T is sunlight sheathed and gently charmed;"

and I think there is at once a lightness and a polish of versification beyond what he has elsewhere attained. If it be a miniature, it is such a one as a Cooper might have hung fearlessly beside the masterpieces of Vandyke.

The Introductions contain some of the most exquisite passages he ever produced; but their general effect has always struck me as unfortunate. No art can reconcile us to contemptuous satire of the merest frivolities of modern life—some of them already, in twenty years, grown obsolete—interlaid between such bright visions of the old world of romance, when

> "Strength was gigantic, valor high,
> And wisdom soared beyond the sky,
> And beauty had such matchless beam
> As lights not now a lover's dream."

The fall is grievous, from the hoary minstrel of Newark, and his feverish tears on Killiecrankie, to a pathetic swain, who can stoop to denounce as objects of his jealousy—

> "The landaulet and four blood bays—
> The Hessian boot and pantaloon."

Before Triermain came out, Scott had taken wing for Abbotsford; and indeed he seems to have so contrived it in his earlier period, that he should not be in Edinburgh when any unavowed work of his was published; whereas, from the first, in the case of books that bore his name on the title-page, he walked as usual to the Parliament House, and bore all the buzz and tattle of friends and acquaintance with an air of good-humored equanimity, or rather total apparent indifference. The following letter, which contains some curious matter of more kinds than one, was written partly in town and partly in the country:—

TO MISS JOANNA BAILLIE, HAMPSTEAD.

Edinburgh, March 13, 1813.

My dearest Friend,—The pinasters have arrived safe, and I can hardly regret, while I am so much flattered by, the trouble you have had in collecting them. I have got some wild larch-trees from Loch Katrine, and both are to be planted next week, when, God willing, I shall be at Abbotsford to superintend the operation. I have got a little corner of ground laid out for a nursery, where I shall rear them carefully till they are old enough to be set forth to push their fortune on the banks of Tweed.—What I shall finally make of this villa-work I don't know, but in the mean time it is very entertaining. I shall have to resist very flattering invitations this season; for I have received hints, from more quarters than one, that my bow would be acceptable at Carlton House in case I should be in London, which is very flattering, especially as there were some prejudices to be got over in that quarter. I should be in some danger of giving new offence, too; for, although I utterly disapprove of the present rash and ill-advised course of the princess, yet, as she always was most kind and civil to me, I certainly could not, as a gentleman, decline obeying any commands she might give me to wait upon her, especially in her present adversity. So, though I do not affect to say I should be sorry to take an opportunity of peeping at the splendors of royalty, prudence and economy will keep me quietly at home till another day. My great amusement here this some time past has been going almost nightly to see John Kemble, who certainly is a great artist. It is a pity he shows too much of his machinery. I wish he could be double-capped, as they say of watches;—but the fault of too much study certainly does not belong to many of his tribe. He is, I think, very great in those parts especially where character is tinged by some acquired and systematic habits, like those of the Stoic philosophy in Cato and Brutus, or of misanthropy in Penruddock; but sudden turns and natural bursts of passion are not his forte. I saw him play Sir Giles Overreach (the Richard III. of middling life) last night; but he came not within a hundred miles of Cooke, whose terrible visage, and short, abrupt, and savage utterance, gave a reality almost to that extraordinary scene in which he boasts of his own successful villainy to a nobleman of worth and honor, of whose alliance he is ambitious. Cooke contrived somehow to impress upon the audience the idea of such a monster of enormity as had learned to pique himself even upon his own atrocious character. But Kemble was too handsome, too plausible,

and too smooth, to admit its being probable that he should be blind to the unfavorable impression which these extraordinary vaunts are likely to make on the person whom he is so anxious to conciliate.

Abbotsford, 21st March.

This letter, begun in Edinburgh, is to take wing from Abbotsford. John Winnos (now John Winnos is the sub-oracle of Abbotsford, the principal being Tom Purdie)—John Winnos pronounces that the pinaster seed ought to be raised at first on a hot-bed, and thence transplanted to a nursery; so to a hot-bed they have been carefully consigned, the upper oracle not objecting, in respect his talent lies in catching a salmon, or finding a hare sitting—on which occasions (being a very complete Scrub) he solemnly exchanges his working jacket for an old green one of mine, and takes the air of one of Robin Hood's followers. His more serious employments are ploughing, harrowing, and overseeing all my premises; being a complete Jack-of-all-trades, from the carpenter to the shepherd, nothing comes strange to him; and being extremely honest, and somewhat of a humorist, he is quite my right hand. I cannot help singing his praises at this moment, because I have so many odd and out-of-the-way things to do, that I believe the conscience of many of our jog-trot countrymen would revolt at being made my instrument in sacrificing good corn-land to the visions of Mr. Price's theory. Mr. Pinkerton, the historian, has a play coming out at Edinburgh; it is by no means bad poetry, yet I think it will not be popular; the people come and go, and speak very notable things in good blank verse, but there is no very strong interest excited; the plot also is disagreeable, and liable to the objections (though in a less degree) which have been urged against the Mysterious Mother; it is to be acted on Wednesday; I will let you know its fate. P., with whom I am in good habits, showed the MS., but I referred him, with such praise as I could conscientiously bestow, to the players and the public. I don't know why one should take the task of damning a man's play out of the hands of the proper tribunal. Adieu, my dear friend. I have scarce room for love to Miss, Mrs., and Dr. B.

W. Scott.

To this I add a letter to Lady Louisa Stuart, who had sent him a copy of these lines, found by Lady Douglas on the back of a tattered bank-note:—

"Farewell, my note, and wheresoe'er ye wend,
Shun gaudy scenes, and be the poor man's friend.
You've left a poor one; go to one as poor,
And drive despair and hunger from his door."

It appears that these noble friends had adopted, or feigned to adopt, the belief that The Bridal of Triermain was a production of Mr. R. P. Gillies—who had about this time published an imitation of Lord Byron's Romaunt, under the title of Childe Alarique.

TO THE LADY LOUISA STUART, BOTHWELL CASTLE.

Abbotsford, 28th April, 1813.

Dear Lady Louisa,—Nothing can give me more pleasure than to hear from you, because it is both a most acceptable favor to me, and also a sign that your own spirits are recovering their tone. Ladies are, I think, very fortunate in having a resource in work at a time when the mind rejects intellectual amusement. Men have no resource but striding up and down the room, like a bird that beats itself to pieces against the bars of its cage; whereas needle-work is a sort of sedative, too mechanical to worry the mind by distracting it from the points on which its musings turn, yet gradually assisting it in regaining steadiness and composure; for so curiously are our bodies and minds linked together, that the regular and constant employment of the former on any process, however dull and uniform, has the effect of tranquillizing, where it cannot disarm, the feelings of the other. I am very much pleased with the lines on the guinea note, and if Lady Douglas does not object, I would willingly mention the circumstance in the Edinburgh Annual Register. I think it will give the author great delight to know that his lines had attracted attention, and *had* sent the paper on which they were recorded, "heaven-directed, to the poor." Of course I would mention no names. There was, as your Ladyship may remember, some years since, a most audacious and determined murder committed on a porter belonging to the British Linen Company's Bank at Leith, who was stabbed to the heart in broad daylight, and robbed of a large sum in notes. If ever this crime comes to light, it will be through the circumstance of an idle young fellow having written part of a playhouse song on one of the notes, which, however, has as yet never appeared in circulation.

I am very glad you like Rokeby, which is nearly out of fashion and memory with me. It has been wonderfully popular, about ten thousand copies having walked off already, in about three months, and the demand continuing faster than it can be supplied. As to my imitator, the Knight of Triermain, I will endeavor to convey to Mr. Gillies (*puisque Gillies il est*) your Ladyship's very just strictures on the Introduction to the second Canto. But if he takes the opinion of a hacked old author like myself, he will content himself with avoiding such bevues in future, without attempting to mend those which are already made. There is an ominous old proverb which says, *Confess and be hanged*; and truly if an author acknowledges his own blunders, I do not know who he can expect to stand by him; whereas, let him confess nothing, and he will always find some injudicious admirers to vindicate even his faults. So that I think after publication the effect of criticism should be prospective, in which point of view I dare say Mr. G. will take your friendly hint, especially as it is confirmed by that of the best judges who have read the poem.—Here is beautiful weather for April! an absolute snow-storm mortifying me to the core by retarding the growth of all my young trees and shrubs.—Charlotte begs to be most respectfully remembered to your Ladyship and Lady D. We are realizing the nursery tale of the man and his wife who lived in a vinegar bottle, for our only sitting-room is just twelve feet square, and my Eve alleges that I am too big for our paradise. To make amends, I have created a tolerable garden, occupying about an English acre, which I begin to be very fond of. When one passes forty, an addition to the quiet occupations of life becomes of real value, for I do not hunt and fish with quite the relish I did ten years ago. Adieu, my dear Lady Louisa, and all good attend you.

Walter Scott.

Chapter XXVI

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1813

About a month after the publication of The Bridal of Triermain, the affairs of the Messrs. Ballantyne, which had never apparently been in good order since the establishment of the bookselling firm, became so embarrassed as to call for Scott's most anxious efforts to disentangle them. Indeed, it is clear that there had existed some very serious perplexity in the course of the preceding autumn; for Scott writes to John Ballantyne, while Rokeby was in progress (August 11, 1812),—"I have a letter from James, very anxious about your health and state of spirits. If you suffer the present inconveniences to depress you too much, you are wrong; and if you conceal any part of them, are very unjust to us all. I am always ready to make any sacrifices to do justice to engagements, and would rather sell anything, or everything, than be less than true men to the world."

I have already, perhaps, said enough to account for the general want of success in this publishing adventure; but Mr. James Ballantyne sums up the case so briefly in his deathbed paper, that I may here quote his words. "My brother," he says, "though an active and pushing, was not a cautious bookseller, and the large sums received never formed an addition to stock.

In fact, they were all expended by the partners, who, being then young and sanguine men, not unwillingly adopted my brother's hasty results. By May, 1813, in a word, the absolute throwing away of our own most valuable publications, and the rash adoption of some injudicious speculations of Mr. Scott, had introduced such losses and embarrassments, that after a very careful consideration, Mr. Scott determined to dissolve the concern." He adds: "This became a matter of less difficulty, because time had in a great measure worn away the differences between Mr. Scott and Mr. Constable, and Mr. Hunter was now out of Constable's concern. A peace, therefore, was speedily made up, and the old habits of intercourse were restored."

How reluctantly Scott had made up his mind to open such a negotiation with Constable, as involved a complete exposure of the mismanagement of John Ballantyne's business as a publisher, will appear from a letter dated about the Christmas of 1812, in which he says to James, who had proposed asking Constable to take a share both in Rokeby and in the Annual Register, "You must be aware, that in stating the objections which occur to me to taking in Constable, I think they ought to give way either to absolute necessity or to very strong grounds of advantage. But I *am* persuaded nothing ultimately good can be expected from any connection with that house, unless for those who have a mind to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. We will talk the matter coolly over, and, in the mean while, perhaps you could see W. Erskine, and learn what impression this odd union is like to make among your friends. Erskine is sound-headed, and quite to be trusted with *your whole story*. I must own I can hardly think the purchase of the Register is equal to the loss of credit and character which your surrender will be conceived to infer." At the time when he wrote this, Scott no doubt anticipated that Rokeby would have success not less decisive than The Lady of the Lake; but in this expectation—though 10,000 copies in three months would have seemed to any other author a triumphant sale—he had been disappointed. And meanwhile the difficulties of the firm, accumulating from week to week, had reached, by the middle of May, a point which rendered it absolutely necessary for him to conquer all his scruples.

Mr. Cadell, then Constable's partner, says in his *Memoranda*,—"Prior to this time the reputation of John Ballantyne and Co. had been decidedly on the decline. It was notorious in the trade that their general speculations had been unsuccessful; they were known to be grievously in want of money.

These rumors were realized to the full by an application which Messrs. B. made to Mr. Constable in May, 1813, for pecuniary aid, accompanied by an offer of some of the books they had published since 1809, as a purchase, along with various shares in Mr. Scott's own poems. Their difficulties were admitted, and the negotiation was pressed urgently; so much so, that a pledge was given, that if the terms asked were acceded to, John Ballantyne and Co. would endeavor to wind up their concerns, and cease as soon as possible to be publishers." Mr. Cadell adds: "I need hardly remind you that this was a period of very great general difficulty in the money market. It was the crisis of the war. The public expenditure had reached an enormous height; and even the most prosperous mercantile houses were often pinched to sustain their credit. It may easily, therefore, be supposed that the Messrs. Ballantyne had during many months besieged every banker's door in Edinburgh, and that their agents had done the like in London."

The most important of the requests which the laboring house made to Constable was that he should forthwith take entirely to himself the stock, copyright, and future management of the Edinburgh Annual Register. Upon examining the state of this book, however, Constable found that the loss on it had never been less than £1000 per annum, and he therefore declined that matter for the present. He promised, however, to consider seriously the means he might have of ultimately relieving them from the pressure of the Register, and, in the mean time, offered to take 300 sets of the stock on hand. The other purchases he finally made on the 18th of May were considerable portions of Weber's unhappy Beaumont and Fletcher—of an edition of De Foe's novels in twelve volumes—of a collection entitled Tales of the East in three large volumes, 8vo, double-columned—and of another in one volume, called Popular Tales—about 800 copies of The Vision of Don Roderick—and a fourth of the remaining copyright of Rokeby, price £700. The immediate accommodation thus received amounted to £2000; and Scott, who had personally conducted the latter part of the negotiation, writes thus to his junior partner, who had gone a week or two earlier to London in quest of some similar assistance there:—

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE, CARE OF MESSRS.
LONGMAN & CO., LONDON.

Printing-Office, May 18, 1813.

Dear John,—After many *offs* and *ons*, and as many *projets* and *contre-projets* as the treaty of Amiens, I have at length concluded a treaty with Constable, in which I am sensible he has gained a great advantage; but what could I do amidst the disorder and pressure of so many demands? The arrival of your long-dated bills decided my giving in, for what could James or I do with them? I trust this sacrifice has cleared our way, but many rubs remain; nor am I, after these hard skirmishes, so able to meet them by my proper credit. Constable, however, will be a zealous ally; and for the first time these many weeks I shall lay my head on a quiet pillow, for now I do think that, by our joint exertions, we shall get well through the storm, save Beaumont from depreciation, get a partner in our heavy concerns, reef our topsails, and move on securely under an easy sail. And if, on the one hand, I have sold my gold too cheap, I have, on the other, turned my lead to gold. Brewster and Singers are the only heavy things to which I have not given a blue eye. Had your news of Cadell's sale reached us here, I could not have harpooned my grampus so deeply as I have done, as nothing but Rokeby would have barbed the hook.

Adieu, my dear John. I have the most sincere regard for you, and you may depend on my considering your interest with quite as much attention as my own. If I have ever expressed myself with irritation in speaking of this business, you must impute it to the sudden, extensive, and unexpected embarrassments in which I found myself involved all at once. If to your real goodness of heart and integrity, and to the quickness and acuteness of your talents, you added habits of more universal circumspection, and, above all, the courage to tell disagreeable truths to those whom you hold in regard, I pronounce that the world never held such a man of business. These it must be your study to add to your other good qualities. Meantime, as some one says to Swift, I love you with all your failings. Pray make an effort and love me with all mine. Yours truly,

W. S.

Three days afterwards Scott resumes the subject as follows:—

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 21st May, 1813.

Dear John,—Let it never escape your recollection, that shutting your own eyes, or blinding those of your friends, upon the actual state of business, is the high road to ruin. Meanwhile, we have recovered our legs for a week or two. Constable will, I think, come in to the Register. He is most anxious to maintain the printing-office; he sees most truly that the more we print the less we publish; and for the same reason he will, I think, help us off with our heavy quire-stock.

I was aware of the distinction between the *state* and the *calendar* as to the latter including the printing-office bills, and I summed and docked them (they are marked with red ink), but there is still a difference of £2000 and upwards on the calendar against the business. I sometimes fear that, between the long dates of your bills, and the tardy settlements of the Edinburgh trade, some difficulties will occur even in June; and July I always regard with deep anxiety. As for loss, if I get out without public exposure, I shall not greatly regard the rest. Radcliffe the physician said, when he lost £2000 on the South Sea scheme, it was only going up 2000 pair of stairs; I say, it is only writing 2000 couplets, and the account is balanced. More of this hereafter. Yours truly,

W. Scott.

P. S.—James has behaved very well during this whole transaction, and has been most steadily attentive to business. I am convinced that the more he works the better his health will be. One or other of you will need to be constantly in the printing-office henceforward,—it is the sheet-anchor.

The allusion in this *postscript* to James Ballantyne's health reminds me that Scott's letters to himself are full of hints on that subject, even from a very early period of their connection; and these hints are all to the same effect. James was a man of lazy habits, and not a little addicted to the more solid, and perhaps more dangerous, part of the indulgences of the table. One letter (dated Ashestiel, 1810) will be a sufficient specimen:—

TO MR. JAMES BALLANTYNE.

My dear James,—I am very sorry for the state of your health, and should be still more so, were I not certain that I can prescribe for you as well as any physician in Edinburgh. You have naturally an athletic constitution and a

hearty stomach, and these agree very ill with a sedentary life and the habits of indolence which it brings on. Your stomach thus gets weak; and from those complaints of all others arise most certainly flatulence, hypochondria, and all the train of unpleasant feelings connected with indigestion. We all know the horrible sensation of the nightmare arises from the same cause which gives those waking nightmares commonly called the blue devils. You must positively put yourself on a regimen as to eating, not for a month or two, but for a year at least, and take regular exercise—and my life for yours. I know this by myself, for if I were to eat and drink in town as I do here, it would soon finish me, and yet I am sensible I live too genially in Edinburgh as it is. Yours very truly,

W. Scott.

Among Scott's early pets at Abbotsford there was a huge raven, whose powers of speech were remarkable, far beyond any parrot's that he had ever met with; and who died in consequence of an excess of the kind to which James Ballantyne was addicted. Thenceforth, Scott often repeated to his old friend, and occasionally scribbled by way of postscript to his notes on business—

> "When you are craving,
> Remember the Raven."

Sometimes the formula is varied to—

> "When you've dined half,
> Think on poor Ralph!"

His preachments of regularity in book-keeping to John, and of abstinence from good cheer to James Ballantyne, were equally vain; but on the other hand it must be allowed that they had some reason for displeasure—(the more felt, because they durst not, like him, express their feelings)—when they found that scarcely had these "hard skirmishes" terminated in the bargain of May 18, before Scott was preparing fresh embarrassments for himself, by commencing a negotiation for a considerable addition to his property at Abbotsford. As early as the 20th of June he writes to Constable as being already aware of this matter, and alleges his anxiety "to close at once with a very capricious person," as the only reason that could have

induced him to make up his mind to sell the whole copyright of an as yet unwritten poem, to be entitled The Nameless Glen. This copyright he then offered to dispose of to Constable for £5000; adding, "this is considerably less in proportion than I have already made on the share of Rokeby sold to yourself, and surely that is no unfair admeasurement." A long correspondence ensued, in the course of which Scott mentions The Lord of the Isles, as a title which had suggested itself to him in place of The Nameless Glen; but as the negotiation did not succeed, I may pass its details. The new property which Scott was so eager to acquire was that hilly tract stretching from the old Roman road near Turn-again towards the Cauldshiels Loch: a then desolate and naked mountain-mere, which he likens, in a letter of this summer (to Lady Louisa Stuart), to the Lake of the Genie and the Fisherman in the Arabian Tale. To obtain this lake at one extremity of his estate, as a contrast to the Tweed at the other, was a prospect for which hardly any sacrifice would have appeared too much; and he contrived to gratify his wishes in the course of that July, to which he had spoken of himself in May as looking forward "with the deepest anxiety."

Nor was he, I must add, more able to control some of his minor tastes. I find him writing to Mr. Terry, on the 20th of June, about "that splendid lot of ancient armor, advertised by Winstanley," a celebrated auctioneer in London, of which he had the strongest fancy to make his spoil, though he was at a loss to know where it should be placed when it reached Abbotsford; and on the 2d of July, this acquisition also having been settled, he says to the same correspondent: "I have written to Mr. Winstanley. My bargain with Constable was otherwise arranged, but Little John is to find the needful article, and I shall take care of Mr. Winstanley's interest, who has behaved too handsomely in this matter to be trusted to the mercy of our little friend the Picaroon, who is, notwithstanding his many excellent qualities, a little on the score of old Gobbo—doth somewhat smack—somewhat grow to. We shall be at Abbotsford on the 12th, and hope soon to see you there. I am fitting up a small room above *Peter-House*, where an unceremonious bachelor may consent to do penance, though the place is a cock-loft, and the access that which leads many a bold fellow to his last nap—a ladder." And a few weeks later, he says, in the same sort, to his sister-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Scott: "In despite of these hard times, which affect my patrons the booksellers very much, I am buying old books and old armor as usual, and adding to what your old friend Burns calls—

'A fouth of auld nick-nackets,
Rusty airn caps and jingling jackets,
Wad haud the Lothians three in tackets
A towmont gude,
And parritch-pats and auld saut-backets,
Before the flude.'"

Notwithstanding all this, it must have been with a most uneasy mind that he left Edinburgh to establish himself at Abbotsford that July. The assistance of Constable had not been granted, indeed it had not been asked, to an extent at all adequate for the difficulties of the case; and I have now to transcribe, with pain and reluctance, some extracts from Scott's letters, during the ensuing autumn, which speak the language of anxious, and, indeed, humiliating distress; and give a most lively notion of the incurable recklessness of his younger partner.

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

Abbotsford, Saturday, 24th July.

Dear John,—I sent you the order, and have only to hope it arrived safe and in good time. I waked the boy at three o'clock myself, having slept little, less on account of the money than of the time. Surely you should have written, three or four days before, the probable amount of the deficit, and, as on former occasions, I would have furnished you with means of meeting it. These expresses, besides every other inconvenience, excite surprise in my family and in the neighborhood. I know no justifiable occasion for them but the unexpected return of a bill. I do not consider you as answerable for the success of plans, but I do and must hold you responsible for giving me, in distinct and plain terms, your opinion as to any difficulties which may occur, and that in such time that I may make arrangements to obviate them if possible.

Of course, if anything has gone wrong you will come out here to-morrow. But if, as I hope and trust, the cash arrived safe, you will write to me, under cover to the Duke of Buccleuch, Drumlanrig Castle, Dumfries-shire. I shall set out for that place on Monday morning early.

W. S.

TO MR. JAMES BALLANTYNE.

Abbotsford, 25th July, 1813.

Dear James,—I address the following jobation for John to you, that you may see whether I do not well to be angry, and enforce upon him the necessity of constantly writing his fears as well as his hopes. You should rub him often on this point, for his recollection becomes rusty the instant I leave town and am not in the way to rack him with constant questions. I hope the presses are doing well, and that you are quite stout again. Yours truly,

W. S.

(*Enclosure.*)

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

My Good Friend John,—The post brings me no letter from you, which I am much surprised at, as you must suppose me anxious to learn that your express arrived. I think he must have reached you before post-hours, and James or you *might* have found a minute to say so in a single line. I once more request that you will be a businesslike correspondent, and state your provisions for every week prospectively. I do not expect you to *warrant them*, which you rather perversely seem to insist is my wish, but I do want to be aware of their nature and extent, that I may provide against the possibility of miscarriage. The calendar, to which you refer me, tells me what sums are due, but cannot tell your shifts to pay them, which are naturally altering with circumstances, and of which alterations I request to have due notice. You say you *could not suppose* Sir W. Forbes would have refused the long dated bills; but that you *had* such an apprehension is clear, both because in the calendar these bills were rated two months lower, and because, three days before, you wrote me an enigmatical expression of your apprehensions, instead of saying plainly there was a chance of your wanting £350, when I would have sent you an order to be used conditionally.

All I desire is unlimited confidence and frequent correspondence, and that you will give me weekly at least the fullest anticipation of your resources, and the probability of their being effectual. I may be disappointed in my own, of which you shall have equally timeous notice. Omit no exertions to

procure the use of money, even for a month or six weeks, for time is most precious. The large balance due in January from the trade, and individuals, which I cannot reckon at less than £4000, will put us finally to rights; and it will be a shame to founder within sight of harbor. The greatest risk we run is from such ill-considered despatches as those of Friday. Suppose that I had gone to Drumlanrig—suppose the pony had set up—suppose a thousand things—and we were ruined for want of your telling your apprehensions in due time. Do not plague yourself to vindicate this sort of management; but if you have escaped the consequences (as to which you have left me uncertain), thank God, and act more cautiously another time. It was quite the same to me on what day I sent that draft; indeed it must have been so if I had the money in my cash account, and if I had not, the more time given me to provide it the better.

Now, do not affect to suppose that my displeasure arises from your not having done your utmost to realize funds, and that utmost having failed. It is one mode, to be sure, of exculpation, to suppose one's self accused of something they are not charged with, and then to make a querulous or indignant defence, and complain of the injustice of the accuser. The head and front of your offending is precisely your not writing explicitly, and I request this may not happen again. It is your fault, and I believe arises either from an ill-judged idea of smoothing matters to me—as if I were not behind the curtain—or a general reluctance to allow that any danger is near, until it is almost unparriable. I shall be very sorry if anything I have said gives you pain; but the matter is too serious for all of us, to be passed over without giving you my explicit sentiments. To-morrow I set out for Drumlanrig, and shall not hear from you till Tuesday or Wednesday. Make yourself master of the post-town—Thornhill, probably, or Sanquhar. As Sir W. F. & Co. have cash to meet my order, nothing, I think, can have gone wrong, unless the boy perished by the way. Therefore, in faith and hope, and—that I may lack none of the Christian virtues—in charity with your dilatory worship, I remain very truly yours,

W. S.

Scott proceeded, accordingly, to join a gay and festive circle, whom the Duke of Buccleuch had assembled about him on first taking possession of the magnificent Castle of Drumlanrig, in Nithsdale, the principal messuage

of the dukedom of Queensberry, which had recently lapsed into his family. But, *post equitem sedet atra cura*—another of John Ballantyne's unwelcome missives, rendered necessary by a neglect of precisely the same kind as before, reached him in the midst of this scene of rejoicing. On the 31st, he again writes:—

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE, BOOKSELLER,
EDINBURGH.

Drumlanrig, Friday.

Dear John,—I enclose the order. Unfortunately, the Drumlanrig post only goes thrice a week; but the Marquis of Queensberry, who carries this to Dumfries, has promised that the guard of the mail-coach shall deliver it by five to-morrow. I was less anxious, as your note said you could clear this month. It is a cruel thing that no State you furnish excludes the arising of such unexpected claims as this for the taxes on the printing-office. What unhappy management, to suffer them to run ahead in such a manner!—but it is in vain to complain. Were it not for your strange concealments, I should anticipate no difficulty in winding up these matters. But who can reckon upon a State where claims are kept out of view until they are in the hands of a *writer*? If you have no time to say that *this* comes safe to hand, I suppose James may favor me so far. Yours truly,

W. S.

Let the guard be rewarded.

Let me know exactly what you *can* do and *hope* to do for next month; for it signifies nothing raising money for you, unless I see it is to be of real service. Observe, I make you responsible for nothing but a fair statement. The guard is known to the Marquis, who has good-naturedly promised to give him this letter with his own hand; so it must reach you in time, though probably past five on Saturday.

Another similar application reached Scott the day after the guard delivered his packet. He writes thus, in reply:

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

Drumlanrig, Sunday.

Dear John,—I trust you got my letter yesterday by five, with the draft enclosed. I return your draft accepted. On Wednesday I think of leaving this place, where, but for these damned affairs, I should have been very happy.

W. S.

Scott had been for some time under an engagement to meet the Marquis of Abercorn at Carlisle, in the first week of August, for the transaction of some business connected with his brother Thomas's late administration of that nobleman's Scottish affairs; and he had designed to pass from Drumlanrig to Carlisle for this purpose, without going back to Abbotsford. In consequence of these repeated harassments, however, he so far altered his plans as to cut short his stay at Drumlanrig, and turn homewards for two or three days, where James Ballantyne met him with such a statement as in some measure relieved his mind.

He then proceeded to fulfil his engagement with Lord Abercorn, whom he encountered travelling in a rather peculiar style between Carlisle and Longtown. The ladies of the family and the household occupied four or five carriages, all drawn by the Marquis's own horses, while the noble Lord himself brought up the rear, mounted on horseback, and decorated with the ribbon of the order of the Garter. On meeting the cavalcade, Scott turned with them, and he was not a little amused when they reached the village of Longtown, which he had ridden through an hour or two before, with the preparations which he found there made for the dinner of the party. The Marquis's major-domo and cook had arrived there at an early hour in the morning, and everything was now arranged for his reception in the paltry little public house, as nearly as possible in the style usual in his own lordly mansions. The ducks and geese that had been dabbling three or four hours ago in the village pond were now ready to make their appearance under numberless disguises as *entrées*; a regular bill-of-fare flanked the noble Marquis's allotted cover; every huckaback towel in the place had been pressed to do service as a napkin; and, that nothing might be wanting to the mimicry of splendor, the landlady's poor remnants of crockery and pewter had been furbished up, and mustered in solemn order on a crazy old beauffet, which was to represent a sideboard worthy of Lucullus. I think it worth while to preserve this anecdote, which Scott delighted in telling, as

perhaps the last relic of a style of manners now passed away, and never likely to be revived among us.

Having despatched this dinner and his business, Scott again turned southwards, intending to spend a few days with Mr. Morritt at Rokeby; but on reaching Penrith, the landlord there, who was his old acquaintance (Mr. Buchanan), placed a letter in his hands: *ecce iterum*—it was once more a cry of distress from John Ballantyne. He thus answered it:—

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

Penrith, August 10, 1813.

Dear John,—I enclose you an order for £350. I shall remain at Rokeby until Saturday or Sunday, and be at Abbotsford on Wednesday at latest.

I hope the printing-office is going on well. I fear, from the state of accompts between the companies, restrictions on the management and expense will be unavoidable, which may trench upon James's comforts. I cannot observe hitherto that the printing-office is paying off, but rather adding to its embarrassments; and it cannot be thought that I have either means or inclination to support a losing concern at the rate of £200 a month. If James could find a monied partner, an active man who understood the commercial part of the business, and would superintend the conduct of the cash, it might be the best for all parties; for I really am not adequate to the fatigue of mind which these affairs occasion me, though I must do the best to struggle through them.

Believe me yours, etc.

W. S.

At Brough he encountered a messenger who brought him such a painful account of Mrs. Morritt's health, that he abandoned his intention of proceeding to Rokeby; and, indeed, it was much better that he should be at Abbotsford again as soon as possible, for his correspondence shows a continued succession, during the three or four ensuing weeks, of the same annoyances that had pursued him to Drumlanrig and to Penrith. By his desire, the Ballantynes had, it would seem, before the middle of August, laid a statement of their affairs before Constable. Though the statement was not so clear and full as Scott had wished it to be, Constable, on considering

it, at once assured them, that to go on raising money in driblets would never effectually relieve them; that, in short, one or both of the companies must stop, unless Mr. Scott could find means to lay his hand, without farther delay, on at least £4000; and I gather that, by way of inducing Constable himself to come forward with part at least of this supply, John Ballantyne again announced his intention of forthwith abandoning the bookselling business altogether, and making an effort to establish himself—on a plan which Constable had shortly before suggested—as an auctioneer in Edinburgh. The following letters need no comment:—

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

Abbotsford, August 16, 1813.

Dear John,—I am quite satisfied it is impossible for J. B. and Co. to continue business longer than is absolutely necessary for the sale of stock and extrication of their affairs. The fatal injury which their credit has sustained, as well as your adopting a profession in which I sincerely hope you will be more fortunate, renders the closing of the bookselling business inevitable. With regard to the printing, it is my intention to retire from that also, so soon as I can possibly do so with safety to myself, and with the regard I shall always entertain for James's interest. Whatever loss I may sustain will be preferable to the life I have lately led, when I seem surrounded by a sort of magic circle, which neither permits me to remain at home in peace, nor to stir abroad with pleasure. Your first exertion as an auctioneer may probably be on "that distinguished, select, and inimitable collection of books, made by an amateur of this city retiring from business." I do not feel either health or confidence in my own powers sufficient to authorize me to take a long price for a new poem, until these affairs shall have been in some measure digested. This idea has been long running in my head, but the late fatalities which have attended this business have quite decided my resolution. I will write to James to-morrow, being at present annoyed with a severe headache.

Yours truly,

W. Scott.

Were I to transcribe all the letters to which these troubles gave rise, I should fill a volume before I had reached the end of another twelvemonth. The two next I shall quote are dated on the same day (the 24th August), which may, in consequence of the answer the second of them received, be set down as determining the crisis of 1813.

TO MR. JAMES BALLANTYNE.

Abbotsford, 24th August, 1813.

Dear James,—Mr. Constable's advice is, as I have always found it, sound, sensible, and friendly,—and I shall be guided by it. But I have no wealthy friend who would join in security with me to such an extent; and to apply in quarters where I might be refused would insure disclosure. I conclude John has shown Mr. C. the state of the affairs; if not, I would wish him to do so directly. If the proposed accommodation could be granted to the firm on my personally joining in the security, the whole matter would be quite safe, for I have to receive in the course of the winter some large sums from my father's estate. Besides which, I shall certainly be able to go to press in November with a new poem; or, if Mr. Constable's additional security would please the bankers better, I could insure Mr. C. against the possibility of loss, by assigning the copyrights, together with that of the new poem, or even my library, in his relief. In fact, if he looks into the affairs, he will I think see that there is no prospect of any eventual loss to the creditors, though I may be a loser myself. My property here is unincumbered; so is my house in Castle Street; and I have no debts out of my own family, excepting a part of the price of Abbotsford, which I am to retain for four years. So that, literally, I have no claims upon me unless those arising out of this business; and when it is considered that my income is above £2000 a year, even if the printing-office pays nothing, I should hope no one can possibly be a loser by me.

Clerkship,	£1300
Sheriffdom,	300
Mrs. Scott,	200
Interest,	100

Somers, (say) 200

£2100

I am sure I would strip myself to my shirt rather than it should be the case; and my only reason for wishing to stop the concern was to do open justice to all persons. It must have been a bitter pill to me. I can more confidently expect some aid from Mr. Constable, or from Longman's house, because they can look into the concern and satisfy themselves how little chance there is of their being losers, which others cannot do. Perhaps between them they might manage to assist us with the credit necessary, and go on in winding up the concern by occasional acceptances.

An odd thing has happened. I have a letter, by order of the Prince Regent, offering me the laureateship in the most flattering terms. Were I my own man, as you call it, I would refuse this offer (with all gratitude); but, as I am situated, £300 or £400 a year is not to be sneezed at upon a point of poetical honor—and it makes me a better man to that extent. I have not yet written, however. I will say little about Constable's handsome behavior, but shall not forget it. It is needless to say I shall wish him to be consulted in every step that is taken. If I should lose all I advanced to this business, I should be less vexed than I am at this moment. I am very busy with Swift at present, but shall certainly come to town if it is thought necessary; but I should first wish Mr. Constable to look into the affairs to the bottom. Since I have personally superintended them, they have been winding up very fast, and we are now almost within sight of harbor. I will also own it was partly ill-humor at John's blunder last week that made me think of throwing things up.

Yours truly,

W. S.

After writing and despatching this letter, an idea occurred to Scott that there was a quarter, not hitherto alluded to in any of these anxious epistles, from which he might consider himself as entitled to ask assistance, not only with little, if any, chance of a refusal, but (owing to particular circumstances)

without incurring any very painful sense of obligation. On the 25th he says to John Ballantyne:—

After some meditation, last night, it occurred to me I had some title to ask the Duke of Buccleuch's guarantee to a cash account for £4000, as Constable proposes. I have written to him accordingly, and have very little doubt that he will be my surety. If this cash account be in view, Mr. Constable will certainly *assist us* until the necessary writings are made out —I beg your pardon—I dare say I am very stupid; but very often you don't consider that I can't follow details which would be quite obvious to a man of business;—for instance, you tell me daily, "that *if* the sums I count upon *are* forthcoming, the results must be as I suppose." But—in a week—the scene is changed, and all I can do, and more, is inadequate to bring about these results. I protest I don't know if at this moment £4000 *will* clear us out. After all, you are vexed, and so am I; and it is needless to wrangle who has a right to be angry. Commend me to James.

Yours truly,

W. S.

Having explained to the Duke of Buccleuch the position in which he stood —obliged either to procure some guarantee which would enable him to raise £4000, or to sell abruptly all his remaining interest in the copyright of his works; and repeated the statement of his personal property and income, as given in the preceding letter to James Ballantyne—Scott says to his noble friend:—

I am not asking nor desiring any loan from your Grace, but merely the honor of your sanction to my credit as a good man for £4000; and the motive of your Grace's interference would be sufficiently obvious to the London Shylocks, as your constant kindness and protection is no secret to the world. Will your Grace consider whether you can do what I propose, in conscience and safety, and favor me with your answer?—I have a very flattering offer from the Prince Regent, of his own free motion, to make me poet laureate; I am very much embarrassed by it. I am, on the one hand, afraid of giving offence where no one would willingly offend, and perhaps losing an opportunity of smoothing the way to my youngsters through life; on the other hand, the office is a ridiculous one, somehow or other—they and I should be well quizzed,—yet that I should not mind. My real feeling of reluctance lies deeper—it is, that favored as I have been by the public, I

should be considered, with some justice, I fear, as engrossing a petty emolument which might do real service to some poorer brother of the Muses. I shall be most anxious to have your Grace's advice on this subject. There seems something churlish, and perhaps conceited, in repelling a favor so handsomely offered on the part of the Sovereign's representative; and on the other hand, I feel much disposed to shake myself free from it. I should make but a bad courtier, and an ode-maker is described by Pope as a poet out of his way or out of his senses. I will find some excuse for protracting my reply till I can have the advantage of your Grace's opinion; and remain, in the mean time, very truly your obliged and grateful

Walter Scott.

P. S.—I trust your Grace will not suppose me capable of making such a request as the enclosed, upon any idle or unnecessary speculation; but, as I stand situated, it is a matter of deep interest to me to prevent these copyrights from being disposed of either hastily or at under prices. I could have half the booksellers in London for my sureties, on a hint of a new poem; but bankers do not like people in trade, and my brains are not ready to spin another web. So your Grace must take me under your princely care, as in the days of lang syne; and I think I can say, upon the sincerity of an honest man, there is not the most distant chance of your having any trouble or expense through my means.

The Duke's answer was in all respects such as might have been looked for from the generous kindness and manly sense of his character.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., ABBOTSFORD.

Drumlanrig Castle, August 28, 1813.

My dear Sir,—I received yesterday your letter of the 24th. I shall with pleasure comply with your request of guaranteeing the £4000. You must, however, furnish me with the form of a letter to this effect, as I am completely ignorant of transactions of this nature.

I am never willing to *offer* advice, but when my opinion is asked by a friend I am ready to give it. As to the offer of his Royal Highness to appoint you laureate, I shall frankly say that I should be mortified to see you hold a situation which, by the general concurrence of the world, is stamped

ridiculous. There is no good reason why this should be so; but so it is. *Walter Scott, Poet Laureate*, ceases to be the Walter Scott of the Lay, Marmion, etc. Any future poem of yours would not come forward with the same probability of a successful reception. The poet laureate would stick to you and your productions like a piece of *court plaster*. Your muse has hitherto been independent—don't put her into harness. We know how lightly she trots along when left to her natural paces, but do not try driving. I would write frankly and openly to his Royal Highness, but with respectful gratitude, for he *has* paid you a compliment. I would not fear to state that you had hitherto written when in poetic mood, but feared to trammel yourself with a fixed periodical exertion; and I cannot but conceive that his Royal Highness, who has much taste, will at once see the many objections which you must have to his proposal, but which you cannot write. Only think of being chaunted and recitatived by a parcel of hoarse and squeaking choristers on a birthday, for the edification of the bishops, pages, maids of honor, and gentlemen-pensioners! Oh horrible! thrice horrible! Yours sincerely,

Buccleuch, etc.

The letter which first announced the Prince Regent's proposal was from his Royal Highness's librarian, Dr. James Stanier Clarke; but before Scott answered it he had received a more formal notification from the late Marquis of Hertford, then Lord Chamberlain. I shall transcribe both these documents.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., EDINBURGH.

Pavilion, Brighton, August 18, 1813.

My dear Sir,—Though I have never had the honor of being introduced to you, you have frequently been pleased to convey to me very kind and flattering messages, and I trust, therefore, you will allow me, without any further ceremony, to say—That I took an early opportunity this morning of seeing the Prince Regent, who arrived here late yesterday; and I then delivered to his Royal Highness my earnest wish and anxious desire that the vacant situation of poet laureate might be conferred on you. The Prince replied, "that you had already been written to, and that if you wished it, everything would be settled as I could desire."

I hope, therefore, I may be allowed to congratulate you on this event. You are the man to whom it ought first to have been offered, and it gave me sincere pleasure to find that those sentiments of high approbation which my Royal Master had so often expressed towards you in private, were now so openly and honorably displayed in public. Have the goodness, dear sir, to receive this intrusive letter with your accustomed courtesy, and believe me, yours very sincerely,

J. S. Clarke.

Librarian to H. R. H., the Prince Regent.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., EDINBURGH.

Ragley, 31st August, 1813.

Sir,—I thought it my duty to his Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, to express to him my humble opinion that I could not make so creditable a choice as in your person for the office, now vacant, of poet laureate. I am now authorized to offer it to you, which I would have taken an earlier opportunity of doing, but that, till this morning, I have had no occasion of seeing his Royal Highness since Mr. Pye's death. I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

Ingram Hertford.

The following letters conclude this matter:—

TO THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUIS OF HERTFORD,
ETC., ETC., RAGLEY, WARWICKSHIRE.

Abbotsford, 4th September.

My Lord,—I am this day honored with your Lordship's letter of the 31st August, tendering for my acceptance the situation of poet laureate in the Royal Household. I shall always think it the highest honor of my life to have been the object of the good opinion implied in your Lordship's recommendation, and in the gracious acquiescence of his Royal Highness, the Prince Regent. I humbly trust I shall not forfeit sentiments so highly valued, although I find myself under the necessity of declining, with every acknowledgment of respect and gratitude, a situation above my deserts, and

offered to me in a manner so very flattering. The duties attached to the office of poet laureate are not indeed very formidable, if judged of by the manner in which they have sometimes been discharged. But an individual selected from the literary characters of Britain, upon the honorable principle expressed in your Lordship's letter, ought not, in justice to your Lordship, to his own reputation, but above all to his Royal Highness, to accept of the office, unless he were conscious of the power of filling it respectably, and attaining to excellence in the execution of the tasks which it imposes. This confidence I am so far from possessing, that, on the contrary, with all the advantages which do now, and I trust ever will, present themselves to the poet whose task it may be to commemorate the events of his Royal Highness's administration, I am certain I should feel myself inadequate to the fitting discharge of the regularly recurring duty of periodical composition, and should thus at once disappoint the expectation of the public, and, what would give me still more pain, discredit the nomination of his Royal Highness.

Will your Lordship permit me to add, that though far from being wealthy, I already hold two official situations in the line of my profession, which afford a respectable income. It becomes me, therefore, to avoid the appearance of engrossing one of the few appointments which seem specially adapted for the provision of those whose lives have been dedicated exclusively to literature, and who too often derive from their labors more credit than emolument.

Nothing could give me greater pain than being thought ungrateful to his Royal Highness's goodness, or insensible to the honorable distinction his undeserved condescension has been pleased to bestow upon me. I have to trust to your Lordship's kindness for laying at the feet of his Royal Highness, in the way most proper and respectful, my humble, grateful, and dutiful thanks, with these reasons for declining a situation which, though every way superior to my deserts, I should chiefly have valued as a mark of his Royal Highness's approbation.

For your Lordship's unmerited goodness, as well as for the trouble you have had upon this occasion, I can only offer you my respectful thanks, and entreat that you will be pleased to believe me, my Lord Marquis, your Lordship's much obliged and much honored humble servant,

Walter Scott.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC.,
DRUMLANRIG CASTLE.

Abbotsford, September 5, 1813.

My dear Lord Duke,—Good advice is easily followed when it jumps with our own sentiments and inclinations. I no sooner found mine fortified by your Grace's opinion than I wrote to Lord Hertford, declining the laurel in the most civil way I could imagine. I also wrote to the Prince's librarian, who had made himself active on the occasion, dilating, at somewhat more length than I thought respectful to the Lord Chamberlain, my reasons for declining the intended honor. My wife has made a copy of the last letter, which I enclose for your Grace's perusal: there is no occasion either to preserve or return it—but I am desirous you should know what I have put my apology upon, for I may reckon on its being misrepresented. I certainly should never have survived the recitative described by your Grace: it is a part of the etiquette I was quite unprepared for, and should have sunk under it. It is curious enough that Drumlanrig should always have been the refuge of bards who decline court promotion. Gay, I think, refused to be a gentleman-usher, or some such post; and I am determined to abide by my post of Grand Ecuyer Trenchant of the Chateau, varied for that of tale-teller of an evening.

I will send your Grace a copy of the letter of guarantee when I receive it from London. By an arrangement with Longman and Co., the great booksellers in Paternoster Row, I am about to be enabled to place their security, as well as my own, between your Grace and the possibility of hazard. But your kind readiness to forward a transaction which is of such great importance both to my fortune and comfort can never be forgotten—although it can scarce make me more than I have always been, my dear Lord, your Grace's much obliged and truly faithful,

Walter Scott.

(*Copy—Enclosure.*)

TO THE REV. J. S. CLARKE, ETC., ETC., ETC., PAVILION,
BRIGHTON.

Abbotsford, 4th September, 1813.

Sir,—On my return to this cottage, after a short excursion, I was at once surprised and deeply interested by the receipt of your letter. I shall always consider it as the proudest incident of my life that his Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, whose taste in literature is so highly distinguished, should have thought of naming me to the situation of poet laureate. I feel, therefore, no small embarrassment lest I should incur the suspicion of churlish ingratitude in declining an appointment in every point of view so far above my deserts, but which I should chiefly have valued as conferred by the unsolicited generosity of his Royal Highness, and as entitling me to the distinction of terming myself an immediate servant of his Majesty. But I have to trust to your goodness in representing to his Royal Highness, with my most grateful, humble, and dutiful acknowledgments, the circumstances which compel me to decline the honor which his undeserved favor has proposed for me. The poetical pieces I have hitherto composed have uniformly been the hasty production of impulses, which I must term fortunate, since they have attracted his Royal Highness's notice and approbation. But I strongly fear, or rather am absolutely certain, that I should feel myself unable to justify, in the eye of the public, the choice of his Royal Highness, by a fitting discharge of the duties of an office which requires stated and periodical exertion. And although I am conscious how much this difficulty is lessened under the government of his Royal Highness, marked by paternal wisdom at home and successes abroad which seem to promise the liberation of Europe, I still feel that the necessity of a regular commemoration would trammel my powers of composition at the very time when it would be equally my pride and duty to tax them to the uttermost. There is another circumstance which weighs deeply in my mind while forming my present resolution. I have already the honor to hold two appointments under Government, not usually conjoined, and which afford an income, far indeed from wealth, but amounting to decent independence. I fear, therefore, that in accepting one of the few situations which our establishment holds forth as the peculiar provision of literary men, I might be justly censured as availing myself of his Royal Highness's partiality to engross more than my share of the public revenue, to the prejudice of competitors equally meritorious at least, and otherwise unprovided for; and as this calculation will be made by thousands who know that I have reaped

great advantages by the favor of the public, without being aware of the losses which it has been my misfortune to sustain, I may fairly reckon that it will terminate even more to my prejudice than if they had the means of judging accurately of my real circumstances. I have thus far, sir, frankly exposed to you, for his Royal Highness's favorable consideration, the feelings which induce me to decline an appointment offered in a manner so highly calculated to gratify, I will not say my vanity only, but my sincere feelings of devoted attachment to the crown and constitution of my country, and to the person of his Royal Highness, by whom its government has been so worthily administered. No consideration on earth would give me so much pain as the idea of my real feelings being misconstrued on this occasion, or that I should be supposed stupid enough not to estimate the value of his Royal Highness's favor, or so ungrateful as not to feel it as I ought. And you will relieve me from great anxiety if you will have the goodness to let me know if his Royal Highness is pleased to receive favorably my humble and grateful apology.

I cannot conclude without expressing my sense of your kindness and of the trouble you have had upon this account, and I request you will believe me, sir, your obliged humble servant,

Walter Scott.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., KESWICK.

Abbotsford, 4th September, 1813.

My dear Southey,—On my return here I found, to my no small surprise, a letter tendering me the laurel vacant by the death of the poetical Pye. I have declined the appointment, as being incompetent to the task of annual commemoration; but chiefly as being provided for in my professional department, and unwilling to incur the censure of engrossing the emolument attached to one of the few appointments which seems proper to be filled by a man of literature who has no other views in life. Will you forgive me, my dear friend, if I own I had you in my recollection? I have given Croker the hint, and otherwise endeavored to throw the office into your option. I am uncertain if you will like it, for the laurel has certainly been tarnished by some of its wearers, and, as at present managed, its duties are inconvenient and somewhat liable to ridicule. But the latter matter might be amended, as

I think the Regent's good sense would lead him to lay aside these regular commemorations; and as to the former point, it has been worn by Dryden of old, and by Warton in modern days. If you quote my own refusal against me, I reply—first, I have been luckier than you in holding two offices not usually conjoined; secondly, I did not refuse it from any foolish prejudice against the situation, otherwise how durst I mention it to you, my elder brother in the muse?—but from a sort of internal hope that they would give it to you, upon whom it would be so much more worthily conferred. For I am not such an ass as not to know that you are my better in poetry, though I have had, probably but for a time, the tide of popularity in my favor. I have not time to add ten thousand other reasons, but I only wished to tell you how the matter was, and to beg you to think before you reject the offer which I flatter myself will be made to you. If I had not been, like Dogberry, a fellow with two gowns already, I should have jumped at it like a cock at a gooseberry. Ever yours most truly,

Walter Scott.

Immediately after Mr. Croker received Scott's letter here alluded to, Mr. Southey was invited to accept the vacant laurel. But, as the birthday ode had been omitted since the illness of King George III., and the Regent had good sense and good taste enough to hold that ancient custom as "more honored in the breach than the observance," the whole fell completely into disuse. The office was thus relieved from the burden of ridicule which had, in spite of so many illustrious names, adhered to it; and though its emoluments did not in fact amount to more than a quarter of the sum at which Scott rated them when he declined it, they formed no unacceptable addition to Mr. Southey's income. Scott's answer to his brother poet's affectionate and grateful letter on the conclusion of this affair is as follows:—

TO R. SOUTHEY, ESQ., KESWICK.

Edinburgh, November 13, 1813.

I do not delay, my dear Southey, to say my *gratulor*. Long may you live, as Paddy says, to rule over us, and to redeem the crown of Spenser and of Dryden to its pristine dignity. I am only discontented with the extent of your royal revenue, which I thought had been £400, or £300 at the very least. Is there no getting rid of that iniquitous modus, and requiring the *butt* in kind?

I would have you think of it; I know no man so well entitled to Xeres sack as yourself, though many bards would make a better figure at drinking it. I should think that in due time a memorial might get some relief in this part of the appointment—it should be at least, £100 wet and £100 dry. When you have carried your point of discarding the ode, and my point of getting the sack, you will be exactly in the situation of Davy in the farce, who stipulates for more wages, less work, and the key of the ale-cellar. I was greatly delighted with the circumstances of your investiture. It reminded me of the porters at Calais with Dr. Smollett's baggage, six of them seizing upon one small portmanteau, and bearing it in triumph to his lodgings. You see what it is to laugh at the superstitions of a gentleman-usher, as I think you do somewhere. "The whirligig of time brings in his revenges."

Adieu, my dear Southey; my best wishes attend all that you do, and my best congratulations every good that attends you—yea even this, the very least of Providence's mercies, as a poor clergyman said when pronouncing grace over a herring. I should like to know how the Prince received you; his address is said to be excellent, and his knowledge of literature far from despicable. What a change of fortune even since the short time when we met! The great work of retribution is now rolling onward to consummation, yet am I not fully satisfied—*pereat iste*!—there will be no permanent peace in Europe till Buonaparte sleeps with the tyrants of old. My best compliments attend Mrs. Southey and your family.

Ever yours,

Walter Scott.

To avoid returning to the affair of the laureateship, I have placed together such letters concerning it as appeared important. I regret to say that, had I adhered to the chronological order of Scott's correspondence, ten out of every twelve letters between the date of his application to the Duke of Buccleuch, and his removal to Edinburgh on the 12th of November, would have continued to tell the same story of pecuniary difficulty, urgent and almost daily applications for new advances to the Ballantynes, and endeavors, more or less successful, but in no case effectually so, to relieve the pressure on the bookselling firm by sales of its heavy stock to the great publishing houses of Edinburgh and London. Whatever success these

endeavors met with, appears to have been due either directly or indirectly to Mr. Constable; who did a great deal more than prudence would have warranted, in taking on himself the results of its unhappy adventures,—and, by his sagacious advice, enabled the distressed partners to procure similar assistance at the hands of others, who did not partake his own feelings of personal kindness and sympathy. "I regret to learn," Scott writes to him on the 16th October, "that there is great danger of your exertions in our favor, which once promised so fairly, proving finally abortive, or at least being too tardy in their operation to work out our relief. If anything more can be honorably and properly done to avoid a most unpleasant shock, I shall be most willing to do it; if not—God's will be done! There will be enough of property, including my private fortune, to pay every claim; and I have not used prosperity so ill, as greatly to fear adversity. But these things we will talk over at meeting; meanwhile believe me, with a sincere sense of your kindness and friendly views, very truly yours, W. S."—I have no wish to quote more largely from the letters which passed during this crisis between Scott and his partners. The pith and substance of his, to John Ballantyne at least, seems to be summed up in one brief *postscript*: "For God's sake treat me as a man, and not as a milch-cow!"

The difficulties of the Ballantynes were by this time well known throughout the commercial circles not only of Edinburgh, but of London; and a report of their actual bankruptcy, with the addition that Scott was engaged as their surety to the extent of £20,000, found its way to Mr. Morritt about the beginning of November. This dear friend wrote to him, in the utmost anxiety, and made liberal offers of assistance in case the catastrophe might still be averted; but the term of Martinmas, always a critical one in Scotland, had passed before this letter reached Edinburgh, and Scott's answer will show symptoms of a clearing horizon. I think also there is one expression in it which could hardly have failed to convey to Mr. Morritt that his friend was involved, more deeply than he had ever acknowledged, in the concerns of the Messrs. Ballantyne.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., ROKEBY PARK.

Edinburgh, 20th November, 1813.

I did not answer your very kind letter, my dear Morritt, until I could put your friendly heart to rest upon the report you have heard, which I could not

do entirely until this term of Martinmas was passed. I have the pleasure to say that there is no truth whatever in the Ballantynes' reported bankruptcy. They have had severe difficulties for the last four months to make their resources balance the demands upon them, and I, having the price of Rokeby, and other monies in their hands, have had considerable reason for apprehension, and no slight degree of plague and trouble. They have, however, been so well supported, that I have got out of hot water upon their account. They are winding up their bookselling concern with great regularity, and are to abide hereafter by the printing-office, which, with its stock, etc., will revert to them fairly.

I have been able to redeem the offspring of my brain, and they are like to pay me like grateful children. This matter has set me a-thinking about money more seriously than ever I did in my life, and I have begun by insuring my life for £4000, to secure some ready cash to my family should I slip girths suddenly. I think my other property, library, etc., may be worth about £12,000, and I have not much debt.

Upon the whole, I see no prospect of any loss whatever. Although in the course of human events I may be disappointed, there certainly *can* be none to vex your kind and affectionate heart on my account. I am young, with a large official income, and if I lose anything now, I have gained a great deal in my day. I cannot tell you, and will not attempt to tell you, how much I was affected by your letter—so much, indeed, that for several days I could not make my mind up to express myself on the subject. Thank God! all real danger was yesterday put over—and I will write, in two or three days, a funny letter, without any of these vile cash matters, of which it may be said there is no living with them nor without them.

Ever yours, most truly,

Walter Scott.

All these annoyances produced no change whatever in Scott's habits of literary industry. During these anxious months of September, October, and November, he kept feeding James Ballantyne's press, from day to day, both with the annotated text of the closing volumes of Swift's works, and with the MS. of his Life of the Dean. He had also proceeded to mature in his own mind the plan of The Lord of the Isles, and executed such a portion of

the First Canto as gave him confidence to renew his negotiation with Constable for the sale of the whole, or part of its copyright. It was, moreover, at this period, that, looking into an old cabinet in search of some fishing-tackle, his eye chanced to light once more on the Ashestiel fragment of Waverley.—He read over those introductory chapters—thought they had been undervalued—and determined to finish the story.

All this while, too, he had been subjected to those interruptions from idle strangers, which from the first to the last imposed so heavy a tax on his celebrity; and he no doubt received such guests with all his usual urbanity of attention. Yet I was not surprised to discover, among his hasty notes to the Ballantynes, several of tenor akin to the following specimens:—

"September 2, 1813.

"My temper is really worn to a hair's breadth. The intruder of yesterday hung on me till twelve to-day. When I had just taken my pen, he was relieved, like a sentry leaving guard, by two other lounging visitors; and their post has now been supplied by some people on real business."

Again:—

"Monday evening.

"Oh James! oh James! Two Irish dames
Oppress me very sore;
I groaning send one sheet I've penned—
For, hang them! there's no more."

A scrap of nearly the same date to his brother Thomas may be introduced, as belonging to the same state of feeling:—

> Dear Tom,—I observe what you say as to Mr. ****; and as you may often be exposed to similar requests, which it would be difficult to parry, you can sign such letters of introduction as relate to persons whom you do not delight to honor short, *T. Scott*; by which abridgment of your name I shall understand to limit my civilities.

It is proper to mention that, in the very agony of these perplexities, the unfortunate Maturin received from him a timely succor of £50, rendered

doubly acceptable by the kind and judicious letter of advice in which it was enclosed; and I have before me ample evidence that his benevolence had been extended to other struggling brothers of the trade, even when he must often have had actual difficulty to meet the immediate expenditure of his own family. All this, however, will not surprise the reader.

Nor did his general correspondence suffer much interruption; and, as some relief after so many painful details, I shall close the narrative of this anxious year by a few specimens of his miscellaneous communications:—

TO MISS JOANNA BAILLIE, HAMPSTEAD.

Abbotsford, September 12, 1813.

My dear Miss Baillie,—I have been a vile lazy correspondent, having been strolling about the country, and indeed a little way into England, for the greater part of July and August; in short, "aye skipping here and there," like the Tanner of Tamworth's horse. Since I returned, I have had a gracious offer of the laurel on the part of the Prince Regent. You will not wonder that I have declined it, though with every expression of gratitude which such an unexpected compliment demanded. Indeed, it would be high imprudence in one having literary reputation to maintain, to accept of an offer which obliged him to produce a poetical exercise on a given theme twice a year; and besides, as my loyalty to the royal family is very sincere, I would not wish to have it thought mercenary. The public has done its part by me very well, and so has Government: and I thought this little literary provision ought to be bestowed on one who has made literature his sole profession. If the Regent means to make it respectable, he will abolish the foolish custom of the annual odes, which is a drudgery no person of talent could ever willingly encounter—or come clear off from, if he was so rash. And so, peace be with the laurel,

"Profaned by Cibber and contemned by Gray."

I was for a fortnight at Drumlanrig, a grand old chateau, which has descended, by the death of the late Duke of Queensberry, to the Duke of Buccleuch. It is really a most magnificent pile, and when embosomed amid the wide forest scenery, of which I have an infantine recollection, must have been very romantic. But old Q. made wild devastation among the noble trees, although some fine ones are still left, and a quantity of young shoots

are, in despite of the want of every kind of attention, rushing up to supply the places of the fathers of the forest from whose stems they are springing. It will now I trust be in better hands, for the reparation of the castle goes hand in hand with the rebuilding of all the cottages, in which an aged race of pensioners of Duke Charles, and his pious wife,—"Kitty, blooming, young and gay,"—have, during the last reign, been pining into rheumatisms and agues, in neglected poverty.

All this is beautiful to witness: the indoor work does not please me so well, though I am aware that, to those who are to inhabit an old castle, it becomes often a matter of necessity to make alterations by which its tone and character are changed for the worse. Thus a noble gallery, which ran the whole length of the front, is converted into bedrooms—very comfortable, indeed, but not quite so magnificent; and as grim a dungeon as ever knave or honest man was confined in, is in some danger of being humbled into a wine-cellar. It is almost impossible to draw your breath, when you recollect that this, so many feet under-ground, and totally bereft of air and light, was built for the imprisonment of human beings, whether guilty, suspected, or merely unfortunate. Certainly, if our frames are not so hardy, our hearts are softer than those of our forefathers, although probably a few years of domestic war, or feudal oppression, would bring us back to the same case-hardening both in body and sentiment.

I meant to have gone to Rokeby, but was prevented by Mrs. Morritt being unwell, which I very much regret, as I know few people that deserve better health. I am very glad you have known them, and I pray you to keep up the acquaintance in winter. I am glad to see by this day's paper that our friend Terry has made a favorable impression on his first appearance at Covent Garden—he has got a very good engagement there for three years, at twelve guineas a week, which is a handsome income.—This little place comes on as fast as can be reasonably hoped; and the pinasters are all above the ground, but cannot be planted out for twelve months. My kindest compliments—in which Mrs. Scott always joins—attend Miss Agnes, the Doctor, and his family. Ever, my dear friend, yours most faithfully,

Walter Scott.

TO DANIEL TERRY, ESQ., LONDON.

Abbotsford, 20th October, 1813.

Dear Terry,—You will easily believe that I was greatly pleased to hear from you. I had already learned from The Courier (what I had anticipated too strongly to doubt for one instant) your favorable impression on the London public. I think nothing can be more judicious in the managers than to exercise the various powers you possess, in their various extents. A man of genius is apt to be limited to one single style, and to become perforce a mannerist, merely because the public is not so just to its own amusement as to give him an opportunity of throwing himself into different lines; and doubtless the exercise of our talents in one unvaried course, by degrees renders them incapable of any other, as the over-use of any one limb of our body gradually impoverishes the rest. I shall be anxious to hear that you have played *Malvolio*, which is, I think, one of your *coups-de-maître*, and in which envy itself cannot affect to trace an imitation. That same charge of imitation, by the way, is one of the surest scents upon which dunces are certain to open. Undoubtedly, if the same character is well performed by two individuals, their acting must bear a general resemblance—it could not be well performed by both were it otherwise. But this general resemblance, which arises from both following nature and their author, can as little be termed imitation as the river in Wales can be identified with that of Macedon. Never mind these dunderheads, but go on your own way, and scorn to laugh on the right side of your mouth, to make a difference from some ancient comedian who, in the same part, always laughed on the left. Stick to the public—be uniform in your exertions to study even those characters which have little in them, and to give a grace which you cannot find in the author. Audiences are always grateful for this—or rather—for gratitude is as much out of the question in the theatre, as Bernadotte says to Boney it is amongst sovereigns—or rather, the audience is gratified by receiving pleasure from a part which they had no expectation would afford them any. It is in this view that, had I been of your profession, and possessed talents, I think I should have liked often those parts with which my brethren quarrelled, and studied to give them an effect which their intrinsic merit did not entitle them to. I have some thoughts of being in town in spring (not resolutions by any means); and it will be an additional motive to witness your success, and to find you as comfortably established as your friends in Castle Street earnestly hope and trust you will be.

The summer—an uncommon summer in beauty and serenity—has glided away from us at Abbotsford, amidst our usual petty cares and petty pleasures. The children's garden is in apple-pie order, our own completely cropped and stocked, and all the trees flourishing like the green bay of the Psalmist. I have been so busy about our domestic arrangements, that I have not killed six hares this season. Besides, I have got a cargo of old armor, sufficient to excite a suspicion that I intend to mount a squadron of cuirassiers. I only want a place for my armory; and, thank God, I can wait for that, these being no times for building. And this brings me to the loss of poor Stark, with whom more genius has died than is left behind among the collected universality of Scottish architects. O Lord!—but what does it signify?—Earth was born to bear, and man to pay (that is, lords, nabobs, Glasgow traders, and those who have wherewithal)—so wherefore grumble at great castles and cottages, with which the taste of the latter contrives to load the back of Mother Terra?—I have no hobbyhorsical commissions at present, unless if you meet the Voyages of Captain Richard, or Robert Falconer, in one volume—"cow-heel, quoth Sancho"—I mark them for my own. Mrs. Scott, Sophia, Anne, and the boys, unite in kind remembrances. Ever yours truly,

W. Scott.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD BYRON, 4 BENNET STREET, ST. JAMES'S, LONDON.

Abbotsford, 6th November, 1813.

My dear Lord,—I was honored with your Lordship's letter of the 27th September, and have sincerely to regret that there is such a prospect of your leaving Britain, without my achieving your personal acquaintance. I heartily wish your Lordship had come down to Scotland this season, for I have never seen a finer, and you might have renewed all your old associations with Caledonia, and made such new ones as were likely to suit you. I dare promise you would have liked me well enough—for I have many properties of a Turk—never trouble myself about futurity—am as lazy as the day is long—delight in collecting silver-mounted pistols and ataghans, and go out of my own road for no one—all which I take to be attributes of your good Moslem. Moreover, I am somewhat an admirer of royalty, and in order to

maintain this part of my creed, I shall take care never to be connected with a court, but stick to the *ignotum pro mirabili*.

The author of The Queen's Wake will be delighted with your approbation. He is a wonderful creature for his opportunities, which were far inferior to those of the generality of Scottish peasants. Burns, for instance—(not that their extent of talents is to be compared for an instant)—had an education not much worse than the sons of many gentlemen in Scotland. But poor Hogg literally could neither read nor write till a very late period of his life; and when he first distinguished himself by his poetical talent, could neither spell nor write grammar. When I first knew him, he used to send me his poetry, and was both indignant and horrified when I pointed out to him parallel passages in authors whom he had never read, but whom all the world would have sworn he had copied. An evil fate has hitherto attended him, and baffled every attempt that has been made to place him in a road to independence. But I trust he may be more fortunate in future.

I have not yet seen Southey in the Gazette as Laureate. He is a real poet, such as we read of in former times, with every atom of his soul and every moment of his time dedicated to literary pursuits, in which he differs from almost all those who have divided public attention with him. Your Lordship's habits of society, for example, and my own professional and official avocations, must necessarily connect us much more with our respective classes in the usual routine of pleasure or business, than if we had not any other employment than *vacare musis*. But Southey's ideas are all poetical, and his whole soul dedicated to the pursuit of literature. In this respect, as well as in many others, he is a most striking and interesting character.

I am very much interested in all that concerns your Giaour, which is universally approved of among our mountains. I have heard no objection except by one or two geniuses, who run over poetry as a cat does over a harpsichord, and they affect to complain of obscurity. On the contrary, I hold every real lover of the art is obliged to you for condensing the narrative, by giving us only those striking scenes which you have shown to be so susceptible of poetic ornament, and leaving to imagination the says I's and says he's, and all the minutiæ of detail which might be proper in giving evidence before a court of justice. The truth is, I think poetry is most

striking when the mirror can be held up to the reader, and the same kept constantly before his eyes; it requires most uncommon powers to support a direct and downright narration; nor can I remember many instances of its being successfully maintained even by our greatest bards.

As to those who have done me the honor to take my rhapsodies for their model, I can only say they have exemplified the ancient adage, "One fool makes many;" nor do I think I have yet had much reason to suppose I have given rise to anything of distinguished merit. The worst is, it draws on me letters and commendatory verses, to which my sad and sober thanks in humble prose are deemed a most unmeet and ungracious reply. Of this sort of plague your Lordship must ere now have had more than your share, but I think you can hardly have met with so original a request as concluded the letter of a bard I this morning received, who limited his demands to being placed in his due station on Parnassus—*and* invested with a post in the Edinburgh Custom House.

What an awakening of dry bones seems to be taking place on the Continent! I could as soon have believed in the resurrection of the Romans as in that of the Prussians—yet it seems a real and active renovation of national spirit. It will certainly be strange enough if that tremendous pitcher, which has travelled to so many fountains, should be at length broken on the banks of the Saale; but from the highest to the lowest we are the fools of fortune. Your Lordship will probably recollect where the Oriental tale occurs, of a Sultan who consulted Solomon on the proper inscription for a signet-ring, requiring that the maxim which it conveyed should be at once proper for moderating the presumption of prosperity and tempering the pressure of adversity. The apophthegm supplied by the Jewish sage was, I think, admirably adapted for both purposes, being comprehended in the words, "And this also shall pass away."

When your Lordship sees Rogers, will you remember me kindly to him? I hope to be in London next spring, and renew my acquaintance with my friends there. It will be an additional motive if I could flatter myself that your Lordship's stay in the country will permit me the pleasure of waiting upon you. I am, with much respect and regard, your Lordship's truly honored and obliged humble servant,

Walter Scott.

I go to Edinburgh next week, *multum gemens*.

TO MISS JOANNA BAILLIE, HAMPSTEAD.

Edinburgh, 10th December, 1813.

Many thanks, my dear friend, for your kind token of remembrance, which I yesterday received. I ought to blush, if I had grace enough left, at my long and ungenerous silence: but what shall I say? The habit of procrastination, which had always more or less a dominion over me, does not relax its sway as I grow older and less willing to take up the pen. I have not written to dear Ellis this age,—yet there is not a day that I do not think of you and him, and one or two other friends in your southern land. I am very glad the whiskey came safe: do not stint so laudable an admiration for the liquor of Caledonia, for I have plenty of right good and sound Highland Ferintosh, and I can always find an opportunity of sending you up a bottle.

We are here almost mad with the redemption of Holland, which has an instant and gratifying effect on the trade of Leith, and indeed all along the east coast of Scotland. About £100,000 worth of various commodities, which had been dormant in cellars and warehouses, was sold the first day the news arrived, and Orange ribbons and *Orange Boven* was the order of the day among all ranks. It is a most miraculous revivification which it has been our fate to witness. Though of a tolerably sanguine temper, I had fairly adjourned all hopes and expectations of the kind till another generation: the same power, however, that opened the windows of heaven and the fountains of the great deep has been pleased to close them, and to cause his wind to blow upon the face of the waters, so that we may look out from the ark of our preservation, and behold the reappearance of the mountain crests, and old, beloved, and well-known land-marks, which we had deemed swallowed up forever in the abyss: the dove with the olive branch would complete the simile, but of that I see little hope. Buonaparte is that desperate gambler, who will not rise while he has a stake left; and, indeed, to be King of France would be a poor pettifogging enterprise, after having been almost Emperor of the World. I think he will drive things on, till the fickle and impatient people over whom he rules get tired of him and shake him out of the saddle. Some circumstances seem to intimate his having

become jealous of the Senate; and indeed anything like a representative body, however imperfectly constructed, becomes dangerous to a tottering tyranny. The sword displayed on both frontiers may, like that brandished across the road of Balaam, terrify even dumb and irrational subjection into utterance;—but enough of politics, though now a more cheerful subject than they have been for many years past.

I have had a strong temptation to go to the Continent this Christmas; and should certainly have done so, had I been sure of getting from Amsterdam to Frankfort, where, as I know Lord Aberdeen and Lord Cathcart, I might expect a welcome. But notwithstanding my earnest desire to see the allied armies cross the Rhine, which I suppose must be one of the grandest military spectacles in the world, I should like to know that the roads were tolerably secure, and the means of getting forward attainable. In spring, however, if no unfortunate change takes place, I trust to visit the camp of the allies, and see all the pomp and power and circumstance of war, which I have so often imagined, and sometimes attempted to embody in verse.—Johnnie Richardson is a good, honorable, kind-hearted little fellow as lives in the world, with a pretty taste for poetry, which he has wisely kept under subjection to the occupation of drawing briefs and revising conveyances. It is a great good fortune to him to be in your neighborhood, as he is an idolater of genius, and where could he offer up his worship so justly? And I am sure you will like him, for he is really "officious, innocent, sincere." Terry, I hope, will get on well; he is industrious, and zealous for the honor of his art. Ventidius must have been an excellent part for him, hovering between tragedy and comedy, which is precisely what will suit him. We have a woeful want of him here, both in public and private, for he was one of the most easy and quiet chimney-corner companions that I have had for these two or three years past.

I am very glad if anything I have written to you could give pleasure to Miss Edgeworth, though I am sure it will fall very short of the respect which I have for her brilliant talents. I always write to you *à la volée*, and trust implicitly to your kindness and judgment upon all occasions where you may choose to communicate any part of my letters. As to the taxing men, I must battle them as I can: they are worse than the great Emathian conqueror, who

"bade spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground."

Your pinasters are coming up gallantly in the nursery-bed at Abbotsford. I trust to pay the whole establishment a Christmas visit, which will be, as Robinson Crusoe says of his glass of rum, "to mine exceeding refreshment." All Edinburgh have been on tiptoe to see Madame de Staël, but she is now not likely to honor us with a visit, at which I cannot prevail on myself to be very sorry; for as I tired of some of her works, I am afraid I should disgrace my taste by tiring of the authoress too. All my little people are very well, learning, with great pain and diligence, much which they will have forgotten altogether, or nearly so, in the course of twelve years hence: but the habit of learning is something in itself, even when the lessons are forgotten.

I must not omit to tell you that a friend of mine, with whom that metal is more plenty than with me, has given me some gold mohurs to be converted into a ring for enchasing King Charles's hair; but this is not to be done until I get to London, and get a very handsome pattern. Ever, most truly and sincerely, yours,

W. Scott.

The last sentence of this letter refers to a lock of the hair of Charles I., which, at Dr. Baillie's request, Sir Henry Halford had transmitted to Scott when the royal martyr's remains were discovered at Windsor, in April, 1813. Sir John Malcolm had given him some Indian coins to supply virgin gold for the setting of this relic; and for some years he constantly wore the ring, which is a massive and beautiful one, with the word Remember surrounding it in highly relieved black-letter.

The poet's allusion to "taxing men" may require another word of explanation. To add to his troubles during this autumn of 1813, a demand was made on him by the commissioners of the income-tax, to return in one of their schedules an account of the profits of his literary exertions during the last three years. He demurred to this, and took the opinion of high authorities in Scotland, who confirmed him in his impression that the claim

was beyond the statute. The grounds of his resistance are thus briefly stated in one of his letters to his legal friend in London:—

TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ., FLUDYER STREET, WESTMINSTER.

My dear Richardson,—I have owed you a letter this long time, but perhaps my debt might not yet be discharged, had I not a little matter of business to trouble you with. I wish you to lay before either the King's counsel, or Sir Samuel Romilly and any other you may approve, the point whether a copyright being sold for the term during which Queen Anne's act warranted the property to the author, the price is liable in payment of the property-tax. I contend it is not so liable, for the following reasons: 1st, It is a patent right, expected to produce an annual, or at least an incidental profit, during the currency of many years; and surely it was never contended that if a man sold a theatrical patent, or a patent for machinery, property-tax should be levied in the first place on the full price as paid to the seller, and then on the profits as purchased by the buyer. I am not very expert at figures, but I think it clear that a double taxation takes place. 2d, It should be considered that a book may be the work not of one year, but of a man's whole life; and as it has been found, in a late case of the Duke of Gordon, that a fall of timber was not subject to property-tax because it comprehended the produce of thirty years, it seems at least equally fair that mental exertions should not be subjected to a harder principle of measurement. 3d, The demand is, so far as I can learn, totally new and unheard of. 4th, Supposing that I died and left my manuscripts to be sold publicly along with the rest of my library, is there any ground for taxing what might be received for the written book, any more than any rare printed book, which a speculative bookseller might purchase with a view to republication? You will know whether any of these things ought to be suggested in the brief. David Hume, and every lawyer here whom I have spoken to, consider the demand as illegal. Believe me truly yours,

Walter Scott.

Mr. Richardson having prepared a case, obtained upon it the opinions of Mr. Alexander (afterwards Sir William Alexander and Chief Baron of the Exchequer) and of the late Sir Samuel Romilly. These eminent lawyers

agreed in the view of their Scotch brethren; and after a tedious correspondence, the Lords of the Treasury at last decided that the Income-Tax Commissioners should abandon their claim upon the produce of literary labor. I have thought it worth while to preserve some record of this decision, and of the authorities on which it rested, in case such a demand should ever be renewed hereafter.

In the beginning of December, the Town Council of Edinburgh resolved to send a deputation to congratulate the Prince Regent on the prosperous course of public events, and they invited Scott to draw up their address, which, on its being transmitted for previous inspection to Mr. William Dundas, then Member for the City, and through him shown privately to the Regent, was acknowledged to the penman, by his Royal Highness's command, as "the most elegant congratulation a sovereign ever received, or a subject offered." The Lord Provost of Edinburgh presented it accordingly at the levee of the 10th, and it was received most graciously. On returning to the north, the Magistrates expressed their sense of Scott's services on this occasion by presenting him with the freedom of his native city, and also with a piece of plate,—which the reader will find alluded to, among other matters of more consequence, in a letter to be quoted presently.

At this time Scott further expressed his patriotic exultation in the rescue of Europe, by two songs for the anniversary of the death of Pitt; one of which has ever since, I believe, been chanted at that celebration:—

> "O dread was the time and more dreadful the omen,
> When the brave on Marengo lay slaughter'd in vain," etc.

Chapter XXVII

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Insanity of Henry Weber. — Letters on the Abdication of Napoleon, Etc. — Publication of Scott's Life and Edition of Swift. — Essays for the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica. — Completion and Publication of Waverley

1814

I have to open the year 1814 with a melancholy story. Mention has been made, more than once, of Henry Weber, a poor German scholar, who escaping to this country in 1804, from misfortunes in his own, excited Scott's compassion, and was thenceforth furnished, through his means, with literary employment of various sorts. Weber was a man of considerable learning; but Scott, as was his custom, appears to have formed an exaggerated notion of his capacity, and certainly countenanced him, to his own severe cost, in several most unfortunate undertakings. When not engaged on things of a more ambitious character, he had acted for ten years as his protector's amanuensis, and when the family were in Edinburgh, he very often dined with them. There was something very interesting in his appearance and manners: he had a fair, open countenance, in which the honesty and the enthusiasm of his nation were alike visible; his demeanor was gentle and modest; and he had not only a stock of curious antiquarian knowledge, but the reminiscences, which he detailed with amusing simplicity, of an early life chequered with many strange-enough adventures. He was, in short, much a favorite with Scott and all the household; and was invited to dine with them so frequently, chiefly because his friend was aware that he had an unhappy propensity to drinking, and was anxious to keep him away from places where he might have been more likely to indulge it. This vice, however, had been growing on him; and of late Scott had found it necessary to make some rather severe remonstrances about habits which were at once injuring his health, and interrupting his literary industry.

They had, however, parted kindly when Scott left Edinburgh at Christmas, 1813,—and the day after his return, Weber attended him as usual

in his library, being employed in transcribing extracts during several hours, while his friend, seated over against him, continued working at the Life of Swift. The light beginning to fail, Scott threw himself back in his chair, and was about to ring for candles, when he observed the German's eyes fixed upon him with an unusual solemnity of expression. "Weber," said he, "what's the matter with you?" "Mr. Scott," said Weber, rising, "you have long insulted me, and I can bear it no longer. I have brought a pair of pistols with me, and must insist on your taking one of them instantly;" and with that he produced the weapons, which had been deposited under his chair, and laid one of them on Scott's manuscript. "You are mistaken, I think," said Scott, "in your way of setting about this affair—but no matter. It can, however, be no part of your object to annoy Mrs. Scott and the children; therefore, if you please, we will put the pistols into the drawer till after dinner, and then arrange to go out together like gentlemen." Weber answered with equal coolness, "I believe that will be better," and laid the second pistol also on the table. Scott locked them both in his desk, and said, "I am glad you have felt the propriety of what I suggested—let me only request further, that nothing may occur while we are at dinner to give my wife any suspicion of what has been passing." Weber again assented, and Scott withdrew to his dressing-room, from which he immediately despatched a message to one of Weber's intimate companions,—and then dinner was served, and Weber joined the family circle as usual. He conducted himself with perfect composure, and everything seemed to go on in the ordinary way, until whiskey and hot water being produced, Scott, instead of inviting his guest to help himself, mixed two moderate tumblers of toddy, and handed one of them to Weber, who, upon that, started up with a furious countenance, but instantly sat down again, and when Mrs. Scott expressed her fear that he was ill, answered placidly that he was liable to spasms, but that the pain was gone. He then took the glass, eagerly gulped down its contents, and pushed it back to Scott. At this moment the friend who had been sent for made his appearance, and Weber, on seeing him enter the room, rushed past him and out of the house, without stopping to put on his hat. The friend, who pursued instantly, came up with him at the end of the street, and did all he could to soothe his agitation, but in vain. The same evening he was obliged to be put into a strait-waistcoat; and though in a few days he exhibited such symptoms of recovery that he was allowed to go by himself to pay a visit in the north of England, he there soon relapsed, and

continued ever afterwards a hopeless lunatic, being supported to the end of his life, in June, 1818, at Scott's expense, in an asylum at York.

The reader will now appreciate the gentle delicacy of the following letter:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., ROKEBY, GRETA BRIDGE.

Edinburgh, 7th January, 1814.

Many happy New Years to you and Mrs. Morritt.

My dear Morritt,—I have postponed writing a long while, in hopes to send you the Life of Swift. But I have been delayed by an odd accident. Poor Weber, whom you may have heard me mention as a sort of grinder of mine, who assisted me in various ways, has fallen into a melancholy state. His habits, like those of most German students, were always too convivial—this, of course, I guarded against while he was in my house, which was always once a week at least; but unfortunately he undertook a long walk through the Highlands of upwards of 2000 miles, and, I suppose, took potations pottle deep to support him through the fatigue. His mind became accordingly quite unsettled, and after some strange behavior here, he was fortunately prevailed upon to go to **** who resides in Yorkshire. It is not unlikely, from something that dropped from him, that he may take it into his head to call at Rokeby, in which case you must parry any visit, upon the score of Mrs. Morritt's health. If he were what he used to be, you would be much pleased with him; for besides a very extensive general acquaintance with literature, he was particularly deep in our old dramatic lore, a good modern linguist, a tolerable draughtsman and antiquary, and a most excellent hydrographer. I have not the least doubt that if he submits to the proper regimen of abstinence and moderate exercise, he will be quite well in a few weeks or days—if not, it is miserable to think what may happen. The being suddenly deprived of his services in this melancholy way, has flung me back at least a month with Swift, and left me no time to write to my friends, for all my memoranda, etc., were in his hands, and had to be new-modelled, etc., etc.

Our glorious prospects on the Continent called forth the congratulations of the City of Edinburgh among others. The Magistrates asked me to draw their address, which was presented by the Lord Provost in person, who

happens to be a gentleman of birth and fortune. The Prince said some very handsome things respecting the address, with which the Magistrates were so much elated, that they have done the genteel thing (as Winifred Jenkins says) by their literary adviser, and presented me with the freedom of the city, and a handsome piece of plate. I got the freedom at the same time with Lord Dalhousie and Sir Thomas Graham, and the Provost gave a very brilliant entertainment. About 150 gentlemen dined at his own house, all as well served as if there had been a dozen. So if one strikes a cuff on the one side from ill-will, there is a pat on the other from kindness, and the shuttlecock is kept flying. To poor Charlotte's great horror, I chose my plate in the form of an old English tankard, an utensil for which I have a particular respect, especially when charged with good ale, cup, or any of these potables. I hope you will soon see mine.

Your little friends, Sophia and Walter, were at a magnificent party on Twelfth Night at Dalkeith, where the Duke and Duchess entertained all Edinburgh. I think they have dreamed of nothing since but Aladdin's lamp and the palace of Haroun Al-Raschid. I am uncertain what to do this spring. I would fain go on the Continent for three or four weeks, if it be then safe for non-combatants. If not, we will have a merry meeting in London, and, like Master Silence,

> "Eat, drink, and make good cheer,
> And praise heaven for the merry year."

I have much to say about Triermain. The fourth edition is at press. The Empress Dowager of Russia has expressed such an interest in it, that it will be inscribed to her, in some doggerel sonnet or other, by the unknown author. This is funny enough.—Love a thousand times to dear Mrs. Morritt, who, I trust, keeps pretty well. Pray write soon—a modest request from

Walter Scott.

The last of Weber's literary productions were the analyses of the Old German Poems of the *Helden Buch*, and the *Nibelungen Lied*, which appeared in a massive quarto, entitled Illustrations of Northern Antiquities, published in the summer of 1814, by his and Scott's friend, Mr. Robert Jameson. Scott avowedly contributed to this collection an account of the Eyrbiggia Saga, which has since been included in his Prose Miscellanies

(Vol. V., edition 1834); but any one who examines the share of the work which goes under Weber's name will see that Scott had a considerable hand in that also. The rhymed versions from the Nibelungen Lied came, I can have no doubt, from his pen; but he never reclaimed these, or any other similar benefactions, of which I have traced not a few; nor, highly curious and even beautiful as many of them are, could they be intelligible, if separated from the prose narrative on which Weber embroidered them, in imitation of the style of Ellis's Specimens of Metrical Romance.

The following letters, on the first abdication of Napoleon, are too characteristic to be omitted here. I need not remind the reader how greatly Scott had calmed his opinions, and softened his feelings, respecting the career and fate of the most extraordinary man of our age, before he undertook to write his history.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., PORTLAND PLACE, LONDON.

Abbotsford, 30th April, 1814

"Joy—joy in London now!"—and in Edinburgh, moreover, my dear Morritt; for never did you or I see, and never again shall we see, according to all human prospects, a consummation so truly glorious, as now bids fair to conclude this long and eventful war. It is startling to think that, but for the preternatural presumption and hardness of heart displayed by the arch-enemy of mankind, we should have had a hollow and ominous truce with him, instead of a glorious and stable peace with the country over which he tyrannized, and its lawful ruler. But Providence had its own wise purposes to answer—and such was the deference of France to the ruling power—so devoutly did they worship the Devil for possession of his burning throne, that, it may be, nothing short of his rejection of every fair and advantageous offer of peace could have driven them to those acts of resistance which remembrance of former convulsions had rendered so fearful to them. Thank God! it is done at last: and—although I rather grudge him even the mouthful of air which he may draw in the Isle of Elba—yet I question whether the moral lesson would have been completed either by his perishing in battle, or being torn to pieces (which I should greatly have preferred), like the De Witts, by an infuriated crowd of conscripts and their parents. Good God! with what strange feelings must that man retire from the most unbounded authority ever vested in the hands of one man, to the

seclusion of privacy and restraint! We have never heard of one good action which he did, at least for which there was not some selfish or political reason; and the train of slaughter, pestilence, and famine and fire, which his ambition has occasioned, would have outweighed five hundredfold the private virtues of a Titus. These are comfortable reflections to carry with one to privacy. If he writes his own history, as he proposes, we may gain something; but he must send it here to be printed. Nothing less than a neck-or-nothing London bookseller, like John Dunton of yore, will venture to commit to the press his strange details uncastrated. I doubt if he has *stamina* to undertake such a labor; and yet, in youth, as I know from the brothers of Lauriston, who were his school-companions, Buonaparte's habits were distinctly and strongly literary. Spain, the Continental System, and the invasion of Russia he may record as his three leading blunders—an awful lesson to sovereigns that morality is not so indifferent to politics as Machiavelians will assert. *Res nolunt diu male administrari.* Why can we not meet to talk over these matters over a glass of claret? and when shall that be! Not this spring, I fear, for time wears fast away, and I have remained here nailed among my future oaks, which I measure daily with a foot-rule. Those which were planted two years ago begin to look very gayly, and a venerable plantation of four years old looks as *bobbish* as yours at the dairy by Greta side. Besides, I am arranging this cottage a little more conveniently, to put off the plague and expense of building another year; and I assure you, I expect to spare Mrs. Morritt and you a chamber in the wall, with a dressing-room and everything handsome about you. You will not stipulate, of course, for many square feet.—You would be surprised to hear how the Continent is awakening from its iron sleep. The utmost eagerness seems to prevail about English literature. I have had several voluntary epistles from different parts of Germany, from men of letters, who are eager to know what we have been doing, while they were compelled to play at blind man's buff with the *ci-devant Empereur*. The feeling of the French officers, of whom we have many in our vicinity, is very curious, and yet natural. Many of them, companions of Buonaparte's victories, and who hitherto have marched with him from conquest to conquest, disbelieve the change entirely. This is all very stupid to write to you, who are in the centre of these wonders; but what else can I say, unless I should send you the measure of the future fathers of the forest? Mrs. Scott

is with me here—the children in Edinburgh. Our kindest love attends Mrs. Morritt. I hope to hear soon that her health continues to gain ground.

I have a letter from Southey, in high spirits on the glorious news. What a pity this last battle was fought. But I am glad the rascals were beaten once more.

Ever yours,

Walter Scott.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., KESWICK.

Edinburgh, 17th June, 1814.

My dear Southey,—I suspended writing to thank you for the Carmen Triumphale—(a happy omen of what you can do to immortalize our public story)—until the feverish mood of expectation and anxiety should be over. And then, as you truly say, there followed a stunning sort of listless astonishment and complication of feeling, which, if it did not lessen enjoyment, confused and confounded one's sense of it. I remember the first time I happened to see a launch, I was neither so much struck with the descent of the vessel, nor with its majestic sweep to its moorings, as with the blank which was suddenly made from the withdrawing so large an object, and the prospect which was at once opened to the opposite side of the dock crowded with spectators. Buonaparte's fall strikes me something in the same way: the huge bulk of his power, against which a thousand arms were hammering, was obviously to sink when its main props were struck away—and yet now—when it has disappeared—the vacancy which it leaves in our minds and attention marks its huge and preponderating importance more strongly than even its presence. Yet I so devoutly expected the termination, that in discussing the matter with Major Philips, who seemed to partake of the doubts which prevailed during the feverish period preceding the capture of Paris, when he was expressing his apprehensions that the capital of France would be defended to the last, I hazarded a prophecy that a battle would be fought on the heights of Montmartre—(no great sagacity, since it was the point where Marlborough proposed to attack, and for which Saxe projected a scheme of defence)—and that if the allies were successful, which I little doubted, the city would surrender, and the

Senate proclaim the dethronement of Buonaparte. But I never thought nor imagined that he would have *given in* as he has done. I always considered him as possessing the genius and talents of an Eastern conqueror; and although I never supposed that he possessed, allowing for some difference of education, the liberality of conduct and political views which were sometimes exhibited by old Hyder Ally, yet I did think he might have shown the same resolved and dogged spirit of resolution which induced Tippoo Saib to die manfully upon the breach of his capital city with his sabre clenched in his hand. But this is a poor devil, and cannot play the tyrant so rarely as Bottom the Weaver proposed to do. I think it is Strap in Roderick Random, who, seeing a highwayman that had lately robbed him, disarmed and bound, fairly offers to box him for a shilling. One has really the same feeling with respect to Buonaparte, though if he go out of life after all in the usual manner, it will be the strongest proof of his own insignificance, and the liberality of the age we live in. Were I a son of Palm or Hoffer, I should be tempted to take a long shot at him in his retreat to Elba. As for coaxing the French by restoring all our conquests, it would be driving generosity into extravagance: most of them have been colonized with British subjects, and improved by British capital; and surely we owe no more to the French nation than any well-meaning individual might owe to a madman, whom—at the expense of a hard struggle, black eyes, and bruises—he has at length overpowered, knocked down, and by the wholesome discipline of a bull's pizzle and strait-jacket, brought to the handsome enjoyment of his senses. I think with you, what we return to them should be well paid for; and they should have no Pondicherry to be a nest of smugglers, nor Mauritius to nurse a hornet-swarm of privateers. In short, draw teeth, and pare claws, and leave them to fatten themselves in peace and quiet, when they are deprived of the means of indulging their restless spirit of enterprise.

—The above was written at Abbotsford last month, but left in my portfolio there till my return some days ago; and now, when I look over what I have written, I am confirmed in my opinion that we have given the rascals too good an opportunity to boast that they have got well off. An intimate friend of mine, just returned from a long captivity in France, witnessed the entry of the King, guarded by the Imperial Guards, whose countenances betokened the most sullen and ferocious discontent. The mob, and

especially the women, pelted them for refusing to cry, "Vive le Roi." If Louis is well advised, he will get rid of these fellows gradually, but as soon as possible. "Joy, joy in London now!" What a scene has been going on there! I think you may see the Czar appear on the top of one of your stages one morning. He is a fine fellow, and has fought the good fight. Yours affectionately,

Walter Scott.

On the 1st of July, 1814, Scott's Life and Edition of Swift, in nineteen volumes 8vo, at length issued from the press. This adventure, undertaken by Constable in 1808, had been proceeded in during all the variety of their personal relations, and now came forth when author and publisher felt more warmly towards each other than perhaps they had ever before done. The impression was of 1250 copies; and a reprint of similar extent was called for in 1824. The Life of Swift has subsequently been included in the author's Miscellanies, and has obtained a very wide circulation.

By his industrious inquiries, in which, as the preface gratefully acknowledges, he found many zealous assistants, especially among the Irish literati, Scott added to this edition many admirable pieces, both in prose and verse, which had never before been printed, and still more which had escaped notice amidst old bundles of pamphlets and broadsides. To the illustration of these and of all the better known writings of the Dean, he brought the same qualifications which had, by general consent, distinguished his Dryden, "uniting," as the Edinburgh Review expresses it, "to the minute knowledge and patient research of the Malones and Chalmerses, a vigor of judgment and a vivacity of style to which they had no pretensions." His biographical narrative, introductory essays, and notes on Swift, show, indeed, an intimacy of acquaintance with the obscurest details of the political, social, and literary history of the period of Queen Anne, which it is impossible to consider without feeling a lively regret that he never accomplished a long-cherished purpose of preparing a Life and Edition of Pope on a similar scale. It has been specially unfortunate for that "true deacon of the craft," as Scott often called Pope, that first Goldsmith, and then Scott, should have taken up, only to abandon it, the project of writing his life and editing his works.

The Edinburgh Reviewer thus characterizes Scott's Memoir of the Dean of St. Patrick's:—

"It is not everywhere extremely well written, in a literary point of view, but it is drawn up in substance with great intelligence, liberality, and good feeling. It is quite fair and moderate in politics; and perhaps rather too indulgent and tender towards individuals of all descriptions—more full, at least, of kindness and veneration for genius and social virtue, than of indignation at baseness and profligacy. Altogether, it is not much like the production of a mere man of letters, or a fastidious speculator in sentiment and morality; but exhibits throughout, and in a very pleasing form, the good sense and large toleration of a man of the world, with much of that generous allowance for the

'Fears of the brave and follies of the wise,'

which genius too often requires, and should therefore always be most forward to show. It is impossible, however, to avoid noticing that Mr. Scott is by far too favorable to the personal character of his author, whom we think it would really be injurious to the cause of morality to allow to pass either as a very dignified or a very amiable person. The truth is, we think, that he was extremely ambitious, arrogant, and selfish; of a morose, vindictive, and haughty temper; and though capable of a sort of patronizing generosity towards his dependents, and of some attachment towards those who had long known and flattered him, his general demeanor, both in public and private life, appears to have been far from exemplary; destitute of temper and magnanimity, and we will add, of principle, in the former; and in the latter, of tenderness, fidelity, or compassion."—*Edinburgh Review*, vol. xvii. p. 9.

I have no desire to break a lance in this place in defence of the personal character of Swift. It does not appear to me that he stands at all distinguished among politicians (least of all, among the politicians of his time) for laxity of principle; nor can I consent to charge his private demeanor with the absence either of tenderness, or fidelity, or compassion. But who ever dreamed—most assuredly not Scott—of holding up the Dean of St. Patrick's as on the whole an "exemplary character"? The biographer felt, whatever his critic may have thought on the subject, that a vein of morbid humor ran through Swift's whole existence, both mental and physical, from the beginning. "He early adopted," says Scott, "the custom of observing his birthday, as a term not of joy but of sorrow, and of reading,

when it annually recurred, the striking passage of Scripture in which Job laments and execrates the day upon which it was said in his father's house *that a man-child was born*;" and I should have expected that any man who had considered the black close of the career thus early clouded, and read the entry of Swift's diary on the funeral of Stella, his epitaph on himself, and the testament by which he disposed of his fortune, would have been willing, like Scott, to dwell on the splendor of his immortal genius, and the many traits of manly generosity "which he unquestionably exhibited," rather than on the faults and foibles of nameless and inscrutable disease, which tormented and embittered the far greater part of his earthly being. What the critic says of the practical and businesslike style of Scott's biography, appears very just—and I think the circumstance eminently characteristic; nor, on the whole, could his edition, as an edition, have been better dealt with than in the Essay which I have quoted. It was, by the way, written by Mr. Jeffrey, at Constable's particular request. "It was, I think, the first time I ever asked such a thing of him," the bookseller said to me; "and I assure you the result was no encouragement to repeat such petitions." Mr. Jeffrey attacked Swift's whole character at great length, and with consummate dexterity; and, in Constable's opinion, his article threw such a cloud on the Dean, as materially checked, for a time, the popularity of his writings. Admirable as the paper is, in point of ability, I think Mr. Constable may have considerably exaggerated its effects; but in those days it must have been difficult for him to form an impartial opinion upon such a question; for, as Johnson said of Cave, that "he could not spit over his window without thinking of The Gentleman's Magazine," I believe Constable allowed nothing to interrupt his paternal pride in the concerns of his Review, until the Waverley Novels supplied him with another periodical publication still more important to his fortunes.

And this consummation was not long delayed: a considerable addition having by that time been made to the original fragment, there appeared in The Scots Magazine, for February 1, 1814, an announcement, that "Waverley; or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since, a novel, in 3 vols., 12mo," would be published in March. And before Scott came into Edinburgh, at the close of the Christmas vacation, on the 12th of January, Mr. Erskine had perused the greater part of the first volume, and expressed his decided opinion that Waverley would prove the most popular of all his friend's writings. The MS. was forthwith copied by John Ballantyne, and sent to press. As soon as a

volume was printed, Ballantyne conveyed it to Constable, who did not for a moment doubt from what pen it proceeded, but took a few days to consider of the matter, and then offered £700 for the copyright. When we recollect what the state of novel literature in those days was, and that the only exceptions to its mediocrity, the Irish Tales of Miss Edgeworth, however appreciated in refined circles, had a circulation so limited that she had never realized a tithe of £700 by the best of them—it must be allowed that Constable's offer was a liberal one. Scott's answer, however, transmitted through the same channel, was that £700 was too much, in case the novel should not be successful, and too little in case it should. He added, "If our fat friend had said £1000, I should have been staggered." John did not forget to hint this last circumstance to Constable, but the latter did not choose to act upon it; and he ultimately published the work, on the footing of an equal division of profits between himself and the author. There was a considerable pause between the finishing of the first volume and the beginning of the second. Constable had, in 1812, acquired the copyright of the Encyclopædia Britannica, and was now preparing to publish the valuable Supplement to that work, which has since, with modifications, been incorporated into its text. He earnestly requested Scott to undertake a few articles for the Supplement; he agreed—and, anxious to gratify the generous bookseller, at once laid aside his tale until he had finished two essays—those on Chivalry and the Drama. They appear to have been completed in the course of April and May, and he received for each of them —as he did subsequently for that on Romance—£100.

The two next letters will give us, in more exact detail than the author's own recollection could supply in 1830, the history of the completion of Waverley. It was published on the 7th of July; and two days afterwards he thus writes:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., LONDON.

Edinburgh, 9th July, 1814.

My dear Morritt,—I owe you many apologies for not sooner answering your very entertaining letter upon your Parisian journey. I heartily wish I had been of your party, for you have seen what I trust will not be seen again in a hurry; since, to enjoy the delight of a restoration, there is a necessity for a previous *bouleversement* of everything that is valuable in morals and

policy, which seems to have been the case in France since 1790. The Duke of Buccleuch told me yesterday of a very good reply of Louis to some of his attendants, who proposed shutting the doors of his apartments to keep out the throng of people. "Open the door," he said, "to John Bull; he has suffered a great deal in keeping the door open for me."

Now, to go from one important subject to another, I must account for my own laziness, which I do by referring you to a small anonymous sort of a novel, in three volumes, Waverley, which you will receive by the mail of this day. It was a very old attempt of mine to embody some traits of those characters and manners peculiar to Scotland, the last remnants of which vanished during my own youth, so that few or no traces now remain. I had written great part of the first volume, and sketched other passages, when I mislaid the MS., and only found it by the merest accident as I was rummaging the drawers of an old cabinet; and I took the fancy of finishing it, which I did so fast, that the last two volumes were written in three weeks. I had a great deal of fun in the accomplishment of this task, though I do not expect that it will be popular in the south, as much of the humor, if there be any, is local, and some of it even professional. You, however, who are an adopted Scotchman, will find some amusement in it. It has made a very strong impression here, and the good people of Edinburgh are busied in tracing the author, and in finding out originals for the portraits it contains. In the first case, they will probably find it difficult to convict the guilty author, although he is far from escaping suspicion. Jeffrey has offered to make oath that it is mine, and another great critic has tendered his affidavit *ex contrario*; so that these authorities have divided the Gude Town. However, the thing has succeeded very well, and is thought highly of. I don't know if it has got to London yet. I intend to maintain my *incognito*. Let me know your opinion about it. I should be most happy if I could think it would amuse a painful thought at this anxious moment. I was in hopes Mrs. Morritt was getting so much better, that this relapse affects me very much. Ever yours truly,

W. Scott.

P. S.—As your conscience has very few things to answer for, you must still burthen it with the secret of the Bridal. It is spreading very rapidly, and I have one or two little fairy romances, which will make a second volume,

and which I would wish published, but not with my name. The truth is, that this sort of muddling work amuses me, and I am something in the condition of Joseph Surface, who was embarrassed by getting himself too good a reputation; for many things may please people well enough anonymously, which, if they have me in the title-page, would just give me that sort of ill name which precedes hanging—and that would be in many respects inconvenient if I thought of again trying a *grande opus*.

This statement of the foregoing letter (repeated still more precisely in the following one), as to the time occupied in the composition of the second and third volumes of Waverley, recalls to my memory a trifling anecdote, which, as connected with a dear friend of my youth, whom I have not seen for many years, and may very probably never see again in this world, I shall here set down, in the hope of affording him a momentary, though not an unmixed pleasure, when he may chance to read this compilation on a distant shore—and also in the hope that my humble record may impart to some active mind in the rising generation a shadow of the influence which the reality certainly exerted upon his. Happening to pass through Edinburgh in June, 1814, I dined one day with the gentleman in question (now the Honorable William Menzies, one of the Supreme Judges at the Cape of Good Hope), whose residence was then in George Street, situated very near to, and at right angles with, North Castle Street. It was a party of very young persons, most of them, like Menzies and myself, destined for the Bar of Scotland, all gay and thoughtless, enjoying the first flush of manhood, with little remembrance of the yesterday, or care of the morrow. When my companion's worthy father and uncle, after seeing two or three bottles go round, left the juveniles to themselves, the weather being hot, we adjourned to a library which had one large window looking northwards. After carousing here for an hour or more, I observed that a shade had come over the aspect of my friend, who happened to be placed immediately opposite to myself, and said something that intimated a fear of his being unwell. "No," said he, "I shall be well enough presently, if you will only let me sit where you are, and take my chair; for there is a confounded hand in sight of me here, which has often bothered me before, and now it won't let me fill my glass with a good will." I rose to change places with him accordingly, and he pointed out to me this hand which, like the writing on Belshazzar's wall, disturbed his hour of hilarity. "Since we sat down," he said, "I have been

watching it—it fascinates my eye—it never stops—page after page is finished and thrown on that heap of MS., and still it goes on unwearied—and so it will be till candles are brought in, and God knows how long after that. It is the same every night—I can't stand a sight of it when I am not at my books."—"Some stupid, dogged, engrossing clerk, probably," exclaimed myself, or some other giddy youth in our society. "No, boys," said our host, "I well know what hand it is—'tis Walter Scott's." This was the hand that, in the evenings of three summer weeks, wrote the last two volumes of Waverley. Would that all who that night watched it had profited by its example of diligence as largely as William Menzies!

In the next of these letters Scott enclosed to Mr. Morritt the Prospectus of a new edition of the old poems of the Bruce and the Wallace, undertaken by the learned lexicographer, Dr. John Jamieson; and he announces his departure on a sailing excursion round the north of Scotland. It will be observed that when Scott began his letter, he had only had Mr. Morritt's opinion of the first volume of Waverley, and that before he closed it he had received his friend's honest criticism on the work as a whole, with the expression of an earnest hope that he would drop his *incognito* on the title-page of a second edition.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., PORTLAND PLACE, LONDON.

Abbotsford, July 24, 1814.

My Dear Morritt,—I am going to say my *vales* to you for some weeks, having accepted an invitation from a committee of the Commissioners for the Northern Lights (I don't mean the Edinburgh Reviewers, but the *bona-fide* Commissioners for the Beacons), to accompany them upon a nautical tour round Scotland, visiting all that is curious on continent and isle. The party are three gentlemen with whom I am very well acquainted, William Erskine being one. We have a stout cutter, well fitted up and manned for the service by Government; and to make assurance double sure, the admiral has sent a sloop of war to cruise in the dangerous points of our tour, and sweep the sea of the Yankee privateers, which sometimes annoy our northern latitudes. I shall visit the Clephanes in their solitude—and let you know all that I see that is rare and entertaining, which, as we are masters of our time and vessel, should add much to my stock of knowledge.

As to Waverley, I will play Sir Fretful for once, and assure you that I left the story to flag in the first volume on purpose; the second and third have rather more bustle and interest. I wished (with what success Heaven knows) to avoid the ordinary error of novel writers, whose first volume is usually their best. But since it has served to amuse Mrs. Morritt and you *usque ab initio*, I have no doubt you will tolerate it even unto the end. It may really boast to be a tolerably faithful portrait of Scottish manners, and has been recognized as such in Edinburgh. The first edition of a thousand instantly disappeared, and the bookseller informs me that the second, of double the quantity, will not supply the market long.—As I shall be very anxious to know how Mrs. Morritt is, I hope to have a few lines from you on my return, which will be about the end of August or beginning of September. I should have mentioned that we have the celebrated engineer, Stevenson, along with us. I delight in these professional men of talent; they always give you some new lights by the peculiarity of their habits and studies, so different from the people who are rounded, and smoothed, and ground down for conversation, and who can say all that every other person says, and—nothing more.

What a miserable thing it is that our royal family cannot be quiet and decent at least, if not correct and moral in their deportment. Old farmer George's manly simplicity, modesty of expense, and domestic virtue, saved this country at its most perilous crisis; for it is inconceivable the number of persons whom these qualities united in his behalf, who would have felt but feebly the abstract duty of supporting a crown less worthily worn.

—I had just proceeded thus far when your kind favor of the 21st reached Abbotsford. I am heartily glad you continued to like Waverley to the end. The hero is a sneaking piece of imbecility; and if he had married Flora, she would have set him up upon the chimney-piece, as Count Borowlaski's wife used to do with him. I am a bad hand at depicting a hero, properly so called, and have an unfortunate propensity for the dubious characters of Borderers, buccaneers, Highland robbers, and all others of a Robin Hood description. I do not know why it should be, as I am myself, like Hamlet, indifferent honest; but I suppose the blood of the old cattle-drivers of Teviotdale continues to stir in my veins.

I shall *not* own Waverley; my chief reason is that it would prevent me of the pleasure of writing again. David Hume, nephew of the historian, says the

author must be of a Jacobite family and predilections, a yeoman-cavalry man, and a Scottish lawyer, and desires me to guess in whom these happy attributes are united. I shall not plead guilty, however; and as such seems to be the fashion of the day, I hope charitable people will believe my *affidavit* in contradiction to all other evidence. The Edinburgh faith now is, that Waverley is written by Jeffrey, having been composed to lighten the tedium of his late transatlantic voyage. So you see the unknown infant is like to come to preferment. In truth, I am not sure it would be considered quite decorous for me, as a Clerk of Session, to write novels. Judges being monks, Clerks are a sort of lay brethren, from whom some solemnity of walk and conduct may be expected. So, whatever I may do of this kind, "I shall whistle it down the wind, and let it prey at fortune." I will take care, in the next edition, to make the corrections you recommend. The second is, I believe, nearly through the press. It will hardly be printed faster than it was written; for though the first volume was begun long ago, and actually lost for a time, yet the other two were begun and finished between the 4th June and the 1st July, during all which I attended my duty in Court, and proceeded without loss of time or hindrance of business.

I wish, for poor auld Scotland's sake, and for the manes of Bruce and Wallace, and for the living comfort of a very worthy and ingenious dissenting clergyman, who has collected a library and medals of some value, and brought up, I believe, sixteen or seventeen children (his wife's ambition extended to twenty) upon about £150 a year—I say I wish, for all these reasons, you could get me among your wealthy friends a name or two for the enclosed proposals. The price is, I think, too high; but the booksellers fixed it two guineas above what I proposed. I trust it will be yet lowered to five guineas, which is a more come-at-able sum than six. The poems themselves are great curiosities, both to the philologist and antiquary; and that of Bruce is invaluable even to the historian. They have been hitherto wretchedly edited.

I am glad you are not to pay for this scrawl. Ever yours,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—I do not see how my silence can be considered as imposing on the public. If I give my name to a book without writing it, unquestionably that

would be a trick. But, unless in the case of his averring facts which he may be called upon to defend or justify, I think an author may use his own discretion in giving or withholding his name. Harry Mackenzie never put his name in a title-page till the last edition of his works; and Swift only owned one out of his thousand-and-one publications. In point of emolument, everybody knows that I sacrifice much money by withholding my name; and what should I gain by it, that any human being has a right to consider as an unfair advantage? In fact, only the freedom of writing trifles with less personal responsibility, and perhaps more frequently than I otherwise might do.

W. S.

I am not able to give the exact date of the following reply to one of John Ballantyne's expostulations on the subject of *the secret*:—

"No, John, I will not own the book—
I won't, you Picaroon.
When next I try St. Grubby's brook,
The A. of Wa—shall bait the hook—
And flat-fish bite as soon,
As if before them they had got
The worn-out wriggler

Walter Scott."

Chapter XXVIII

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Voyage to the Shetland Isles, Etc. — Scott's Diary Kept on Board the Lighthouse Yacht

1814

The gallant composure with which Scott, when he had dismissed a work from his desk, awaited the decision of the public—and the healthy elasticity of spirit with which he could meanwhile turn his whole zeal upon new or different objects—are among the features in his character which will always, I believe, strike the student of literary history as most remarkable. We have now seen him before the fate of Waverley had been determined—before he had heard a word about its reception in England, except from one partial confidant—preparing to start on a voyage to the northern isles, which was likely to occupy the best part of two months, and in the course of which he could hardly expect to receive any intelligence from his friends in Edinburgh. The Diary which he kept during this expedition is—thanks to the leisure of a landsman on board—a very full one; and, written without the least notion probably that it would ever be perused except in his own family circle, it affords such a complete and artless portraiture of the man, as he was in himself, and as he mingled with his friends and companions, at one of the most interesting periods of his life, that I am persuaded every reader will be pleased to see it printed in its original state. A few extracts from it were published by himself, in one of the Edinburgh Annual Registers—he also drew from it some of the notes to his Lord of the Isles, and the substance of several others for his romance of the Pirate. But the recurrence of these detached passages will not be complained of—expounded and illustrated as the reader will find them by the personal details of the context.

I have been often told by one of the companions of this voyage, that heartily as Scott entered throughout into their social enjoyments, they all perceived him, when inspecting for the first time scenes of remarkable grandeur, to be in such an abstracted and excited mood, that they felt it would be the kindest and discreetest plan to leave him to himself. "I often,"

said Lord Kinnedder, "on coming up from the cabin at night, found him pacing the deck rapidly, muttering to himself—and went to the forecastle, lest my presence should disturb him. I remember, that at Loch Corriskin, in particular, he seemed quite overwhelmed with his feelings; and we all saw it, and retiring unnoticed, left him to roam and gaze about by himself, until it was time to muster the party and be gone." Scott used to mention the surprise with which he himself witnessed Erskine's emotion on first entering the Cave of Staffa. "Would you believe it?" he said—"my poor Willie sat down and wept like a woman!" Yet his own sensibilities, though betrayed in a more masculine and sterner guise, were perhaps as keen as well as deeper than his amiable friend's.

The poet's Diary, contained in five little paper books, is as follows:—

VACATION, 1814.

Voyage in the Lighthouse Yacht to Nova Zembla, and the Lord knows where.

"*July 29, 1814*.—Sailed from Leith about one o'clock on board the Lighthouse Yacht, conveying six guns, and ten men, commanded by Mr. Wilson. The company: Commissioners of the Northern Lights, Robert Hamilton, Sheriff of Lanarkshire; William Erskine, Sheriff of Orkney and Zetland; Adam Duff, Sheriff of Forfarshire. Non-commissioners, Ipse Ego; Mr. David Marjoribanks, son to John Marjoribanks, Provost of Edinburgh, a young gentleman; Rev. Mr. Turnbull, minister of Tingwall, in the presbytery of Shetland. But the official chief of the expedition is Mr. Stevenson, the Surveyor-Viceroy over the Commissioners—a most gentlemanlike and modest man, and well known by his scientific skill.

"Reached the Isle of May in the evening; went ashore, and saw the light—an old tower, and much in the form of a border-keep, with a beacon-grate on the top. It is to be abolished for an oil revolving-light, the grate-fire only being ignited upon the leeward side when the wind is very high. *Quære*—Might not the grate revolve? The isle had once a cell or two upon it. The vestiges of the chapel are still visible. Mr. Stevenson proposed demolishing the old tower, and I recommended *ruining* it *à la picturesque—i. e.*, demolishing it partially. The island might be made a delightful residence for sea-bathers.

"On board again in the evening: watched the progress of the ship round Fifeness, and the revolving motion of the now distant Bell-Rock light until the wind grew rough, and the landsmen sick. To bed at eleven, and slept sound.

"*30th July*.—Waked at six by the steward; summoned to visit the Bell-Rock, where the beacon is well worthy attention. Its dimensions are well known; but no description can give the idea of this slight, solitary, round tower, trembling amid the billows, and fifteen miles from Arbroath, the nearest shore. The fitting up within is not only handsome, but elegant. All work of wood (almost) is wainscot; all hammer-work brass; in short, exquisitely fitted up. You enter by a ladder of rope, with wooden steps, about thirty feet from the bottom, where the mason-work ceases to be solid, and admits of round apartments. The lowest is a storehouse for the people's provisions, water, etc.; above that a storehouse for the lights, of oil, etc.; then the kitchen of the people, three in number; then their sleeping chamber; then the saloon or parlor, a neat little room; above all, the lighthouse; all communicating by oaken ladders, with brass rails, most handsomely and conveniently executed. Breakfasted in the parlor. On board again at nine, and run down, through a rough sea, to Aberbrothock, vulgarly called Arbroath. All sick, even Mr. Stevenson. God grant this occur seldom! Landed and dined at Arbroath, where we were to take up Adam Duff. We visited the appointments of the lighthouse establishment—a handsome tower, with two wings. These contain the lodgings of the keepers of the light—very handsome, indeed, and very clean. They might be thought too handsome, were it not of consequence to give those men, entrusted with a duty so laborious and slavish, a consequence in the eyes of the public and in their own. The central part of the building forms a single tower, corresponding with the lighthouse. As the keepers' families live here, they are apprised each morning by a signal that *all is well*. If this signal be not made, a tender sails for the rock directly. I visited the abbey church for the third time, the first being—*eheu!*—the second with T. Thomson. Dined at Arbroath, and came on board at night, where I made up this foolish journal, and now beg for wine and water. So the vessel is once more in motion.

"*31st July*.—Waked at seven; vessel off Fowlsheugh and Dunnottar. Fair wind, and delightful day; glide enchantingly along the coast of Kincardineshire, and open the bay of Nigg about ten. At eleven, off

Aberdeen; the gentlemen go ashore to Girdle-Ness, a projecting point of rock to the east of the harbor of Foot-Dee. There the magistrates of Aberdeen wish to have a fort and beacon-light. The Oscar, whaler, was lost here last year, with all her hands, excepting two; about forty perished. Dreadful, to be wrecked so near a large and populous town! The view of Old and New Aberdeen from the sea is quite beautiful. About noon proceed along the coast of Aberdeenshire, which, to the northwards, changes from a bold and rocky to a low and sandy character. Along the bay of Belhelvie, a whole parish was swallowed up by the shifting sands, and is still a desolate waste. It belonged to the Earls of Errol, and was rented at £500 a year at the time. When these sands are passed the land is all arable. Not a tree to be seen; nor a grazing cow, or sheep, or even a labor-horse at grass, though this be Sunday. The next remarkable object was a fragment of the old castle of Slains, on a precipitous bank, overlooking the sea. The fortress was destroyed when James VI. marched north [A. D. 1594], after the battle of Glenlivet, to reduce Huntly and Errol to obedience. The family then removed to their present mean habitation, for such it seems, a collection of low houses forming a quadrangle, one side of which is built on the very verge of the precipice that overhangs the ocean. What seems odd, there are no stairs down to the beach. Imprudence, or ill-fortune as fatal as the sands of Belhelvie, has swallowed up the estate of Errol, excepting this dreary mansion-house, and a farm or two adjoining. We took to the boat, and running along the coast had some delightful sea-views to the northward of the castle. The coast is here very rocky; but the rocks, being rather soft, are wasted and corroded by the constant action of the waves,—and the fragments which remain, where the softer parts have been washed away, assume the appearance of old Gothic ruins. There are open arches, towers, steeples, and so forth. One part of this scaur is called *Dunbuy*, being colored yellow by the dung of the sea-fowls, who build there in the most surprising numbers. We caught three young gulls. But the most curious object was the celebrated Buller of Buchan, a huge rocky cauldron, into which the sea rushes through a natural arch of rock. I walked round the top; in one place the path is only about two feet wide, and a monstrous precipice on either side. We then rowed into the cauldron or buller from beneath, and saw nothing around us but a regular wall of black rock, and nothing above but the blue sky. A fishing hamlet had sent out its inhabitants, who, gazing from the brink, looked like sylphs looking down upon gnomes. In the side of the

cauldron opens a deep black cavern. Johnson says it might be a retreat from storms, which is nonsense. In a high gale the waves rush in with incredible violence. An old fisher said he had seen them flying over the natural wall of the buller, which cannot be less than 200 feet high. Same old man says Slains is now inhabited by a Mr. Bowles, who comes so far from the southward that naebody kens whare he comes frae. 'Was he frae the Indies?'—'Na; he did not think he came that road. He was far frae the southland. Naebody ever heard the name of the place; but he had brought more guid out o' Peterhead than a' the Lords he had seen in Slains, and he had seen three.' About half-past five we left this interesting spot, and after a hard pull reached the yacht. Weather falls hazy, and rather calm; but at sea we observe vessels enjoying more wind. Pass Peterhead, dimly distinguishing two steeples and a good many masts. Mormounthill said to resemble a coffin—a likeness of which we could not judge, Mormount being for the present invisible. Pass Rattray-Head: near this cape are dangerous shelves, called the Bridge of Rattray. Here the wreck of the Doris merchant vessel came on shore, lost last year with a number of passengers for Shetland. We lie off all night.

"*1st August*.—Off Fraserburgh—a neat little town. Mr. Stevenson and the Commissioners go on shore to look at a light maintained there upon an old castle, on a cape called Kinnaird's Head. The morning being rainy, and no object of curiosity ashore, I remain on board, to make up my journal, and write home.

"The old castle, now bearing the light, is a picturesque object from the sea. It was the baronial mansion of the Frasers, now Lords Saltoun—an old square tower with a minor fortification towards the landing-place on the sea-side. About eleven, the Commissioners came off, and we leave this town, the extreme point of the Moray Firth, to stretch for Shetland—salute the castle with three guns, and stretch out with a merry gale. See Mormount, a long flattish-topped hill near to the West Trouphead, and another bold cliff promontory projecting into the firth. Our gale soon failed, and we are now all but becalmed; songs, ballads, recitations, backgammon, and piquet, for the rest of the day. Noble sunset and moon rising; we are now out of sight of land.

"*2d August*.—At sea in the mouth of the Moray Firth. This day almost a blank—light baffling airs, which do us very little good; most of the landsmen sick, more or less; piquet, backgammon, and chess, the only resources.—*P.M.* A breeze, and we begin to think we have passed the Fair Isle, lying between Shetland and Orkney, at which it was our intention to have touched. In short, like one of Sinbad's adventures, we have run on till neither captain nor pilot know exactly where we are. The breeze increases —weather may be called rough; worse and worse after we are in our berths, nothing but booming, trampling, and whizzing of waves about our ears, and ever and anon, as we fall asleep, our ribs come in contact with those of the vessel; hail Duff and the Udaller in the after-cabin, but they are too sick to answer. Towards morning, calm (comparative), and a nap.

"*3d August*.—At sea as before; no appearance of land; proposed that the Sheriff of Zetland do issue a *meditatione fugæ* warrant against his territories, which seem to fly from us. Pass two whalers; speak the nearest, who had come out of Lerwick, which is about twenty miles distant; stand on with a fine breeze. About nine at night, with moonlight and strong twilight, we weather the point of Bard-head, and enter a channel about three quarters of a mile broad which forms the southern entrance to the harbor of Lerwick, where we cast anchor about half-past ten, and put Mr. Turnbull on shore.

"*4th August*.—Harbor of Lerwick. Admire the excellence of this harbor of the metropolis of Shetland. It is a most beautiful place, screened on all sides from the wind by hills of a gentle elevation. The town, a fishing village built irregularly upon a hill ascending from the shore, has a picturesque appearance. On the left is Fort Charlotte, garrisoned of late by two companies of veterans. The Greenlandmen, of which nine fine vessels are lying in the harbor, add much to the liveliness of the scene. Mr. Duncan, Sheriff-substitute, came off to pay his respects to his principal; he is married to a daughter of my early acquaintance, Walter Scott of Scotshall. We go ashore. Lerwick, a poor-looking place, the streets flagged instead of being causewayed, for there are no wheel-carriages. The streets full of drunken riotous sailors from the whale-vessels. It seems these ships take about 1000 sailors from Zetland every year, and return them as they come back from the fishery. Each sailor may gain from £20 to £30, which is paid by the merchants of Lerwick, who have agencies from the owners of the

whalers in England. The whole return may be between £25,000 and £30,000. These Zetlanders, as they get a part of this pay on landing, make a point of treating their English messmates, who get drunk of course, and are very riotous. The Zetlanders themselves do *not* get drunk, but go straight home to their houses, and reserve their hilarity for the winter season, when they spend their wages in dancing and drinking. Erskine finds employment as Sheriff, for the neighborhood of the fort enables him to make *main forte*, and secure a number of the rioters. We visit F. Charlotte, which is a neat little fort mounting ten heavy guns to the sea, but only one to the land. Major F., the Governor, showed us the fort; it commands both entrances of the harbor: the north entrance is not very good, but the south capital. The water in the harbor is very deep, as frigates of the smaller class lie almost close to the shore. Take a walk with Captain M'Diarmid, a gentlemanlike and intelligent officer of the garrison; we visit a small fresh-water loch called *Cleik-him-in*; it borders on the sea, from which it is only divided by a sort of beach, apparently artificial: though the sea lashes the outside of this beach, the water of the lake is not brackish. In this lake are the remains of a Picts' castle, but ruinous. The people think the castle has not been built on a natural island, but on an artificial one formed by a heap of stones. These Duns or Picts' castles are so small, it is impossible to conceive what effectual purpose they could serve excepting a temporary refuge for the chief.—Leave *Cleik-him-in*, and proceed along the coast. The ground is dreadfully encumbered with stones; the patches which have been sown with oats and barley bear very good crops, but they are mere *patches*, the cattle and ponies feeding amongst them, and secured by tethers. The houses most wretched, worse than the worst herd's house I ever saw. It would be easy to form a good farm by enclosing the ground with Galloway dykes, which would answer the purpose of clearing it at the same time of stones; and as there is plenty of limeshell, marle, and alga-marina, manure could not be wanting. But there are several obstacles to improvement, chiefly the undivided state of the properties, which lie *run-rig*; then the claims of Lord Dundas, the lord of the country, and above all, perhaps, the state of the common people, who, dividing their attention between the fishery and the cultivation, are not much interested in the latter, and are often absent at the proper times of labor. Their ground is chiefly dug with the spade, and their ploughs are beyond description awkward. An odd custom prevails: any person, without exception (if I understand rightly), who wishes to raise a

few kail, fixes upon any spot he pleases, encloses it with a dry stone wall, uses it as a kailyard till he works out the soil, then deserts it and makes another. Some dozen of these little enclosures, about twenty or thirty feet square, are in sight at once. They are called *planty-cruives*; and the Zetlanders are so far from reckoning this an invasion, or a favor on the part of the proprietor, that their most exaggerated description of an avaricious person is one who would refuse liberty for a *planty-cruive*; or to infer the greatest contempt of another, they will say, they would not hold a *planty-cruive* of him. It is needless to notice how much this license must interfere with cultivation.

"Leaving the *cultivated* land, we turn more inland, and pass two or three small lakes. The muirs are mossy and sterile in the highest degree; the hills are clad with stunted heather, intermixed with huge great stones; much of an astringent root with a yellow flower, called *Tormentil*, used by the islanders in dressing leather in lieu of the oak bark. We climbed a hill, about three miles from Lerwick, to a cairn which presents a fine view of the indented coast of the island, and the distant isles of Mousa and others. Unfortunately the day is rather hazy—return by a circuitous route, through the same sterile country. These muirs are used as a commonty by the proprietors of the parishes in which they lie, and each, without any regard to the extent of his peculiar property, puts as much stock upon them as he chooses. The sheep are miserable looking, hairy-legged creatures, of all colors, even to sky-blue. I often wondered where Jacob got speckled lambs; I think now they must have been of the Shetland stock. In our return, pass the upper end of the little lake of *Cleik-him-in*, which is divided by a rude causeway from another small loch, communicating with it, however, by a sluice, for the purpose of driving a mill. But such a mill! The wheel is horizontal, with the cogs turned diagonally to the water; the beam stands upright, and is inserted in a stone-quern of the old-fashioned construction. This simple machine is enclosed in a hovel about the size of a pig-sty—and there is the mill! There are about 500 such mills in Shetland, each incapable of grinding more than a sack at a time.

"I cannot get a distinct account of the nature of the land rights. The Udal proprietors have ceased to exist, yet proper feudal tenures seem ill understood. Districts of ground are in many instances understood to belong to Townships or Communities, possessing what may be arable by patches,

and what is muir as a commonty, *pro indiviso*. But then individuals of such a Township often take it upon them to grant feus of particular parts of the property thus possessed *pro indiviso*. The town of Lerwick is built upon a part of the commonty of Sound, the proprietors of the houses having feu-rights from different heritors of that Township, but why from one rather than another, or how even the whole Township combining (which has not yet been attempted) could grant such a right upon principle, seems altogether uncertain. In the mean time the chief stress is laid upon occupance. I should have supposed, upon principle that Lord Dundas, as superior, possessed the *dominium eminens*, and ought to be resorted to as the source of land rights. But it is not so. It has been found that the heritors of each Township hold directly of the Crown, only paying the *Scat*, or Norwegian land-tax, and other duties to his lordship, used and wont. Besides, he has what are called property lands in every Township, or in most, which he lets to his tenants. Lord Dundas is now trying to introduce the system of leases and a better kind of agriculture. Return home and dine at Sinclair's, a decent inn—Captain M'Diarmid and other gentlemen dine with us.—Sleep at the inn on a straw couch.

"*5th August 1814*.—Hazy disagreeable morning;—Erskine trying the rioters —notwithstanding which, a great deal of rioting still in the town. The Greenlanders, however, only quarrelled among themselves, and the Zetland sailors seemed to exert themselves in keeping peace. They are, like all the other Zetlanders I have seen, a strong, clear-complexioned, handsome race, and the women are very pretty. The females are rather slavishly employed, however, and I saw more than one carrying home the heavy sea-chests of their husbands, brothers, or lovers, discharged from on board the Greenlanders. The Zetlanders are, however, so far provident, that when they enter the navy they make liberal allowance of their pay for their wives and families. Not less than £15,000 a year has been lately paid by the Admiralty on this account; yet this influx of money, with that from the Greenland fishery, seems rather to give the means of procuring useless indulgences than of augmenting the stock of productive labor. Mr. Collector Ross tells me that from the King's books it appears that the quantity of spirits, tea, coffee, tobacco, snuff, and sugar, imported annually into Lerwick for the consumption of Zetland, averages at sale price, £20,000 yearly, at the least. Now the inhabitants of Zetland, men, women, and children, do not exceed

22,000 in all, and the proportion of foreign luxuries seems monstrous, unless we allow for the habits contracted by the seamen in their foreign trips. Tea, in particular, is used by all ranks, and porridge quite exploded.

"We parade Lerwick. The most remarkable thing is, that the main street being flagged, and all the others very narrow lanes descending the hill by steps, anything like a cart, of the most ordinary and rude construction, seems not only out of question when the town was built, but in its present state quite excluded. A road of five miles in length, on the line between Lerwick and Scalloway, has been already made—upon a very awkward and expensive plan, and ill-lined as may be supposed. But it is proposed to extend this road by degrees: carts will then be introduced, and by crossing the breed of their ponies judiciously, they will have Galloways to draw them. The streets of Lerwick (as one blunder perpetrates another) will then be a bar to improvement, for till the present houses are greatly altered, no cart can approach the quay. In the garden of Captain Nicolson, R. N., which is rather in a flourishing state, he has tried various trees, almost all of which have died except the willow. But the plants seem to me to be injured in their passage; seeds would perhaps do better. We are visited by several of the notables of the island, particularly Mr. Mowat, a considerable proprietor, who claims acquaintance with me as the friend of my father, and remembers me as a boy. The day clearing up, Duff and I walk with this good old gentleman to *Cleik-him-in*, and with some trouble drag a boat off the beach into the fresh-water loch, and go to visit the Picts' castle. It is of considerable size, and consists of three circular walls of huge natural stones admirably combined without cement. The outer circuit seems to have been simply a bounding wall or bulwark; the second or interior defence contains lodgments such as I shall describe. This inner circuit is surrounded by a wall of about sixteen or eighteen feet thick, composed, as I said, of huge massive stones placed in layers with great art, but without mortar or cement. The wall is not perpendicular, but the circle lessens gradually towards the top, as an old-fashioned pigeon-house. Up the interior of this wall there proceeds a circular winding gallery ascending in the form of an inclined plane, so as to gain the top by circling round like a corkscrew within the walls. This is enlightened by little apertures (about two feet by three) into the inside, and also, it is said, by small slits—of which I saw none. It is said there are marks of galleries within the circuit, running

parallel to the horizon; these I saw no remains of; and the interior gallery, with its apertures, is so extremely low and narrow, being only about three feet square, that it is difficult to conceive how it could serve the purpose of communication. At any rate, the size fully justifies the tradition prevalent here as well as in the south of Scotland, that the Picts were a diminutive race. More of this when we see the more perfect specimen of a Pict castle in Mousa, which we resolve to examine, if it be possible. Certainly I am deeply curious to see what must be one of the most ancient houses in the world, built by a people who, while they seem to have bestowed much pains on their habitations, knew neither the art of cement, of arches, or of stairs. The situation is wild, dreary, and impressive. On the land side are huge sheets and fragments of rocks, interspersed with a stinted vegetation of grass and heath, which bears no proportion to the rocks and stones. From the top of his tower the Pictish Monarch might look out upon a stormy sea, washing a succession of rocky capes, reaches, and headlands, and immediately around him was the deep fresh-water loch on which his fortress was constructed. It communicates with the land by a sort of causeway, formed, like the artificial islet itself, by heaping together stones till the pile reached the surface of the water. This is usually passable, but at present overflooded.—Return and dine with Mr. Duncan, Sheriff-substitute —are introduced to Dr. Edmonstone, author of a History of Shetland, who proposes to accompany us to-morrow to see the Cradle of Noss. I should have mentioned that Mr. Stevenson sailed this morning with the yacht to survey some isles to the northward; he returns on Saturday, it is hoped.

"*6th August.*—Hire a six-oared boat, whaler-built, with a taper point at each end, so that the rudder can be hooked on either at pleasure. These vessels look very frail, but are admirably adapted to the stormy seas, where they live when a ship's boat stiffly and compactly built must necessarily perish. They owe this to their elasticity and lightness. Some of the rowers wear a sort of coats of dressed sheep leather, sewed together with thongs. We sailed out at the southern inlet of the harbor, rounding successively the capes of the Hammer, Kirkubus, the Ving, and others, consisting of bold cliffs, hollowed into caverns, or divided into pillars and arches of fantastic appearance, by the constant action of the waves. As we passed the most northerly of these capes, called, I think, the Ord, and turned into the open sea, the scenes became yet more tremendously sublime. Rocks upwards of

three or four hundred feet in height presented themselves in gigantic succession, sinking perpendicularly into the main, which is very deep even within a few fathoms of their base. One of these capes is called the Bard-head; a huge projecting arch is named the Giant's Leg.

'Here the lone sea-bird wakes its wildest cry.'

Not lone, however, in one sense, for their numbers and the variety of their tribes are immense, though I think they do not quite equal those of Dunbuy, on the coast of Buchan. Standing across a little bay, we reached the Isle of Noss, having hitherto coasted the shore of Bressay. Here we see a detached and precipitous rock, or island, being a portion rent by a narrow sound from the rest of the cliff, and called the Holm. This detached rock is wholly inaccessible, unless by a pass of peril, entitled the Cradle of Noss, which is a sort of wooden chair, travelling from precipice to precipice on rings, which run upon two cables stretched across over the gulf. We viewed this extraordinary contrivance from beneath, at the distance of perhaps one hundred fathoms at least. The boatmen made light of the risk of crossing it, but it must be tremendous to a brain disposed to be giddy. Seen from beneath, a man in the basket would resemble a large crow or raven floating between rock and rock. The purpose of this strange contrivance is to give the tenant the benefit of putting a few sheep upon the Holm, the top of which is level, and affords good pasture. The animals are transported in the cradle by one at a time, a shepherd holding them upon his knees. The channel between the Holm and the isle is passable by boats in calm weather, but not at the time when we saw it. Rowing on through a heavy tide, and nearer the breakers than any but Zetlanders would have ventured, we rounded another immensely high cape, called by the islanders the Noup of Noss, but by sailors Hang-cliff, from its having a projecting appearance. This was the highest rock we had yet seen, though not quite perpendicular. Its height has never been measured: I should judge it exceeds 600 feet; it has been conjectured to measure 800 and upwards. Our steersman had often descended this precipitous rock, having only the occasional assistance of a rope, one end of which he secured from time to time round some projecting cliff. The collecting sea-fowl for their feathers was the object, and he might gain five or six dozen, worth eight or ten shillings, by such an adventure. These huge precipices abound with caverns, many of which run much farther into the rock than any one has ventured to explore. We entered (with

much hazard to our boat) one called the Orkney-man's Harbor, because an Orkney vessel run in there some years since to escape a French privateer. The entrance was lofty enough to admit us without striking the mast, but a sudden turn in the direction of the cave would have consigned us to utter darkness if we had gone in farther. The dropping of the sea-fowl and cormorants into the water from the sides of the cavern, when disturbed by our approach, had something in it wild and terrible.

"After passing the Noup, the precipices become lower, and sink into a rocky shore with deep indentations, called by the natives, *Gios*. Here we would fain have landed to visit the Cradle from the top of the cliff, but the surf rendered it impossible. We therefore rowed on like Thalaba, in 'Allah's name,' around the Isle of Noss, and landed upon the opposite side of the small sound which divides it from Bressay. Noss exactly resembles in shape Salisbury crags, supposing the sea to flow down the valley called the Hunter's bog, and round the foot of the precipice. The eastern part of the isle is fine smooth pasture, the best I have seen in these isles, sloping upwards to the verge of the tremendous rocks which form its western front.

"As we are to dine at Gardie-House (the seat of young Mr. Mowat), on the Isle of Bressay, Duff and I—who went together on this occasion—resolve to walk across the island, about three miles, being by this time thoroughly wet. Bressay is a black and heathy isle, full of little lochs and bogs. Through storm and shade, and dense and dry, we find our way to Gardie, and have then to encounter the sublunary difficulties of wanting the keys of our portmanteaus, etc., the servants having absconded to see the Cradle. These being overcome, we are most hospitably treated at Gardie. Young Mr. Mowat, son of my old friend, is an improver, and a *moderate* one. He has got a ploughman from Scotland, who acts as *grieve*, but as yet with the prejudices and inconveniences which usually attach themselves to the most salutary experiments. The ploughman complains that the Zetlanders work as if a spade or hoe burned their fingers, and that though they only get a shilling a day, yet the labor of three of them does not exceed what one good hand in Berwickshire would do for 2*s.* 6*d.* The islanders retort that a man can do no more than he can; that they are not used to be taxed to their work so severely; that they will work as their fathers did, and not otherwise; and at first the landlord found difficulty in getting hands to work under his Caledonian task-master. Besides, they find fault with his *ho*, and *gee*, and

wo, when ploughing. 'He speaks to the horse,' they say, 'and they gang—and there's something no canny about the man.' In short, between the prejudices of laziness and superstition, the ploughman leads a sorry life of it;—yet these prejudices are daily abating, under the steady and indulgent management of the proprietor. Indeed, nowhere is improvement in agriculture more necessary. An old-fashioned Zetland plough is a real curiosity. It had but one handle, or stilt, and a coulter, but no sock; it ripped the furrow, therefore, but did not throw it aside. When this precious machine was in motion, it was dragged by four little bullocks yoked abreast, and as many ponies harnessed, or rather strung, to the plough by ropes and thongs of rawhide. One man went before, walking backward, with his face to the bullocks, and pulling them forward by main strength. Another held down the plough by its single handle, and made a sort of slit in the earth, which two women, who closed the procession, converted into a furrow, by throwing the earth aside with shovels. An antiquary might be of opinion that this was the very model of the original plough invented by Triptolemus; and it is but justice to Zetland to say, that these relics of ancient agricultural art will soon have all the interest attached to rarity. We could only hear of one of these ploughs within three miles of Lerwick.

"This and many other barbarous habits to which the Zetlanders were formerly wedded seem only to have subsisted because their amphibious character of fishers and farmers induced them to neglect agricultural arts. A Zetland farmer looks to the sea to pay his rent; if the land finds him a little meal and kail, and (if he be a very clever fellow) a few potatoes, it is very well. The more intelligent part of the landholders are sensible of all this, but argue like men of good sense and humanity on the subject. To have good farming, you must have a considerable farm, upon which capital may be laid out to advantage. But to introduce this change suddenly would turn adrift perhaps twenty families, who now occupy small farms *pro indiviso*, cultivating by patches, or *rundale* and *runrig*, what part of the property is arable, and stocking the pasture as a common upon which each family turns out such stock as they can rear, without observing any proportion as to the number which it can support. In this way many townships, as they are called, subsist indeed, but in a precarious and indigent manner. Fishing villages seem the natural resource for this excess of population; but, besides the expense of erecting them, the habits of the people are to be considered,

who, with 'one foot on land and one on sea,' would be with equal reluctance confined to either element. The remedy seems to be, that the larger proprietors should gradually set the example of better cultivation, and introduce better implements. They will, by degrees, be imitated by the inferior proprietors, and by their tenants; and, as turnips and hay crops become more general, a better and heavier class of stock will naturally be introduced.

"The sheep in particular might be improved into a valuable stock, and would no doubt thrive, since the winters are very temperate. But I should be sorry that extensive pasture farms were introduced, as it would tend to diminish a population invaluable for the supply of our navy. The improvement of the arable land, on the contrary, would soon set them beyond the terrors of famine with which the islanders are at present occasionally visited; and, combined with fisheries, carried on not by farmers, but by real fishers, would amply supply the inhabitants, without diminishing the export of dried fish. This separation of trades will in time take place, and then the prosperous days of Zetland will begin. The proprietors are already upon the alert, studying the means of gradual improvement, and no humane person would wish them to drive it on too rapidly, to the distress and perhaps destruction of the numerous tenants who have been bred under a different system.

"I have gleaned something of the peculiar superstitions of the Zetlanders, which are numerous and potent. Witches, fairies, etc., are as numerous as ever they were in Teviotdale. The latter are called *Trows*, probably from the Norwegian *Dwärg* (or *dwarf*) the D being readily converted into T. The dwarfs are the prime agents in the machinery of Norwegian superstition. The *trows* do not differ from the fairies of the Lowlands, or *Sighean* of the Highlanders. They steal children, dwell within the interior of green hills, and often carry mortals into their recesses. Some, yet alive, pretend to have been carried off in this way, and obtain credit for the marvels they tell of the subterranean habitations of the trows. Sometimes, when a person becomes melancholy and low-spirited, the trows are supposed to have stolen the real being, and left a moving phantom to represent him. Sometimes they are said to steal only the heart—like Lancashire witches. There are cures in each case. The party's friends resort to a cunning man or woman, who hangs about the neck a triangular stone in the shape of a heart, or conjures back

the lost individual, by retiring to the hills and employing the necessary spells. A common receipt, when a child appears consumptive and puny, is that the conjurer places a bowl of water on the patient's head, and pours melted lead into it through the wards of a key. The metal assumes of course a variety of shapes, from which he selects a portion, after due consideration, which is sewn into the shirt of the patient. Sometimes no part of the lead suits the seer's fancy. Then the operation is recommenced, until he obtains a fragment of such a configuration as suits his mystical purpose. Mr. Duncan told us he had been treated in this way when a boy.

"A worse and most horrid opinion prevails, or did prevail, among the fishers —namely, that he who saves a drowning man will receive at his hands some deep wrong or injury. Several instances were quoted to-day in company, in which the utmost violence had been found necessary to compel the fishers to violate this inhuman prejudice. It is conjectured to have arisen as an apology for rendering no assistance to the mariners as they escaped from a shipwrecked vessel, for these isles are infamous for plundering wrecks. A story is told of the crew of a stranded vessel who were warping themselves ashore by means of a hawser which they had fixed to the land. The islanders (of Unst, as I believe) watched their motions in silence, till an old man reminded them that if they suffered these sailors to come ashore, they would consume all their winter stock of provisions. A Zetlander cut the hawser, and the poor wretches, twenty in number, were all swept away. This is a tale of former times—the cruelty would not now be *active*; but I fear that even yet the drowning mariner would in some places receive no assistance in his exertions, and certainly he would in most be plundered to the skin upon his landing. The gentlemen do their utmost to prevent this infamous practice. It may seem strange that the natives should be so little affected by a distress to which they are themselves so constantly exposed. But habitual exposure to danger hardens the heart against its consequences, whether to ourselves or others. There is yet living a man—if he can be called so—to whom the following story belongs: He was engaged in catching sea-fowl upon one of the cliffs, with his father and brother. All three were suspended by a cord, according to custom, and overhanging the ocean, at the height of some hundred feet. This man being uppermost on the cord, observed that it was giving way, as unable to support their united weight. He called out to his brother who was next to him—'Cut away a nail

below, Willie,' meaning he should cut the rope beneath, and let his father drop. Willie refused, and bid him cut himself, if he pleased. He did so, and his brother and father were precipitated into the sea. He never thought of concealing or denying the adventure in all its parts. We left Gardie-House late; being on the side of the Isle of Bressay, opposite to Lerwick, we were soon rowed across the bay. A laugh with Hamilton, whose gout keeps him stationary at Lerwick, but whose good-humor defies gout and every other provocation, concludes the evening.

"*7th August, 1814.*—Being Sunday, Duff, Erskine, and I rode to Tingwall upon Zetland ponies, to breakfast with our friend Parson Turnbull, who had come over in our yacht. An ill-conducted and worse-made road served us four miles on our journey. This *Via Flaminia* of Thule terminates, like its prototype, in a bog. It is, however, the only road in these isles, except about half a mile made by Mr. Turnbull. The land in the interior much resembles the Peel-heights, near Ashestiel; but, as you approach the other side of the island, becomes better. Tingwall is rather a fertile valley, up which winds a loch of about two miles in length. The kirk and manse stand at the head of the loch, and command a view down the valley to another lake beyond the first, and thence over another reach of land, to the ocean, indented by capes and studded with isles; among which, that of St. Ninian's, abruptly divided from the mainland by a deep chasm, is the most conspicuous. Mr. Turnbull is a Jedburgh man by birth, but a Zetlander by settlement and inclination. I have reason to be proud of my countryman; he is doing his best, with great patience and judgment, to set a good example both in temporals and spirituals, and is generally beloved and respected among all classes. His glebe is in far the best order of any ground I have seen in Zetland. It is enclosed chiefly with dry-stone, instead of the useless turf-dykes; and he has sown grass, and has a hay-stack, and a second crop of clover, and may claim well-dressed fields of potatoes, barley, and oats. The people around him are obviously affected by his example. He gave us an excellent discourse and remarkably good prayers, which are seldom the excellence of the Presbyterian worship. The congregation were numerous, decent, clean, and well-dressed. The men have all the air of seamen, and are a good-looking hardy race. Some of the old fellows had got faces much resembling Tritons; if they had had conchs to blow, it would have completed them. After church, ride down the loch to Scalloway—the country wild but

pleasant, with sloping hills of good pasturage, and patches of cultivation on the lower ground. Pass a huge standing stone or pillar. Here, it is said, the son of an old Earl of the Orkneys met his fate. He had rebelled against his father, and fortified himself in Zetland. The Earl sent a party to dislodge him, who, not caring to proceed to violence against his person, failed in the attempt. The Earl then sent a stronger force, with orders to take him dead or alive. The young Absalom's castle was stormed—he himself fled across the loch, and was overtaken and slain at this pillar. The Earl afterwards executed the perpetrators of this slaughter, though they had only fulfilled his own mandate.

"We reach Scalloway, and visit the ruins of an old castle, composed of a double tower or keep, with turrets at the corners. It is the principal, if not the only ruin of Gothic times in Zetland, and is of very recent date, being built in 1600. It was built by Patrick Stewart, Earl of Orkney, afterwards deservedly executed at Edinburgh for many acts of tyranny and oppression. It was this rapacious lord who imposed many of those heavy duties still levied from the Zetlanders by Lord Dundas. The exactions by which he accomplished this erection were represented as grievous. He was so dreaded that upon his trial one Zetland witness refused to say a word till he was assured that there was no chance of the Earl returning to Scalloway. Over the entrance of the castle are his arms, much defaced, with the unicorns of Scotland for supporters, the assumption of which was one of the articles of indictment. There is a Scriptural inscription also above the door, in Latin, now much defaced:—

'PATRICIUS ORCHADIÆ ET ZETLANDIÆ COMES. A. D. 1600.
CUJUS FUNDAMEN SAXUM EST, DOMUS ILLA MANEBIT STABILIS: E CONTRA, SI SIT ARENA, PERIT.'

"This is said to have been furnished to Earl Patrick by a Presbyterian divine, who slyly couched under it an allusion to the evil practices by which the Earl had established his power. He perhaps trusted that the language might disguise the import from the Earl. If so, the Scottish nobility are improved in literature, for the Duke of Gordon pointed out an error in the Latinity.

"Scalloway has a beautiful and very safe harbor, but as it is somewhat difficult of access, from a complication of small islands, it is inferior to Lerwick. Hence, though still nominally the capital of Zetland, for all edictal citations are made at Scalloway, it has sunk into a small fishing hamlet. The Norwegians made their original settlement in this parish of Tingwall. At the head of this loch, and just below the manse, is a small round islet accessible by stepping-stones, where they held their courts; hence the islet is called Law-ting—Ting, or Thing, answering to our word business, exactly like the Latin *negotium*. It seems odd that in Dumfries-shire, and even in the Isle of Man, where the race and laws were surely Celtic, we have this Gothic word Ting and Tingwald applied in the same way. We dined with Mr. Scott of Scalloway, who, like several families of this name in Shetland, is derived from the house of Scotstarvet. They are very clannish, marry much among themselves, and are proud of their descent. Two young ladies, daughters of Mr. Scott's, dined with us—they were both Mrs. Scotts, having married brothers—the husband of one was lost in the unfortunate Doris. They were pleasant, intelligent women, and exceedingly obliging. Old Mr. Scott seems a good country gentleman. He is negotiating an exchange with Lord Dundas, which will give him the Castle of Scalloway and two or three neighboring islands: the rest of the archipelago (seven, I think, in number) are already his own. He will thus have command of the whole fishing and harbor, for which he parts with an estate of more immediate value, lying on the other side of the mainland. I found my name made me very popular in this family, and there were many inquiries after the state of the Buccleuch family, in which they seemed to take much interest. I found them possessed of the remarkable circumstances attending the late projected sale of Ancrum, and the death of Sir John Scott, and thought it strange that, settled for three generations in a country so distant, they should still take an interest in those matters. I was loaded with shells and little curiosities for my young people.

"There was a report (January was two years) of a kraken or some monstrous fish being seen off Scalloway. The object was visible for a fortnight, but nobody dared approach it, although I should have thought the Zetlanders would not have feared the devil if he came by water. They pretended that the suction, when they came within a certain distance, was so great as to endanger their boats. The object was described as resembling a vessel with

her keel turned upmost in the sea, or a small ridge of rock or island. Mr. Scott thinks it might have been a vessel overset, or a large whale: if the latter, it seems odd they should not have known it, as whales are the intimate acquaintances of all Zetland sailors. Whatever it was it disappeared after a heavy gale of wind, which seems to favor the idea that it was the wreck of a vessel. Mr. Scott seems to think Pontopiddan's narrations and descriptions are much more accurate than we inland men suppose; and I find most Zetlanders of the same opinion. Mr. Turnbull, who is not credulous upon these subjects, tells me that this year a parishioner of his, a well-informed and veracious person, saw an animal, which, if his description was correct, must have been of the species of sea-snake, driven ashore on one of the Orkneys two or three years ago. It was very long, and seemed about the thickness of a Norway log, and swam on the top of the waves, occasionally lifting and bending its head. Mr. T. says he has no doubt of the veracity of the narrator, but still thinks it possible it may have been a mere log, or beam of wood, and that the spectator may have been deceived by the motion of the waves, joined to the force of imagination. This for the Duke of Buccleuch.

"At Scalloway my curiosity was gratified by an account of the sword-dance, now almost lost, but still practised in the Island of Papa, belonging to Mr. Scott. There are eight performers, seven of whom represent the Seven Champions of Christendom, who enter one by one with their swords drawn, and are presented to the eighth personage, who is not named. Some rude couplets are spoken (in *English*, not *Norse*), containing a sort of panegyric upon each champion as he is presented. They then dance a sort of cotillion, as the ladies described it, going through a number of evolutions with their swords. One of my three Mrs. Scotts readily promised to procure me the lines, the rhymes, and the form of the dance. I regret much that young Mr. Scott was absent during this visit; he is described as a reader and an enthusiast in poetry. Probably I might have interested him in preserving the dance, by causing young persons to learn it. A few years since, a party of Papa-men came to dance the sword-dance at Lerwick as a public exhibition with great applause. The warlike dances of the northern people, of which I conceive this to be the only remnant in the British dominions, are repeatedly alluded to by their poets and historians. The introduction of the Seven Champions savors of a later period, and was probably ingrafted upon

the dance when *mysteries* and *moralities* (the first scenic representations) came into fashion. In a stall pamphlet, called the history of Buckshaven, it is said those fishers sprung from Danes, and brought with them their *war-dance* or *sword-dance*, and a rude wooden cut of it is given. We resist the hospitality of our entertainers, and return to Lerwick despite a most downright fall of rain. My pony stumbles coming down hill; saddle sways round, having but one girth and that too long, and lays me on my back. *N. B.* The bogs in Zetland as soft as those in Liddesdale. Get to Lerwick about ten at night. No yacht has appeared.

"*8th August.*—No yacht, and a rainy morning; bring up my journal. Day clears up, and we go to pay our farewell visits of thanks to the hospitable Lerwegians, and at the Fort. Visit kind old Mr. Mowat, and walk with him and Collector Ross to the point of Quaggers, or Twaggers, which forms one arm of the southern entrance to the sound of Bressay. From the eminence a delightful sea view, with several of those narrow capes and deep reaches or inlets of the sea, which indent the shores of that land. On the right hand a narrow bay, bounded by the isthmus of Sound, with a house upon it resembling an old castle. In the indenture of the bay, and divided from the sea by a slight causeway, the lake of *Cleik-him-in*, with its Pictish castle. Beyond this the bay opens another yet; and, behind all, a succession of capes, headlands, and islands, as far as the cape called Sumburgh-head, which is the furthest point of Zetland in that direction. Inland, craggy, and sable muirs, with cairns, among which we distinguish the Wart or Ward of Wick, to which we walked on the 4th. On the left the island of Bressay, with its peaked hill called the Wart of Bressay. Over Bressay see the top of Hang-cliff. Admire the Bay of Lerwick, with its shipping, widening out to the northwards, and then again contracted into a narrow sound, through which the infamous Bothwell was pursued by Kirkaldy of Grange, until he escaped through the dexterity of his pilot, who sailed close along a sunken rock, upon which Kirkaldy, keeping the weather-gage, struck, and sustained damage. The rock is visible at low water, and is still called the Unicorn, from the name of Kirkaldy's vessel. Admire Mr. Mowat's little farm, of about thirty acres, bought about twenty years since for £75, and redeemed from the miserable state of the surrounding country, so that it now bears excellent corn; here also was a hay crop. With Mr. Turnbull's it makes two. Visit Mr. Ross, collector of the customs, who presents me with the most

superb collection of the stone axes (or adzes, or whatever they are), called *celts*. The Zetlanders call them *thunder-bolts*, and keep them in their houses as a receipt against thunder; but the Collector has succeeded in obtaining several. We are now to dress for dinner with the Notables of Lerwick, who give us an entertainment in their Town-hall. Oho!

"Just as we were going to dinner, the yacht appeared, and Mr. Stevenson landed. He gives a most favorable account of the isles to the northward, particularly Unst. I believe Lerwick is the worst part of Shetland. Are hospitably received and entertained by the Lerwick gentlemen. They are a quick, intelligent race—chiefly of Scottish birth, as appears from their names, Mowat, Gifford, Scott, and so forth. These are the chief proprietors. The Norwegian or Danish surnames, though of course the more ancient, belong, with some exceptions, to the lower ranks. The Veteran Corps expects to be disbanded, and the officers and Lerwegians seem to part with regret. Some of the officers talk of settling here. The price of everything is moderate, and the style of living unexpensive. Against these conveniences are to be placed a total separation from public life, news, and literature; and a variable and inhospitable climate. Lerwick will suffer most severely if the Fort is not occupied by some force or other; for, between whiskey and frolic, the Greenland sailors will certainly burn the little town. We have seen a good deal, and heard much more, of the pranks of these unruly guests. A gentleman of Lerwick, who had company to dine with him, observed beneath his window a party of sailors eating a leg of roast mutton, which he witnessed with philanthropic satisfaction, till he received the melancholy information, that that individual leg of mutton, being the very sheet-anchor of his own entertainment, had been violently carried off from his kitchen, spit and all, by these honest gentlemen, who were now devouring it. Two others, having carried off a sheep, were apprehended, and brought before a Justice of the Peace, who questioned them respecting the fact. The first denied he had taken the sheep, but said he had seen it taken away by a fellow with a red nose and a black wig (this was the Justice's description). 'Don't you think he was like his honor, Tom?' he added, appealing to his comrade. 'By G—, Jack,' answered Tom, 'I believe it was the very man!' Erskine has been busy with these facetious gentlemen, and has sent several to prison, but nothing could have been done without the soldiery. We leave Lerwick at eight o'clock, and sleep on board the yacht.

"*9th August, 1814.*—Waked at seven, and find the vessel has left Lerwick harbor, and is on the point of entering the sound which divides the small island of Mousa (or Queen's Island) from Coningsburgh, a very wild part of the main island so called. Went ashore, and see the very ancient castle of Mousa, which stands close on the seashore. It is a Pictish fortress, the most entire probably in the world. In form it resembles a dice-box, for the truncated cone is continued only to a certain height, after which it begins to rise perpendicularly, or rather with a tendency to expand outwards. The building is round, and has been surrounded with an outer-wall, of which hardly the slightest vestiges now remain. It is composed of a layer of stones, without cement; they are not of large size, but rather small and thin. To give a vulgar comparison, it resembles an old ruinous pigeon-house. Mr. Stevenson took the dimensions of this curious fort, which are as follows: Outside diameter at the base is fifty-two feet; at the top thirty-eight feet. The diameter of the interior at the base is nineteen feet six inches; at the top twenty-one feet; the curve in the inside being the reverse of the outside, or nearly so. The thickness of the walls at the base seventeen feet; at the top eight feet six inches. The height outside forty-two feet; the inside thirty-four feet. The door or entrance faces the sea, and the interior is partly filled with rubbish. When you enter you see, in the inner wall, a succession of small openings like windows, directly one above another, with broad flat stones, serving for lintels; these are about nine inches thick. The whole resembles a ladder. There were four of these perpendicular rows of windows or apertures, the situation of which corresponds with the cardinal points of the compass. You enter the galleries contained in the thickness of the wall by two of these apertures, which have been broken down. These interior spaces are of two descriptions: one consists of a winding ascent, not quite an inclined plane, yet not by any means a regular stair; but the edges of the stones, being suffered to project irregularly, serve for rude steps—or a kind of assistance. Through this narrow staircase, which winds round the building, you creep up to the top of the castle, which is partly ruinous. But besides the staircase, there branch off at irregular intervals horizontal galleries, which go round the whole building, and receive air from the holes I formerly mentioned. These apertures vary in size, diminishing as they run, from about thirty inches in width by eighteen in height, till they are only about a foot square. The lower galleries are full man height, but narrow. They diminish both in height and width as they ascend, and as the thickness

of the wall in which they are enclosed diminishes. The uppermost gallery is so narrow and low, that it was with great difficulty I crept through it. The walls are built very irregularly, the sweep of the cone being different on the different sides.

"It is said by Torfæus that this fort was repaired and strengthened by Erlind, who, having forcibly carried off the mother of Harold, Earl of the Orkneys, resolved to defend himself to extremity in this place against the insulted Earl. How a castle could be defended which had no opening to the outside for shooting arrows, and which was of a capacity to be pulled to pieces by the assailants, who could advance without annoyance to the bottom of the wall (unless it were battlemented upon the top), does not easily appear. But to Erlind's operations the castle of Mousa possibly owes the upper and perpendicular, or rather overhanging, part of its elevation, and also its rude staircase. In these two particulars it seems to differ from all other Picts' castles, which are ascended by an inclined plane, and generally, I believe, terminate in a truncated cone, without that strange counterpart of the perpendicular or projecting part of the upper wall. Opposite to the castle of Mousa are the ruins of another Pictish fort: indeed, they all communicate with each other through the isles. The island of Mousa is the property of a Mr. Piper, who has improved it considerably, and values his castle. I advised him to clear out the interior, as he tells us there are three or four galleries beneath those now accessible, and the difference of height between the exterior and interior warrants his assertion.

"We get on board, and in time, for the wind freshens, and becomes contrary. We beat down to Sumburgh-head, through rough weather. This is the extreme south-eastern point of Zetland; and as the Atlantic and German oceans unite at this point, a frightful tide runs here, called Sumburgh-rost. The breeze, contending with the tide, flings the breakers in great style upon the high broken cliffs of Sumburgh-head. They are all one white foam, ascending to a great height. We wished to double this point, and lie by in a bay between that and the northern or north-western cape, called Fitful-head, and which seems higher than Sumburgh itself—and tacked repeatedly with this view; but a confounded islet, called *The Horse*, always baffled us, and, after three heats, fairly distanced us. So we run into a roadstead, called Quendal Bay, on the south-eastern side, and there anchor for the night. We go ashore with various purposes,—Stevenson to see the site of a proposed

lighthouse on this tremendous cape—Marjoribanks to shoot rabbits—and Duff and I to look about us.

"I ascended the head by myself, which is lofty, and commands a wild sea-view. Zetland stretches away, with all its projecting capes and inlets, to the north-eastward. Many of those inlets approach each other very nearly; indeed, the two opposite bays at Sumburgh-head seem on the point of joining, and rendering that cape an island. The two creeks from those east and western seas are only divided by a low isthmus of blowing sand, and similar to that which wastes part of the east coast of Scotland. It has here blown like the deserts of Arabia, and destroyed some houses, formerly the occasional residences of the Earls of Orkney. The steep and rocky side of the cape, which faces the west, does not seem much more durable. These lofty cliffs are all of sand-flag, a very loose and perishable kind of rock, which slides down in immense masses, like avalanches, after every storm. The rest lies so loose, that, on the very brow of the loftiest crag, I had no difficulty in sending down a fragment as large as myself: he thundered down in tremendous style, but splitting upon a projecting cliff, descended into the ocean like a shower of shrapnel shot. The sea beneath rages incessantly among a thousand of the fragments which have fallen from the peaks, and which assume an hundred strange shapes. It would have been a fine situation to compose an ode to the Genius of Sumburgh-head, or an Elegy upon a Cormorant—or to have written and spoken madness of any kind in prose or poetry. But I gave vent to my excited feelings in a more simple way; and sitting gently down on the steep green slope which led to the beach, I e'en slid down a few hundred feet, and found the exercise quite an adequate vent to my enthusiasm. I recommend this exercise (time and place suiting) to all my brother scribblers, and I have no doubt it will save much effusion of Christian ink. Those slopes are covered with beautiful short herbage. At the foot of the ascent, and towards the isthmus, is the old house of Sumburgh, in appearance a most dreary mansion. I found, on my arrival at the beach, that the hospitality of the inhabitants had entrapped my companions. I walked back to meet them, but escaped the gin and water. On board about nine o'clock at night. A little schooner lies between us and the shore, which we had seen all day buffeting the tide and breeze like ourselves. The wind increases, and the ship is made SNUG—a sure sign the passengers will not be so.

"*10th August, 1814.*—The omen was but too true—a terrible combustion on board, among plates, dishes, glasses, writing-desks, etc., etc.; not a wink of sleep. We weigh and stand out into that delightful current called *Sumburgh-rost*, or *rust*. This tide certainly owes us a grudge, for it drove us to the eastward about thirty miles on the night of the first, and occasioned our missing the Fair Isle, and now it has caught us on our return. All the landsmen sicker than sick, and our Viceroy, Stevenson, qualmish. This is the only time that I have felt more than temporary inconvenience, but this morning I have headache and nausea; these are trifles, and in a well-found vessel, with a good pilot, we have none of that mixture of danger which gives dignity to the traveller. But he must have a stouter heart than mine, who can contemplate without horror the situation of a vessel of an inferior description caught among these headlands and reefs of rocks, in the long and dark winter nights of these regions. Accordingly, wrecks are frequent. It is proposed to have a light on Sumburgh-head, which is the first land made by vessels coming from the eastward; Fitful-head is higher, but is to the west, from which quarter few vessels come.

"We are now clear of Zetland, and about ten o'clock reach the Fair Isle; one of their boats comes off, a strange-looking thing without an entire plank in it, excepting one on each side, upon the strength of which the whole depends, the rest being patched and joined. This trumpery skiff the men manage with the most astonishing dexterity, and row with remarkable speed; they have two banks, that is, two rowers on each bench, and use very short paddles. The wildness of their appearance, with long elf-locks, striped worsted caps, and shoes of raw-hide—the fragility of their boat—and their extreme curiosity about us and our cutter, give them a title to be distinguished as *natives*. One of our people told their steersman, by way of jeer, that he must have great confidence in Providence to go to sea in such a vehicle; the man very sensibly replied that without the same confidence he would not go to sea in the best *tool* in England. We take to our boat, and row for about three miles round the coast, in order to land at the inhabited part of the island. This coast abounds with grand views of rocks and bays. One immense portion of rock is (like the Holm of Noss) separated by a chasm from the mainland. As it is covered with herbage on the top, though a literal precipice all round, the natives contrive to ascend the rock by a place which would make a goat dizzy, and then drag the sheep up by ropes,

though they sometimes carry a sheep up on their shoulders. The captain of a sloop of war, being ashore while they were at this work, turned giddy and sick while looking at them. This immense precipice is several hundred feet high, and is perforated below by some extraordinary apertures, through which a boat might pass; the light shines distinctly through these hideous chasms.

"After passing a square bay called the North-haven, tenanted by sea-fowl and seals (the first we have yet seen), we come in view of the small harbor. Land, and breakfast, for which, till now, none of us felt inclination. In front of the little harbor is the house of the tacksman, Mr. Strong, and in view are three small assemblages of miserable huts, where the inhabitants of the isle live. There are about thirty families and 250 inhabitants upon the Fair Isle. It merits its name, as the plain upon which the hamlets are situated bears excellent barley, oats, and potatoes, and the rest of the isle is beautiful pasture, excepting to the eastward, where there is a moss, equally essential to the comfort of the inhabitants, since it supplies them with peats for fuel. The Fair Isle is about three miles long and a mile and a half broad. Mr. Strong received us very courteously. He lives here, like Robinson Crusoe, in absolute solitude as to society, unless by a chance visit from the officers of a man-of-war. There is a signal-post maintained on the island by Government, under this gentleman's inspection; when any ship appears that cannot answer his signals, he sends off to Lerwick and Kirkwall to give the alarm. Rogers was off here last year, and nearly cut off one of Mr. Strong's express-boats, but the active islanders outstripped his people by speed of rowing. The inhabitants pay Mr. Strong for the possessions which they occupy under him as sub-tenants, and cultivate the isle in their own way, *i. e.*, by digging instead of ploughing (though the ground is quite open and free from rocks, and they have several scores of ponies), and by raising alternate crops of barley, oats, and potatoes; the first and last are admirably good. They rather over-manure their crops; the possessions lie runrig, that is, by alternate ridges, and the outfield or pasture ground is possessed as common to all their cows and ponies. The islanders fish for Mr. Strong at certain fixed rates, and the fish is his property, which he sends to Kirkwall, Lerwick, or elsewhere, in a little schooner, the same which we left in Quendal Bay, and about the arrival of which we found them anxious. An equal space of rich land on the Fair Isle, situated in an inland county of

Scotland, would rent for £3000 a year at the very least. To be sure it would not be burdened with the population of 250 souls, whose bodies (fertile as it is) it cannot maintain in bread, they being supplied chiefly from the mainland. Fish they have plenty, and are even nice in their choice. Skate they will not touch; dog-fish they say is only food for Orkney-men, and when they catch them, they make a point of tormenting the poor fish for eating off their baits from the hook, stealing the haddocks from their lines, and other enormities. These people, being about halfway between Shetland and Orkney, have unfrequent connection with either archipelago, and live and marry entirely among themselves. One lad told me, only five persons had left the island since his remembrance, and of those, three were pressed for the navy. They seldom go to Greenland; but this year five or six of their young men were on board the whalers. They seemed extremely solicitous about their return, and repeatedly questioned us about the names of the whalers which were at Lerwick, a point on which we could give little information.

"The manners of these islanders seem primitive and simple, and they are sober, good-humored and friendly,—but *jimp* honest. Their comforts are, of course, much dependent on *their master's* pleasure; for so they call Mr. Strong. But they gave him the highest character for kindness and liberality, and prayed to God he might long be their ruler. After mounting the signal-post hill, or Malcolm's Head, which is faced by a most tremendous cliff, we separated on our different routes. The Sheriff went to rectify the only enormity on the island, which existed in the person of a drunken schoolmaster; Marchie went to shoot sea-fowl, or rather to frighten them, as his calumniators allege. Stevenson and Duff went to inspect the remains or vestiges of a Danish lighthouse upon a distant hill, called, as usual, the Ward, or Ward-hill, and returned with specimens of copper ore. Hamilton went down to cater fish for our dinner, and see it properly cooked—and I to see two remarkable indentures in the coast called *Rivas*, perhaps from their being rifted or *riven*. They are exactly like the Buller of Buchan, the sea rolling into a large open basin within the land through a natural archway. These places are close to each other; one is oblong, and it is easy to descend into it by a rude path; the other gulf is inaccessible from the land, unless to a *crags-man*, as these venturous climbers call themselves. I sat for about an hour upon the verge, like the cormorants around me, hanging my legs over

the precipice; but I could not get free of two or three well-meaning islanders, who held me fast by the skirts all the time—for it must be conceived that our numbers and appointments had drawn out the whole population to admire and attend us. After we separated, each, like the nucleus of a comet, had his own distinct train of attendants.—Visit the capital town, a wretched assemblage of the basest huts, dirty without, and still dirtier within; pigs, fowls, cows, men, women, and children, all living promiscuously under the same roof, and in the same room—the brood-sow making (among the more opulent) a distinguished inhabitant of the mansion. The compost, a liquid mass of utter abomination, is kept in a square pond of seven feet deep; when I censured it, they allowed it might be dangerous to the *bairns*; but appeared unconscious of any other objection. I cannot wonder they want meal, for assuredly they waste it. A great *bowie* or wooden vessel of porridge is made in the morning; a child comes and sups a few spoonfuls; then Mrs. Sow takes her share; then the rest of the children or the parents, and all at pleasure; then come the poultry when the mess is more cool; the rest is flung upon the dunghill—and the goodwife wonders and complains when she wants meal in winter. They are a long-lived race, notwithstanding utter and inconceivable dirt and sluttery. A man of sixty told me his father died only last year, aged ninety-eight; nor was this considered as very unusual.

"The clergyman of Dunrossness, in Zetland, visits these poor people once a year, for a week or two during summer. In winter this is impossible, and even the summer visit is occasionally interrupted for two years. Marriages and baptisms are performed, as one of the Isles-men told me, *by the slump*, and one of the children was old enough to tell the clergyman who sprinkled him with water, 'Deil be in your fingers.' Last time, four couple were married; sixteen children baptized. The schoolmaster reads a portion of Scripture in the church each Sunday, when the clergyman is absent; but the present man is unfit for this part of his duty. The women knit worsted stockings, night-caps, and similar trifles, which they exchange with any merchant vessels that approach their lonely isle. In these respects they greatly regret the American war; and mention with unction the happy days when they could get from an American trader a bottle of peach-brandy or rum in exchange for a pair of worsted stockings or a dozen of eggs. The humanity of their *master* interferes much with the favorite but dangerous

occupation of the islanders, which is *fowling*, that is, taking the young sea-fowl from their nests among these tremendous crags. About a fortnight before we arrived, a fine boy of fourteen had dropped from the cliff, while in prosecution of this amusement, into a roaring surf, by which he was instantly swallowed up. The unfortunate mother was laboring at the peat-moss at a little distance. These accidents do not, however, strike terror into the survivors. They regard the death of an individual engaged in these desperate exploits as we do the fate of a brave relation who falls in battle, when the honor of his death furnishes a balm to our sorrow. It therefore requires all the tacksman's authority to prevent a practice so pregnant with danger. Like all other precarious and dangerous employments, the occupation of the crags-men renders them unwilling to labor at employments of a more steady description. The Fair Isle inhabitants are a good-looking race, more like Zetlanders than Orkney-men. Evenson, and other names of a Norwegian or Danish derivation, attest their Scandinavian descent. Return and dine at Mr. Strong's, having sent our cookery ashore, not to overburthen his hospitality. In this place, and perhaps in the very cottage now inhabited by Mr. Strong, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, Commander-in-Chief of the Invincible Armada, wintered, after losing his vessel to the eastward of the island. It was not till he had spent some weeks in this miserable abode, that he got off to Norway. Independently of the moral consideration, that, from the pitch of power in which he stood a few days before, the proudest peer of the proudest nation in Europe found himself dependent on the jealous and scanty charity of these secluded islanders, it is scarce possible not to reflect with compassion on the change of situation from the palaces of Estremadura to the hamlet of the Fair Isle—

> 'Dost thou wish for thy deserts, O Son of Hodeirah?
> Dost thou long for the gales of Arabia?'

"Mr. Strong gave me a curious old chair belonging to Quendale, a former proprietor of the Fair Isle, and which a more zealous antiquary would have dubbed 'the Duke's chair.' I will have it refitted for Abbotsford, however. About eight o'clock we take boat, amid the cheers of the inhabitants, whose minds, subdued by our splendor, had been secured by our munificence, which consisted in a moderate benefaction of whiskey and tobacco, and a few shillings laid out on their staple commodities. They agreed no such day had been seen in the isle. The signal-post displayed its flags, and to

recompense these distinguished marks of honor, we hung out our colors, stood into the bay, and saluted with three guns,

'Echoing from a thousand caves."

and then bear away for Orkney, leaving, if our vanity does not deceive us, a very favorable impression on the mind of the inhabitants of the Fair Isle. The tradition of the Fair Isle is unfavorable to those shipwrecked strangers, who are said to have committed several acts of violence to extort the supplies of provision, given them sparingly and with reluctance by the islanders, who were probably themselves very far from being well supplied.

"I omitted to say we were attended in the morning by two very sportive whales, but of a kind, as some of our crew who had been on board Greenland-men assured us, which it was very dangerous to attack. There were two Gravesend smacks fishing off the isle. Lord, what a long draught London makes!

"*11th August, 1814*.—After a sound sleep to make amends for last night, we find, at awaking, the vessel off the Start of Sanda, the first land in the Orkneys which we could make. There a lighthouse has been erected lately upon the best construction. Landed and surveyed it. All in excellent order, and the establishment of the keepers in the same style of comfort and respectability as elsewhere, far better than the house of the master of the Fair Isle, and rivalling my own baronial mansion of Abbotsford. Go to the top of the tower and survey the island, which, as the name implies, is level, flat, and sandy, quite the reverse of those in Zetland: it is intersected by creeks and small lakes, and, though it abounds with shell marle, seems barren. There is one dreadful inconvenience of an island life, of which we had here an instance. The keeper's wife had an infant in her arms—her first-born, too, of which the poor woman had been delivered without assistance. Erskine told us of a horrid instance of malice which had been practised in this island of Sanda. A decent tenant, during the course of three or four successive years, lost to the number of twenty-five cattle, stabbed as they lay in their fold by some abominable wretch. What made the matter stranger was, that the poor man could not recollect any reason why he should have had the ill-will of a single being, only that in taking up names for the *militia*, a duty imposed upon him by the Justices, he thought he might

possibly have given some unknown offence. The villain was never discovered.

"The wrecks on this coast were numerous before the erection of the lighthouse. It was not uncommon to see five or six vessels on shore at once. The goods and chattels of the inhabitants are all said to savor of *Flotsome* and *Jetsome*, as the floating wreck and that which is driven ashore are severally called. Mr. Stevenson happened to observe that the boat of a Sanda farmer had bad sails—'If it had been His (*i. e.*, God's) will that you hadna built sae many lighthouses hereabout'—answered the Orcadian, with great composure—'I would have had new sails last winter.' Thus do they talk and think upon these subjects; and so talking and thinking, I fear the poor mariner has little chance of any very anxious attempt to assist him. There is one wreck, a Danish vessel, now aground under our lee. These Danes are the stupidest seamen, by all accounts, that sail the sea. When this light upon the Start of Sanda was established, the Commissioners, with laudable anxiety to extend its utility, had its description and bearings translated into Danish and sent to Copenhagen. But they never attend to such trifles. The Norwegians are much better liked, as a clever, hardy, sensible people. I forgot to notice there was a Norwegian prize lying in the Sound of Lerwick, sent in by one of our cruisers. This was a queer-looking, half-decked vessel, all tattered and torn, and shaken to pieces, looking like Coleridge's Spectre Ship. It was pitiable to see such a prize. Our servants went aboard, and got one of their loaves, and gave a dreadful account of its composition. I got and cut a crust of it; it was rye-bread, with a slight mixture of pine-fir bark or sawings of deal. It was not good, but (as Charles XII. said) might be eaten. But after all, if the people can be satisfied with such bread as this, it seems hard to interdict it to them. What would a Londoner say if, instead of his roll and muffins, this black bread, relishing of tar and turpentine, were presented for his breakfast? I would to God there could be a Jehovah-jireh, 'a ram caught in the thicket,' to prevent the sacrifice of that people.

"The few friends who may see this Journal are much indebted for these pathetic remarks to the situation under which they are recorded; for since we left the lighthouse we have been struggling with adverse wind (pretty high too), and a very strong tide, called the Rost of the Start, which, like Sumburgh Rost, bodes no good to our roast and boiled. The worst is that

this struggle carries us past a most curious spectacle, being no less than the carcases of two hundred and sixty-five whales, which have been driven ashore in Taftsness Bay, now lying close under us. With all the inclination in the world, it is impossible to stand in close enough to verify this massacre of Leviathans with our own eyes, as we do not care to run the risk of being drawn ashore ourselves among the party. In fact, this species of spectacle has been of late years very common among the isles. Mr. Stevenson saw upwards of a hundred and fifty whales lying upon the shore in a bay at Unst, in his northward trip. They are not large, but are decided whales, measuring perhaps from fifteen to twenty-five feet. They are easily mastered, for the first that is wounded among the sounds and straits so common in the isles usually runs ashore. The rest follow the blood, and, urged on by the boats behind, run ashore also. A cut with one of the long whaling knives under the back-fin is usually fatal to these huge animals. The two hundred and sixty-five whales, now lying within two or three miles of us, were driven ashore by seven boats only.

"*Five o'clock.*—We are out of the *Rost* (I detest that word), and driving fast through a long sound among low green islands, which hardly lift themselves above the sea—not a cliff or hill to be seen—what a contrast to the land we have left! We are standing for some creek or harbor, called Lingholm Bay, to lie to or anchor for the night; for to pursue our course by night, and that a thick one, among these isles, and islets, and sand-banks, is out of the question—clear moonlight might do. Our sea is now moderate. But, oh gods and men! what misfortunes have travellers to record! Just as the quiet of the elements had reconciled us to the thought of dinner, we learn that an unlucky sea has found its way into the galley during the last infernal combustion, when the lee-side and boltsprit were constantly under water; so our soup is poisoned with salt water—our cod and haddocks, which cost ninepence this blessed morning, and would have been worth a couple of guineas in London, are soused in their primitive element—the curry is undone—and all gone to the devil. We all apply ourselves to comfort our Lord High Admiral Hamilton, whose despair for himself and the public might edify a patriot. His good-humor—which has hitherto defied every incident, aggravated even by the gout—supported by a few bad puns, and a great many fair promises on the part of the steward and cook, fortunately restores his equilibrium.

"*Eight o'clock.*—Our supplemental dinner proved excellent, and we have glided into an admirable roadstead or harbor, called Lingholm Bay, formed by the small island of Lingholm embracing a small basin dividing that islet from the larger isle of Stronsay. Both, as well as Sanda, Eda, and others which we have passed, are low, green, and sandy. I have seen nothing to-day worth marking, except the sporting of a very large whale at some distance, and H.'s face at the news of the disaster in the cook-room. We are to weigh at two in the morning, and hope to reach Kirkwall, the capital of Orkney, by breakfast to-morrow. I trust there are no *rusts* or *rosts* in the road. I shall detest that word even when used to signify verd antique or patina in the one sense, or roast venison in the other. Orkney shall begin a new volume of these exquisite memoranda.

"Omission.—At Lerwick the Dutch fishers had again appeared on their old haunts. A very interesting meeting took place between them and the Lerwegians, most of them being old acquaintances. They seemed very poor, and talked of having been pillaged of everything by the French, and expected to have found Lerwick ruined by the war. They have all the careful, quiet, and economical habits of their country, and go on board their busses with the utmost haste so soon as they see the Greenland sailors, who usually insult and pick quarrels with them. The great amusement of the Dutch sailors is to hire the little ponies, and ride up and down upon them. On one occasion, a good many years ago, an English sailor interrupted this cavalcade, frightened the horses, and one or two Dutchmen got tumbles. Incensed at this beyond their usual moderation, they pursued the cause of their overthrow, and wounded him with one of their knives. The wounded man went on board his vessel, the crew of which, about fifty strong, came ashore with their long flinching knives with which they cut up the whales, and falling upon the Dutchmen, though twice their numbers, drove them all into the sea, where such as could not swim were in some risk of being drowned. The instance of aggression, or rather violent retaliation, on their part, is almost solitary. In general they are extremely quiet, and employ themselves in bartering their little merchandise of gin and gingerbread for Zetland hose and night-caps."

Chapter XXIX

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Diary on Board the Lighthouse Yacht Continued. — the Orkneys. — Kirkwall. — Hoy. — the Standing Stones of Stennis, Etc.

1814

"*12th August, 1814.*—With a good breeze and calm sea we weighed at two in the morning, and worked by short tacks up to Kirkwall Bay, and find ourselves in that fine basin upon rising in the morning. The town looks well from the sea, but is chiefly indebted to the huge old cathedral that rises out of the centre. Upon landing we find it but a poor and dirty place, especially towards the harbor. Farther up the town are seen some decent old-fashioned houses, and the Sheriff's interest secures us good lodgings. Marchie goes to hunt for a pointer. The morning, which was rainy, clears up pleasantly, and Hamilton, Erskine, Duff, and I walk to Malcolm Laing's, who has a pleasant house about half a mile from the town. Our old acquaintance, though an invalid, received us kindly; he looks very poorly, and cannot walk without assistance, but seems to retain all the quick, earnest, and vivacious intelligence of his character and manner. After this, visit the antiquities of the place, namely, the Bishop's palace, the Earl of Orkney's castle, and the cathedral, all situated within a stone-cast of each other. The two former are ruinous. The most prominent part of the ruins of the Bishop's palace is a large round tower, similar to that of Bothwell in architecture, but not equal to it in size. This was built by Bishop Reid, *tempore Jacobi V.*, and there is a rude statue of him in a niche in the front. At the north-east corner of the building is a square tower of greater antiquity, called the Mense or Mass Tower; but, as well as a second and smaller round tower, it is quite ruinous. A suite of apartments of different sizes fills up the space between these towers, all now ruinous. The building is said to have been of great antiquity, but was certainly in a great measure reëdified in the sixteenth century.

"Fronting this castle or palace of the Bishop, and about a gun-shot distant, is that of the Earl of Orkney. The Earl's palace was built by Patrick Stewart,

Earl of Orkney, the same who erected that of Scalloway, in Shetland. It is an elegant structure, partaking at once of the character of a palace and castle. The building forms three sides of an oblong square, but one of the sides extends considerably beyond the others. The great hall must have been remarkably handsome, opening into two or three huge rounds or turrets, the lower part of which is divided by stone shafts into three windows. It has two immense chimneys, the arches or lintels of which are formed by a flat arch, as at Crichton Castle. There is another very handsome apartment communicating with the hall like a modern drawing-room, and which has, like the former, its projecting turrets. The hall is lighted by a fine Gothic-shafted window at one end, and by others on the sides. It is approached by a spacious and elegant staircase of three flights of steps. The dimensions may be sixty feet long, twenty broad, and fourteen high, but doubtless an arched roof sprung from the side walls, so that fourteen feet was only the height from the ground to the arches. Any modern architect, wishing to emulate the real Gothic architecture, and apply it to the purposes of modern splendor, might derive excellent hints from this room. The exterior ornaments are also extremely elegant. The ruins, once the residence of this haughty and oppressive Earl, are now so disgustingly nasty, that it required all the zeal of an antiquary to prosecute the above investigation. Architecture seems to have been Earl Patrick's prevailing taste. Besides this castle and that of Scalloway, he added to or enlarged the old castle of Bressay. To accomplish these objects, he oppressed the people with severities unheard of even in that oppressive age, drew down on himself a shameful though deserved punishment, and left these dishonored ruins to hand down to posterity the tale of his crimes and of his fall. We may adopt, though in another sense, his own presumptuous motto—*Sic Fuit, Est, et Erit*.

"We visit the cathedral, dedicated to St. Magnus, which greeted the Sheriff's approach with a merry peal. Like that of Glasgow, this church has escaped the blind fury of Reformation. It was founded in 1138, by Ronald, Earl of Orkney, nephew of the Saint. It is of great size, being 260 feet long, or thereabout, and supported by twenty-eight Saxon pillars, of good workmanship. The round arch predominates in the building, but I think not exclusively. The steeple (once a very high spire) rises upon four pillars of great strength, which occupy each angle of the nave. Being destroyed by

lightning, it was rebuilt upon a low and curtailed plan. The appearance of the building is rather massive and gloomy than elegant, and many of the exterior ornaments, carving around the doorways, etc., have been injured by time. We entered the cathedral, the whole of which is kept locked, swept, and in good order, although only the eastern end is used for divine worship. We walked some time in the nave and western end, which is left unoccupied, and has a very solemn effect as the avenue to the place of worship. There were many tombstones on the floor and elsewhere; some, doubtless, of high antiquity. One, I remarked, had the shield of arms hung by the corner, with a helmet above it of a large proportion, such as I have seen on the most ancient seals. But we had neither time nor skill to decipher what noble Orcadian lay beneath. The church is as well fitted up as could be expected; much of the old carved oak remains, but with a motley mixture of modern deal pews. All, however, is neat and clean, and does great honor to the kirk-session who maintain its decency. I remarked particularly Earl Patrick's seat, adjoining to that of the magistrates, but surmounting it and every other in the church: it is surrounded with a carved screen of oak, rather elegant, and bears his arms and initials, and the motto I have noticed. He bears the royal arms *without any mark of bastardy* (his father was a natural son of James V.) quarterly, with a lymphad or galley, the ancient arms of the county. This circumstance was charged against him on his trial. I understand the late Mr. Gilbert Laing Meason left the interest of £1000 to keep up this cathedral.

"There are in the street facing the cathedral the ruins of a much more ancient castle; a proper feudal fortress belonging to the Earls of Orkney, but called the King's Castle. It appears to have been very strong, being situated near the harbor, and having, as appears from the fragments, very massive walls. While the wicked Earl Patrick was in confinement, one of his natural sons defended this castle to extremity against the King's troops, and only surrendered when it was nearly a heap of ruins, and then under condition he should not be brought in evidence against his father.

"We dine at the inn, and drink the Prince Regent's health, being that of the day—Mr. Baikie of Tankerness dines with us.

"*13th August, 1814.*—A bad morning, but clears up. No letters from Edinburgh. The country about Kirkwall is flat, and tolerably cultivated. We

see oxen generally wrought in the small country carts, though they have a race of ponies, like those of Shetland, but larger. Marchie goes to shoot on a hill called Whiteford, which slopes away about two or three miles from Kirkwall. The grouse is abundant, for the gentleman who chaperons Marchie killed thirteen brace and a half, with a snipe. There are no partridges nor hares. The soil of Orkney is better, and its air more genial than Shetland; but it is far less interesting, and possesses none of the wild and peculiar character of the more northern archipelago. All vegetables grow here freely in the gardens, and there are one or two attempts at trees where they are sheltered by walls. How ill they succeed may be conjectured from our bringing with us a quantity of brushwood, commissioned by Malcolm Laing from Aberbrothock, to be sticks to his pease. This trash we brought two hundred miles. I have little to add, except that the Orkney people have some odd superstitions about a stone on which they take oaths to Odin. Lovers often perform this ceremony in pledge of mutual faith, and are said to account it a sacred engagement.—It is agreed that we go on board after dinner, and sail with the next tide. The magistrates of Kirkwall present us with the freedom of their ancient burgh; and Erskine, instead of being cumbered with drunken sailors, as at Lerwick, or a drunken schoolmaster, as at Fair Isle, is annoyed by his own Substitute. This will occasion his remaining two days at Kirkwall, during which time it is proposed we shall visit the lighthouse upon the dangerous rocks called the Skerries, in the Pentland Frith; and then, returning to the eastern side of Pomona, take up the counsellor at Stromness. It is further settled that we leave Marchie with Erskine to get another day's shooting. On board at ten o'clock, after a little bustle in expediting our domestics, washerwomen, etc.

"*14th August, 1814*.—Sail about four, and in rounding the mainland of Orkney, called Pomona, encounter a very heavy sea; about ten o'clock, get into the Sound of Holm or Ham, a fine smooth current meandering away between two low green islands, which have little to characterize them. On the right of the Sound is the mainland, and a deep bay called Scalpa Flow indents it up to within two miles of Kirkwall. A canal through this neck of the island would be of great consequence to the burgh. We see the steeple and church of Kirkwall across the island very distinctly. Getting out of the Sound of Holm, we stand in to the harbor or roadstead of Widewall, where we find seven or eight foreign vessels bound for Ireland, and a sloop

belonging to the lighthouse service. These roadsteads are common all through the Orkneys, and afford excellent shelter for small vessels. The day is pleasant and sunny, but the breeze is too high to permit landing at the Skerries. Agree, therefore, to stand over for the mainland of Scotland, and visit Thurso. Enter the Pentland Frith, so celebrated for the strength and fury of its tides, which is boiling even in this pleasant weather; we see a large ship battling with this heavy current, and though with all her canvas set and a breeze, getting more and more involved. See the two Capes of Dungsby or Duncansby, and Dunnet-head, between which lies the celebrated John o' Groat's house, on the north-eastern extremity of Scotland. The shores of Caithness rise bold and rocky before us,—a contrast to the Orkneys, which are all low, excepting the Island of Hoy. On Duncansby-head appear some remarkable rocks, like towers, called the Stacks of Duncansby. Near this shore runs the remarkable breaking tide called the *Merry Men of Mey*, whence Mackenzie takes the scenery of a poem—

> 'Where the dancing Men of Mey,
> Speed the current to the land.'

Here, according to his locality, the Caithness-man witnessed the vision, in which was introduced the song, translated by Gray, under the title of The Fatal Sisters. On this subject, Mr. Baikie told me the following remarkable circumstance: A clergyman told him, that while some remnants of the Norse were yet spoken in North Ronaldsha, he carried thither the translation of Mr. Gray, then newly published, and read it to some of the old people as referring to the ancient history of their islands. But so soon as he had proceeded a little way, they exclaimed they knew it very well in the original, and had often sung it to himself when he asked them for an old Norse song; they called it The Enchantresses.—The breeze dies away between two wicked little islands called Swona and Stroma,—the latter belonging to Caithness, the former to Orkney.—*Nota Bene*. The inhabitants of the rest of the Orcades despise those of Swona for eating limpets, as being the last of human meannesses. Every land has its fashions. The Fair-Isles-men disdain Orkney-men for eating dog-fish. Both islands have dangerous reefs and whirlpools, where, even in this fine day, the tide rages furiously. Indeed, the large high unbroken billows, which at every swell hide from our deck each distant object, plainly intimate what a dreadful current this must be when vexed by high or adverse winds. Finding

ourselves losing ground in the tide, and unwilling to waste time, we give up Thurso—run back into the roadstead or bay of Long-Hope, and anchor under the fort. The bay has four entrances and safe anchorage in most winds, and having become a great rendezvous for shipping (there are nine vessels lying here at present) has been an object of attention with Government.

"Went ashore after dinner, and visited the fort, which is only partly completed: it is a *flêche* to the sea, with eight guns, twenty-four pounders, but without any land defences; the guns are mounted *en barbette*, without embrasures, each upon a kind of movable stage, which stage wheeling upon a pivot in front, and traversing by means of wheels behind, can be pointed in any direction that may be thought necessary. Upon this stage, the gun-carriage moves forward and recoils, and the depth of the parapet shelters the men even better than an embrasure. At a little distance from this battery they are building a Martello tower, which is to cross the fire of the battery, and also that of another projected tower upon the opposite point of the bay. The expedience of these towers seems excessively problematical. Supposing them impregnable, or nearly so, a garrison of fourteen or fifteen men may be always blockaded by a very trifling number, while the enemy dispose of all in the vicinity at their pleasure. In the case of Long-Hope, for instance, a frigate might disembark 100 men, take the fort in the rear, where it is undefended even by a palisade, destroy the magazines, spike and dismount the cannon, carry off or cut out any vessels in the roadstead, and accomplish all the purposes that could bring them to so remote a spot, in spite of a sergeant's party in the Martello tower, and without troubling themselves about them at all. Meanwhile, Long-Hope will one day turn out a flourishing place; there will soon be taverns and slop-shops, where sailors rendezvous in such numbers; then will come quays, docks, and warehouses; and then a thriving town. Amen, so be it. This is the first fine day we have enjoyed to an end since Sunday, 31st ult. Rainy, cold, and hazy, have been our voyages around these wild islands; I hope the weather begins to mend, though Mr. Wilson, our master, threatens a breeze to-morrow. We are to attempt the Skerries, if possible; if not, we will, I believe, go to Stromness.

"*15th August, 1814.*—Fine morning. We get again into the Pentland Frith, and with the aid of a pilot-boat belonging to the lighthouse service, from South Ronaldsha, we attempt the Skerries. Notwithstanding the fair

weather, we have a specimen of the violence of the flood-tide, which forms whirlpools on the shallow sunken rocks by the islands of Swona and Stroma, and in the deep water makes strange, smooth, whirling, and swelling eddies, called by the sailors, *wells*. We run through the *wells of Tuftile* in particular, which, in the least stress of weather, wheel a large ship round and round, without respect either to helm or sails. Hence the distinction of *wells* and *waves* in Old English; the *well* being that smooth, glassy, oily-looking eddy, the force of which seems to the eye almost resistless. The bursting of the waves in foam around these strange eddies has a bewildering and confused appearance, which it is impossible to describe. Get off the Skerries about ten o'clock, and land easily; it is the first time a boat has got there for several days. The *Skerries* is an island about sixty acres, of fine short herbage, belonging to Lord Dundas; it is surrounded by a reef of precipitous rocks, not very high, but inaccessible, unless where the ocean has made ravines among them, and where stairs have been cut down to the water for the lighthouse service. Those inlets have a romantic appearance, and have been christened by the sailors, the Parliament House, the Seals' Lying-in-Hospital, etc. The last inlet, after rushing through a deep chasm, which is open overhead, is continued under ground, and then again opens to the sky in the middle of the island; in this hole the seals bring out their whelps; when the tide is high, the waves rise up through this aperture in the middle of the isle—like the blowing of a whale in noise and appearance. There is another round cauldron of solid rock, to which the waves have access through a natural arch in the rock, having another and lesser arch rising just above it; in hard weather, the waves rush through both apertures with a horrid noise; the workmen called it the Carron Blast, and, indeed, the variety of noises which issued from the abyss, somewhat reminded me of that engine. Take my rifle, and walk round the cliffs in search of seals, but see none, and only disturb the digestion of certain aldermen-cormorants, who were sitting on the points of the crags after a good fish breakfast; only made one good shot out of four. The lighthouse is too low, and on the old construction, yet it is of the last importance. The keeper is an old man-of-war's-man, of whom Mr. Stevenson observed that he was a great swearer when he first came; but after a year or two's residence in this solitary abode, became a changed man. There are about fifty head of cattle on the island; they must be got in and off with great danger and difficulty. There is no water upon the isle,

except what remains after rain in some pools; these sometimes dry in summer, and the cattle are reduced to great straits. Leave the isle about one; and the wind and tide being favorable, crowd all sail, and get on at the rate of fourteen miles an hour. Soon reach our old anchorage at the Long-Hope, and passing, stand to the north-westward, up the Sound of Hoy, for Stromness.

"I should have mentioned, that in going down the Pentland Frith this morning, we saw Johnnie Groat's house, or rather the place where it stood, now occupied by a storehouse. Our pilot opines there was no such man as Johnnie Groat, for, he says, he cannot hear that anybody *ever saw him*. This reasoning would put down most facts of antiquity. They gather shells on the shore, called *Johnnie Groat's buckies*, but I cannot procure any at present. I may also add, that the interpretation given to *wells* may apply to the Wells of Slain, in the fine ballad of Clerk Colvill; such eddies in the romantic vicinity of Slains Castle would be a fine place for a mermaid.

"Our wind fails us, and, what is worse, becomes westerly. The Sound has now the appearance of a fine land-locked bay, the passages between the several islands being scarce visible. We have a superb view of Kirkwall Cathedral, with a strong gleam of sunshine upon it. Gloomy weather begins to collect around us, particularly on the island of Hoy, which, covered with gloom and vapor, now assumes a majestic mountainous character. On Pomona we pass the Hill of Orphir, which reminds me of the clergyman of that parish, who was called to account for some of his inaccuracies to the General Assembly; one charge he held particularly cheap, namely, that of drunkenness. 'Reverend Moderator,' said he, in reply, 'I *do* drink, as other gentlemen do.' This Orphir of the north must not be confounded with the Orphir of the south. From the latter came gold, silver, and precious stones; the former seems to produce little except peats. Yet these are precious commodities, which some of the Orkney Isles altogether want, and lay waste and burn the turf of their land instead of importing coal from Newcastle. The Orcadians seem by no means an alert or active race; they neglect the excellent fisheries which lie under their very noses, and in their mode of managing their boats, as well as in the general tone of urbanity and intelligence, are excelled by the less favored Zetlanders. I observe they always crowd their boat with people in the bows, being the ready way to send her down in any awkward circumstance. There are remains of their

Norwegian descent and language in North Ronaldsha, an isle I regret we did not see. A missionary preacher came ashore there a year or two since, but being a very little black-bearded unshaved man, the seniors of the isle suspected him of being an ancient Pecht or Pict, and *no canny*, of course. The schoolmaster came down to entreat our worthy Mr. Stevenson, then about to leave the island, to come up and verify whether the preacher was an ancient Pecht, yea or no. Finding apologies were in vain, he rode up to the house where the unfortunate preacher, after three nights' watching, had got to bed, little conceiving under what odious suspicion he had fallen. As Mr. S. declined disturbing him, his boots were produced, which being a *little—little—very little* pair, confirmed, in the opinion of all the bystanders, the suspicion of Pechtism. Mr. S. therefore found it necessary to go into the poor man's sleeping apartment, where he recognized one Campbell, heretofore an ironmonger in Edinburgh, but who had put his hand for some years to the missionary plough; of course he warranted his quondam acquaintance to be no ancient Pecht. Mr. Stevenson carried the same schoolmaster who figured in the adventure of the Pecht, to the mainland of Scotland, to be examined for his office. He was extremely desirous to see a tree; and, on seeing one, desired to know what *girss* it was that grew at the top on't—the leaves appearing to him to be grass. They still speak a little Norse, and indeed I hear every day words of that language; for instance, *Ja, kul*, for '*Yes, sir*.' We creep slowly up Hoy Sound, working under the Pomona shore; but there is no hope of reaching Stromness till we have the assistance of the evening tide. The channel now seems like a Highland loch; not the least ripple on the waves. The passage is narrowed, and (to the eye) blocked up by the interposition of the green and apparently fertile isle of Græmsay, the property of Lord Armadale. Hoy looks yet grander, from comparing its black and steep mountains with this verdant isle. To add to the beauty of the Sound, it is rendered lively by the successive appearance of seven or eight whaling vessels from Davies' Straits; large strong ships, which pass successively, with all their sails set, enjoying the little wind that is. Many of these vessels display the *garland*; that is, a wreath of ribbons which the young fellows on board have got from their sweethearts, or come by otherwise, and which hangs between the foremast and mainmast, surmounted sometimes by a small model of the vessel. This garland is hung up upon the 1st of May, and remains till they come into port. I believe we shall dodge here till the tide makes about nine, and then get into Stromness:

no boatman or sailor in Orkney thinks of the wind in comparison of the tides and currents. We must not complain, though the night gets rainy, and the Hill of Hoy is now completely invested with vapor and mist. In the forepart of the day we executed very cleverly a task of considerable difficulty and even danger.

"*16th August, 1814.*—Get into Stromness Bay, and anchor before the party are up. A most decided rain all night. The bay is formed by a deep indention in the mainland, or Pomona; on one side of which stands Stromness—a fishing village and harbor of *call* for the Davies' Straits whalers, as Lerwick is for the Greenlanders. Betwixt the vessels we met yesterday, seven or eight which passed us this morning, and several others still lying in the bay, we have seen between twenty and thirty of these large ships in this remote place. The opposite side of Stromness Bay is protected by Hoy, and Græmsay lies between them; so that the bay seems quite land-locked, and the contrast between the mountains of Hoy, the soft verdure of Græmsay, and the swelling hill of Orphir on the mainland, has a beautiful effect. The day clears up, and Mr. Rae, Lord Armadale's factor, comes off from his house, called Clestrom, upon the shore opposite to Stromness, to breakfast with us. We go ashore with him. His farm is well cultivated, and he has procured an excellent breed of horses from Lanarkshire, of which county he is a native; strong hardy Galloways, fit for labor or hacks. By this we profited, as Mr. Rae mounted us all, and we set off to visit the Standing Stones of Stenhouse or Stennis.

"At the upper end of the bay, about halfway between Clestrom and Stromness, there extends a loch of considerable size, of fresh water, but communicating with the sea by apertures left in a long bridge or causeway which divides them. After riding about two miles along this lake, we open another called the Loch of Harray, of about the same dimensions, and communicating with the lower lake, as the former does with the sea, by a stream, over which is constructed a causeway, with openings to suffer the flow and reflux of the water, as both lakes are affected by the tide. Upon the tongues of land which, approaching each other, divide the lakes of Stennis and Harray, are situated the Standing Stones. The isthmus on the eastern side exhibits a semicircle of immensely large upright pillars of unhewn stone, surrounded by a mound of earth. As the mound is discontinued, it does not seem that the circle was ever completed. The flat or open part of

the semicircle looks up a plain, where, at a distance, is seen a large tumulus. The highest of these stones may be about sixteen or seventeen feet, and I think there are none so low as twelve feet. At irregular distances are pointed out other unhewn pillars of the same kind. One, a little to the westward, is perforated with a round hole, perhaps to bind a victim; or rather, I conjecture, for the purpose of solemnly attesting the deity, which the Scandinavians did by passing their head through a ring,—*vide* Eyrbiggia Saga. Several barrows are scattered around this strange monument. Upon the opposite isthmus is a complete circle, of ninety-five paces in diameter, surrounded by standing stones, less in size than the others, being only from ten or twelve to fourteen feet in height, and four in breadth. A deep trench is drawn around this circle on the outside of the pillars, and four tumuli, or mounds of earth, are regularly placed, two on each side.

"Stonehenge excels these monuments, but I fancy they are otherwise unparalleled in Britain. The idea that such circles were exclusively Druidical is now justly exploded. The northern nations all used such erections to mark their places of meeting, whether for religious purposes or civil policy; and there is repeated mention of them in the Sagas. See the Eyrbiggia Saga, for the establishment of the Helga-fels, or holy mount, where the people held their Comitia, and where sacrifices were offered to Thor and Woden. About the centre of the semicircle is a broad flat stone, probably once the altar on which human victims were sacrificed.—Mr. Rae seems to think the common people have no tradition of the purpose of these stones, but probably he has not inquired particularly. He admits they look upon them with superstitious reverence; and it is evident that those which have fallen down (about half the original number) have been wasted by time, and not demolished. The materials of these monuments lay near, for the shores and bottom of the lake are of the same kind of rock. How they were raised, transported, and placed upright, is a puzzling question. In our ride back, noticed a round entrenchment, or *tumulus*, called the Hollow of Tongue.

"The hospitality of Mrs. Rae detained us to an early dinner at Clestrom. About four o'clock took our long-boat and rowed down the bay to visit the Dwarfie Stone of Hoy. We have all day been pleased with the romantic appearance of that island, for though the Hill of Hoy is not very high, perhaps about 1200 feet, yet rising perpendicularly (almost) from the sea,

and being very steep and furrowed with ravines, and catching all the mists from the western ocean, it has a noble and picturesque effect in every point of view. We land upon the island, and proceed up a long and very swampy valley broken into peat-bogs. The one side of this valley is formed by the Mountain of Hoy, the other by another steep hill, having at the top a circular belt of rock; upon the slope of this last hill, and just where the principal mountain opens into a wide and precipitous and circular *corrie* or hollow, lies the Dwarfie Stone. It is a huge sandstone rock, of one solid stone, being about seven feet high, twenty-two feet long, and seventeen feet broad. The upper end of this stone is hewn into a sort of apartment containing two beds of stone and a passage between them. The uppermost and largest is five feet eight inches long, by two feet broad, and is furnished with a stone pillow. The lower, supposed for the Dwarf's Wife, is shorter, and rounded off, instead of being square at the corners. The entrance may be about three feet and a half square. Before it lies a huge stone, apparently intended to serve the purpose of a door, and shaped accordingly. In the top, over the passage which divides the beds, there is a hole to serve for a window or chimney, which was doubtless originally wrought square with irons, like the rest of the work, but has been broken out by violence into a shapeless hole. Opposite to this stone, and proceeding from it in a line down the valley, are several small barrows, and there is a very large one on the same line, at the spot where we landed. This seems to indicate that the monument is of heathen times, and probably was meant as the temple of some northern edition of the *Dii Manes*. There are no symbols of Christian devotion—and the door is to the westward; it therefore does not seem to have been the abode of a hermit, as Dr. Barry has conjectured. The Orcadians have no tradition on the subject, excepting that they believe it to be the work of a dwarf, to whom, like their ancestors, they attribute supernatural powers and malevolent disposition. They conceive he may be seen sometimes sitting at the door of his abode, but he vanishes on a nearer approach. Whoever inhabited this den certainly enjoyed

> 'Pillow cold and sheets not warm.'

"Duff, Stevenson, and I now walk along the skirts of the Hill of Hoy, to rejoin Robert Hamilton, who in the mean while had rode down to the clergyman's house, the wet and boggy walk not suiting his gout. Arrive at the manse completely wet, and drink tea there. The clergyman (Mr.

Hamilton) has procured some curious specimens of natural history for Bullock's Museum, particularly a pair of fine eaglets. He has just got another of the golden, or white kind, which he intends to send him. The eagle, with every other ravenous bird, abounds among the almost inaccessible precipices of Hoy, which afford them shelter, while the moors, abounding with grouse, and the small uninhabited islands and holms, where sheep and lambs are necessarily left unwatched, as well as the all-sustaining ocean, give these birds of prey the means of support. The clergyman told us that a man was very lately alive in the island of , who, when an infant, was transported from thence by an eagle over a broad sound, or arm of the sea, to the bird's nest in Hoy. Pursuit being instantly made, and the eagle's nest being known, the infant was found there playing with the young eaglets. A more ludicrous instance of transportation he himself witnessed. Walking in the fields, he heard the squeaking of a pig for some time, without being able to discern whence it proceeded, until looking up, he beheld the unfortunate grunter in the talons of an eagle, who soared away with him towards the summit of Hoy. From this it may be conjectured, that the island is very thinly inhabited; in fact, we only saw two or three little wigwams. After tea we walked a mile farther, to a point where the boat was lying, in order to secure the advantage of the flood-tide. We rowed with toil across one stream of tide, which set strongly up between Græmsay and Hoy; but, on turning the point of Græmsay, the other branch of the same flood-tide carried us with great velocity alongside our yacht, which we reached about nine o'clock. Between riding, walking, and running, we have spent a very active and entertaining day.

"*Domestic Memoranda.*—The eggs on Zetland and Orkney are very indifferent, having an earthy taste, and being very small. But the hogs are an excellent breed—queer wild-looking creatures, with heads like wild-boars, but making capital bacon."

Chapter XXX

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Diary Continued. — Stromness. — Bessy Millie's Charm. — Cape Wrath. — Cave of Smowe. — the Hebrides. — Scalpa, Etc.

1814

"*Off Stromness, 17th August, 1814.*—Went on shore after breakfast, and found W. Erskine and Marjoribanks had been in this town all last night, without our hearing of them or they of us. No letters from Abbotsford or Edinburgh. Stromness is a little dirty straggling town, which cannot be traversed by a cart, or even by a horse, for there are stairs up and down, even in the principal streets. We paraded its whole length like turkeys in a string, I suppose to satisfy ourselves that there was a worse town in the Orkneys than the metropolis, Kirkwall. We clomb, by steep and dirty lanes, an eminence rising above the town, and commanding a fine view. An old hag lives in a wretched cabin on this height, and subsists by selling winds. Each captain of a merchantman, between jest and earnest, gives the old woman sixpence, and she boils her kettle to procure a favorable gale. She was a miserable figure; upwards of ninety, she told us, and dried up like a mummy. A sort of clay-colored cloak, folded over her head, corresponded in color to her corpselike complexion. Fine light-blue eyes, and nose and chin that almost met, and a ghastly expression of cunning, gave her quite the effect of Hecate. She told us she remembered *Gow the pirate*, who was born near the House of Clestrom, and afterwards commenced buccaneer. He came to his native country about 1725, with a *snow* which he commanded, carried off two women from one of the islands, and committed other enormities. At length, while he was dining in a house in the island of Eda, the islanders, headed by Malcolm Laing's grandfather, made him prisoner, and sent him to London, where he was hanged. While at Stromness, he made love to a Miss Gordon, who pledged her faith to him by shaking hands, an engagement which, in her idea, could not be dissolved without her going to London to seek back again her 'faith and troth,' by shaking hands with him again after execution. We left our Pythoness, who assured

us there was nothing evil in the intercession she was to make for us, but that we were only to have a fair wind through the benefit of her prayers. She repeated a sort of rigmarole which I suppose she had ready for such occasions, and seemed greatly delighted and surprised with the amount of our donation, as everybody gave her a trifle, our faithful Captain Wilson making the regular offering on behalf of the ship. So much for buying a wind. Bessy Millie's habitation is airy enough for Æolus himself, but if she is a special favorite with that divinity, he has a strange choice. In her house I remarked a quern, or hand-mill.—A cairn, a little higher, commands a beautiful view of the bay, with its various entrances and islets. Here we found the vestiges of a bonfire, lighted in memory of the battle of Bannockburn, concerning which every part of Scotland has its peculiar traditions. The Orcadians say that a Norwegian prince, then their ruler, called by them Harold, brought 1400 men of Orkney to the assistance of Bruce, and that the King, at a critical period of the engagement, touched him with his scabbard, saying, 'The day is against us.'—'I trust,' returned the Orcadian, 'your Grace will *venture again*;' which has given rise to their motto, and passed into a proverb. On board at half-past three, and find Bessy Millie a woman of her word, for the expected breeze has sprung up, if it but last us till we double Cape Wrath. Weigh anchor (I hope) to bid farewell to Orkney.

"The land in Orkney is, generally speaking, excellent, and what is not fitted for the plough is admirably adapted for pasture. But the cultivation is very bad, and the mode of using these extensive commons, where they tear up, without remorse, the turf of the finest pasture, in order to make fuel, is absolutely execrable. The practice has already peeled and exhausted much fine land, and must in the end ruin the country entirely. In other respects, their mode of cultivation is to manure for barley and oats, and then manure again, and this without the least idea of fallow or green crops. Mr. Rae thinks that his example—and he farms very well—has had no effect upon the natives, except in the article of potatoes, which they now cultivate a little more, but crops of turnips are unknown. For this slovenly labor the Orcadians cannot, like the Shetland men, plead the occupation of fishing, which is wholly neglected by them, excepting that about this time of the year all the people turn out for the dogfish, the liver of which affords oil, and the bodies are a food as much valued here by the lower classes as it is

contemned in Shetland. We saw nineteen boats out at this work. But cod, tusk, ling, haddocks, etc., which abound round these isles, are totally neglected. Their inferiority in husbandry is therefore to be ascribed to the prejudices of the people, who are all peasants of the lowest order. On Lord Armadale's estate, the number of tenantry amounts to 300, and the average of rent is about seven pounds each. What can be expected from such a distribution? and how is the necessary restriction to take place, without the greatest immediate distress and hardship to these poor creatures? It is the hardest chapter in Economics; and if I were an Orcadian laird, I feel I should shuffle on with the old useless creatures, in contradiction to my better judgment. Stock is improved in these islands, and the horses seem to be better bred than in Shetland; at least, I have seen more clever animals. The good horses find a ready sale; Mr. Rae gets twenty guineas readily for a colt of his rearing—to be sure, they are very good.

"*Six o'clock.*—Our breeze has carried us through the Mouth of Hoy, and so into the Atlantic. The north-western face of the island forms a ledge of high perpendicular cliffs, which might have surprised us more, had we not already seen the Ord of Bressay, the Noup of Noss, and the precipices of the Fair Isle. But these are formidable enough. One projecting cliff, from the peculiarities of its form, has acquired the name of the Old Man of Hoy, and is well known to mariners as marking the entrance to the Mouth. The other jaw of this mouth is formed by a lower range of crags, called the Burgh of Birsa. The access through this strait would be easy, were it not for the Island of Græmsay, lying in the very throat of the passage, and two other islands covering the entrance to the harbor of Stromness. Græmsay is infamous for shipwrecks, and the chance of these *God-sends*, as they were impiously called, is said sometimes to have doubled the value of the land. In Stromness, I saw many of the sad relics of shipwrecked vessels applied to very odd purposes, and indeed to all sorts of occasions. The gates, or *grinds*, as they are here called, are usually of ship planks and timbers, and so are their bridges, etc. These casualties are now much less common since the lights on the Skerries and the Start have been established. Enough of memoranda for the present.—We have hitherto kept our course pretty well; and a King's ship about eighteen guns or so, two miles upon our lee-boom, has shortened sail, apparently to take us under her wing, which may not be altogether unnecessary in the latitude of Cape Wrath, where several vessels

have been taken by Yankee-Doodle. The sloop of war looks as if she could bite hard, and is supposed by our folks to be the Malay. If we can speak the captain, we will invite him to some grouse, or send him some, as he likes best, for Marchie's campaign was very successful.

"*18th August, 1814.*—Bessy Millie's charm has failed us. After a rainy night, the wind has come round to the north-west, and is getting almost contrary. We have weathered Whitten-head, however, and Cape Wrath, the north-western extremity of Britain, is now in sight. The weather gets rainy and squally. Hamilton and Erskine keep their berths. Duff and I sit upon deck, like two great bears, wrapt in watch-cloaks, the sea flying over us every now and then. At length, after a sound buffeting with the rain, the doubling Cape Wrath with this wind is renounced as impracticable, and we stand away for Loch Eribol, a lake running into the extensive country of Lord Reay. No sickness; we begin to get hardy sailors in that particular. The ground rises upon us very bold and mountainous, especially a very high steep mountain, called Ben-y-Hope, at the head of a lake called Loch Hope. The weather begins to mitigate as we get under the lee of the land. Loch Eribol opens, running up into a wild and barren scene of crags and hills. The proper anchorage is said to be at the head of the lake, but to go eight miles up so narrow an inlet would expose us to be wind-bound. A pilot-boat comes off from Mr. Anderson's house, a principal tacksman of Lord Reay's. After some discussion we anchor within a reef of sunken rocks, nearly opposite to Mr. Anderson's house of Rispan; the situation is not, we are given to understand, altogether without danger if the wind should blow hard, but it is now calm. In front of our anchorage a few shapeless patches of land, not exceeding a few yards in diameter, have been prepared for corn by the spade, and bear wretched crops. All the rest of the view is utter barrenness; the distant hills, we are told, contain plenty of deer, being part of a forest belonging to Lord Reay, who is proprietor of all the extensive range of desolation now under our eye. The water has been kinder than the land, for we hear of plenty of salmon, and haddocks, and lobsters, and send our faithful minister of the interior, John Peters, the steward, to procure some of those good things of this very indifferent land, and to invite Mr. Anderson to dine with us. Four o'clock,—John has just returned, successful in both commissions, and the evening concludes pleasantly.

"*19th August, 1814, Loch Eribol, near Cape Wrath.*—Went off before eight A. M. to breakfast with our friend Mr. Anderson. His house, invisible from the vessel at her moorings, and indeed from any part of the entrance into Loch Eribol, is a very comfortable one, lying obscured behind a craggy eminence. A little creek, winding up behind the crag, and in front of the house, forms a small harbor, and gives a romantic air of concealment and snugness. There we found a ship upon the stocks, built from the keel by a Highland carpenter, who had magnanimously declined receiving assistance from any of the ship-carpenters who happened to be here occasionally, lest it should be said he could not have finished his task without their aid. An ample Highland breakfast of excellent new-taken herring, equal to those of Lochfine, fresh haddocks, fresh eggs, and fresh butter, not forgetting the bottle of whiskey, and bannocks of barley, and oat-cakes, with the Lowland luxuries of tea and coffee. After breakfast, took the long-boat, and, under Mr. Anderson's pilotage, row to see a remarkable natural curiosity, called Uamh Smowe, or the Largest Cave. Stevenson, Marchie, and Duff go by land. Take the fowling-piece, and shoot some sea-fowl and a large hawk of an uncommon appearance. Fire four shots, and kill three times. After rowing about three miles to the westward of the entrance from the sea to Loch Eribol, we enter a creek, between two ledges of very high rocks, and landing, find ourselves in front of the wonder we came to see. The exterior apartment of the cavern opens under a tremendous rock, facing the creek, and occupies the full space of the ravine where we landed. From the top of the rock to the base of the cavern, as we afterwards discovered by plumb, is eighty feet, of which the height of the arch is fifty-three feet; the rest, being twenty-seven feet, is occupied by the precipitous rock under which it opens; the width is fully in proportion to this great height, being 110 feet. The depth of this exterior cavern is 200 feet, and it is apparently supported by an intermediate column of natural rock. Being open to daylight and the sea-air, the cavern is perfectly clean and dry, and the sides are incrusted with stalactites. This immense cavern is so well proportioned, that I was not aware of its extraordinary height and extent, till I saw our two friends, who had somewhat preceded us, having made the journey by land, appearing like pigmies among its recesses. Afterwards, on entering the cave, I climbed up a sloping rock at its extremity, and was much struck with the prospect, looking outward from this magnificent arched cavern upon our boat and its crew, the view being otherwise bounded by the ledge of rocks which

formed each side of the creek. We now propose to investigate the farther wonders of the cave of Smowe. In the right or west side of the cave opens an interior cavern of a different aspect. The height of this second passage may be about twelve or fourteen feet, and its breadth about six or eight, neatly formed into a Gothic portal by the hand of nature. The lower part of this porch is closed by a ledge of rock, rising to the height of between five and six feet, and which I can compare to nothing but the hatch-door of a shop. Beneath this hatch a brook finds its way out, forms a black deep pool before the Gothic archway, and then escapes to the sea, and forms the creek in which we landed. It is somewhat difficult to approach this strange pass, so as to gain a view into the interior of the cavern. By clambering along a broken and dangerous cliff, you can, however, look into it; but only so far as to see a twilight space filled with dark-colored water in great agitation, and representing a subterranean lake, moved by some fearful convulsion of nature. How this pond is supplied with water you cannot see from even this point of vantage, but you are made partly sensible of the truth by a sound like the dashing of a sullen cataract within the bowels of the earth. Here the adventure has usually been abandoned, and Mr. Anderson only mentioned two travellers whose curiosity had led them farther. We were resolved, however, to see the adventures of this new cave of Montesinos to an end. Duff had already secured the use of a fisher's boat and its hands, our own long-boat being too heavy and far too valuable to be ventured upon this Cocytus. Accordingly the skiff was dragged up the brook to the rocky ledge or hatch which barred up the interior cavern, and there, by force of hands, our boat's crew and two or three fishers first raised the boat's bow upon the ledge of rock, then brought her to a level, being poised upon that narrow hatch, and lastly launched her down into the dark and deep subterranean lake within. The entrance was so narrow, and the boat so clumsy, that we, who were all this while clinging to the rock like sea-fowl, and with scarce more secure footing, were greatly alarmed for the safety of our trusty sailors. At the instant when the boat sloped inward to the cave, a Highlander threw himself into it with great boldness and dexterity, and, at the expense of some bruises, shared its precipitate fall into the waters under the earth. This dangerous exploit was to prevent the boat drifting away from us, but a cord at its stern would have been a safer and surer expedient.

"When our *enfant perdu* had recovered breath and legs, he brought the boat back to the entrance, and took us in. We now found ourselves embarked on a deep black pond of an irregular form, the rocks rising like a dome all around us, and high over our heads. The light, a sort of dubious twilight, was derived from two chasms in the roof of the vault, for that offered by the entrance was but trifling. Down one of those rents there poured from the height of eighty feet, in a sheet of foam, the brook, which, after supplying the subterranean pond with water, finds its way out beneath the ledge of rock that blocks its entrance. The other skylight, if I may so term it, looks out at the clear blue sky. It is impossible for description to explain the impression made by so strange a place, to which we had been conveyed with so much difficulty. The cave itself, the pool, the cataract, would have been each separate objects of wonder, but all united together, and affecting at once the ear, the eye, and the imagination, their effect is indescribable. The length of this pond, or loch as the people here call it, is seventy feet over, the breadth about thirty at the narrowest point, and it is of great depth.

"As we resolved to proceed, we directed the boat to a natural arch on the right hand, or west side of the cataract. This archway was double, a high arch being placed above a very low one, as in a Roman aqueduct. The ledge of rock which forms this lower arch is not above two feet and a half high above the water, and under this we were to pass in the boat; so that we were fain to pile ourselves flat upon each other like a layer of herrings. By this judicious disposition we were pushed in safety beneath this low-browed rock into a region of utter darkness. For this, however, we were provided, for we had a tinder-box and lights. The view back upon the twilight lake we had crossed, its sullen eddies wheeling round and round, and its echoes resounding to the ceaseless thunder of the waterfall, seemed dismal enough, and was aggravated by temporary darkness, and in some degree by a sense of danger. The lights, however, dispelled the latter sensation, if it prevailed to any extent, and we now found ourselves in a narrow cavern, sloping somewhat upward from the water. We got out of the boat, proceeded along some slippery places upon shelves of the rock, and gained the dry land. I cannot say *dry*, excepting comparatively. We were then in an arched cave, twelve feet high in the roof, and about eight feet in breadth, which went winding into the bowels of the earth for about an hundred feet. The sides, being (like those of the whole cavern) of limestone rock, were covered with

stalactites, and with small drops of water like dew, glancing like ten thousand thousand sets of birthday diamonds under the glare of our lights. In some places these stalactites branch out into broad and curious ramifications, resembling coral and the foliage of submarine plants.

"When we reached the extremity of this passage, we found it declined suddenly to a horrible ugly gulf, or well, filled with dark water, and of great depth, over which the rock closed. We threw in stones, which indicated great profundity by their sound; and growing more familiar with the horrors of this den, we sounded with an oar, and found about ten feet depth at the entrance, but discovered in the same manner, that the gulf extended under the rock, deepening as it went, God knows how far. Imagination can figure few deaths more horrible than to be sucked under these rocks into some unfathomable abyss, where your corpse could never be found to give intimation of your fate. A water kelpy, or an evil spirit of any aquatic propensities, could not choose a fitter abode; and, to say the truth, I believe at our first entrance, and when all our feelings were afloat at the novelty of the scene, the unexpected plashing of a seal would have routed the whole dozen of us. The mouth of this ugly gulf was all covered with slimy alluvious substances, which led Mr. Stevenson to observe, that it could have no separate source, but must be fed from the waters of the outer lake and brook, as it lay upon the same level, and seemed to rise and fall with them, without having anything to indicate a separate current of its own. Rounding this perilous hole, or gulf, upon the aforesaid alluvious substances, which formed its shores, we reached the extremity of the cavern, which there ascends like a vent, or funnel, directly up a sloping precipice, but hideously black and slippery from wet and sea-weeds. One of our sailors, a Zetlander, climbed up a good way, and by holding up a light, we could plainly perceive that this vent closed after ascending to a considerable height; and here, therefore, closed the adventure of the cave of Smowe, for it appeared utterly impossible to proceed further in any direction whatever. There is a tradition that the first Lord Reay went through various subterranean abysses, and at length returned, after ineffectually endeavoring to penetrate to the extremity of the Smowe cave; but this must be either fabulous, or an exaggerated account of such a journey as we performed. And under the latter supposition, it is a curious instance how little the people in the neighborhood of this curiosity have cared to examine it.

"In returning, we endeavored to familiarize ourselves with the objects in detail, which, viewed together, had struck us with so much wonder. The stalactites, or limy incrustations, upon the walls of the cavern, are chiefly of a dark-brown color, and in this respect, Smowe is inferior, according to Mr. Stevenson, to the celebrated cave of Macallister in the Isle of Skye. In returning, the men with the lights, and the various groups and attitudes of the party, gave a good deal of amusement. We now ventured to clamber along the side of the rock above the subterranean water, and thus gained the upper arch, and had the satisfaction to see our admirable and good-humored commodore, Hamilton, floated beneath the lower arch into the second cavern. His goodly countenance being illumined by a single candle, his recumbent posture, and the appearance of a hard-favored fellow guiding the boat, made him the very picture of Bibo, in the catch, when he wakes in Charon's boat:—

> 'When Bibo thought fit from this world to retreat,
> As full of Champagne as an egg's full of meat,
> He waked in the boat, and to Charon he said,
> That he would be row'd back, for he was not yet dead.'

"Descending from our superior station on the upper arch, we now again embarked, and spent some time in rowing about and examining this second cave. We could see our dusky entrance, into which daylight streamed faint, and at a considerable distance; and under the arch of the outer cavern stood a sailor, with an oar in his hand, looking, in the perspective, like a fairy with his wand. We at length emerged unwillingly from this extraordinary basin, and again enjoyed ourselves in the large exterior cave. Our boat was hoisted with some difficulty over the ledge, which appears the natural barrier of the interior apartments, and restored in safety to the fishers, who were properly gratified for the hazard which their skiff, as well as one of themselves, had endured. After this we resolved to ascend the rocks, and discover the opening by which the cascade was discharged from above into the second cave. Erskine and I, by some chance, took the wrong side of the rocks, and, after some scrambling, got into the face of a dangerous precipice, where Erskine, to my great alarm, turned giddy, and declared he could not go farther. I clambered up without much difficulty, and shouting to the people below, got two of them to assist the Counsellor, who was brought into, by the means which have sent many a good fellow out of, the world—I mean a

rope. We easily found the brook, and traced its descent till it precipitates itself down a chasm of the rock into the subterranean apartment, where we first made its acquaintance. Divided by a natural arch of stone from the chasm down which the cascade falls, there is another rent, which serves as a skylight to the cavern, as I already noticed. Standing on a natural foot-bridge, formed by the arch which divides these two gulfs, you have a grand prospect into both. The one is deep, black, and silent, only affording at the bottom a glimpse of the dark and sullen pool which occupies the interior of the cavern. The right-hand rent, down which the stream discharges itself, seems to ring and reel with the unceasing roar of the cataract, which envelops its side in mist and foam. This part of the scene alone is worth a day's journey. After heavy rains, the torrent is discharged into this cavern with astonishing violence; and the size of the chasm being inadequate to the reception of such a volume of water, it is thrown up in spouts like the blowing of a whale. But at such times the entrance of the cavern is inaccessible.

"Taking leave of this scene with regret, we rowed back to Loch Eribol. Having yet an hour to spare before dinner, we rowed across the mouth of the lake to its shore on the east side. This rises into a steep and shattered stack of mouldering calcareous rock and stone, called Whitten-head. It is pierced with several caverns, the abode of seals and cormorants. We entered one, where our guide promised to us a grand sight, and so it certainly would have been to any who had not just come from Smowe. In this last cave the sea enters through a lofty arch, and penetrates to a great depth; but the weight of the tide made it dangerous to venture very far, so we did not see the extremity of Friskin's Cavern, as it is called. We shot several cormorants in the cave, the echoes roaring like thunder at every discharge. We received, however, a proper rebuke from Hamilton, our commodore, for killing anything which was not fit for *eating*. It was in vain I assured him that the Zetlanders made excellent hare-soup out of these sea-fowl. He will listen to no subordinate authority, and rules us by the Almanach des Gourmands. Mr. Anderson showed me the spot where the Norwegian monarch, Haco, moored his fleet, after the discomfiture he received at Largs. He caused all the cattle to be driven from the hills, and houghed and slain upon a broad flat rock, for the refreshment of his dispirited army. Mr. Anderson dines with us, and very handsomely presents us with a stock of salmon, haddocks,

and so forth, which we requite by a small present of wine from our sea stores. This has been a fine day; the first fair day here for these eight weeks.

"*20th August, 1814.*—Sail by four in the morning, and by half-past six are off Cape Wrath. All hands ashore by seven, and no time allowed to breakfast, except on beef and biscuit. On this dread Cape, so fatal to mariners, it is proposed to build a lighthouse, and Mr. Stevenson has fixed on an advantageous situation. It is a high promontory, with steep sides that go sheer down to the breakers, which lash its feet. There is no landing, except in a small creek about a mile and a half to the eastward. There the foam of the sea plays at long bowls with a huge collection of large stones, some of them a ton in weight, but which these fearful billows chuck up and down as a child tosses a ball. The walk from thence to the Cape was over rough boggy ground, but good sheep pasture. Mr. —— Dunlop, brother to the laird of Dunlop, took from Lord Reay, some years since, a large track of sheep-land, including the territories of Cape Wrath, for about £300 a year, for the period of two-nineteen years and a life-rent. It is needless to say that the tenant has an immense profit, for the value of pasture is now understood here. Lord Reay's estate, containing 150,000 square acres, and measuring eighty miles by sixty, was, before commencement of the last leases, rented at £1200 a year. It is now worth £5000, and Mr. Anderson says he may let it this ensuing year (when the leases expire) for about £15,000. But then he must resolve to part with his people, for these rents can only be given upon the supposition that sheep are generally to be introduced on the property. In an economical, and perhaps in a political point of view, it might be best that every part of a country were dedicated to that sort of occupation for which nature has best fitted it. But to effect this reform in the present instance, Lord Reay must turn out several hundred families who have lived under him and his fathers for many generations, and the swords of whose fathers probably won the lands from which he is now expelling them. He is a good-natured man, I suppose, for Mr. A. says he is hesitating whether he shall not take a more moderate rise (£7000 or £8000), and keep his Highland tenantry. This last war (before the short peace), he levied a fine fencible corps (the Reay fencibles), and might have doubled their number. *Wealth* is no doubt *strength* in a country, while all is quiet and governed by law, but on any altercation or internal commotion, it ceases to be strength, and is

only the means of tempting the strong to plunder the possessors. Much may be said on both sides.

"Cape Wrath is a striking point, both from the dignity of its own appearance, and from the mental association of its being the extreme cape of Scotland, with reference to the north-west. There is no land in the direct line between this point and America. I saw a pair of large eagles, and if I had had the rifle-gun might have had a shot, for the birds, when I first saw them, were perched on a rock within about sixty or seventy yards. They are, I suppose, little disturbed here, for they showed no great alarm. After the Commissioners and Mr. Stevenson had examined the headland, with reference to the site of a lighthouse, we strolled to our boat, and came on board between ten and eleven. Get the boat up upon deck, and set sail for the Lewis with light winds and a great swell of tide. Pass a rocky islet called Gousla. Here a fine vessel was lately wrecked; all her crew perished but one, who got upon the rocks from the boltsprit, and was afterwards brought off. In front of Cape Wrath are some angry breakers, called the *Staggs*; the rocks which occasion them are visible at low water. The country behind Cape Wrath swells in high sweeping elevations, but without any picturesque or dignified mountainous scenery. But on sailing westward a few miles, particularly after doubling a headland called the Stour of Assint, the coast assumes the true Highland character, being skirted with a succession of picturesque mountains of every variety of height and outline. These are the hills of Ross-shire—a waste and thinly peopled district at this extremity of the island. We would willingly have learned the names of the most remarkable, but they are only laid down in the charts by the cant names given them by mariners, from their appearance, as the Sugar-loaf, and so forth. Our breeze now increases, and seems steadily favorable, carrying us on with exhilarating rapidity, at the rate of eight knots an hour, with the romantic outline of the mainland under our lee-beam, and the dusky shores of the Long Island beginning to appear ahead. We remain on deck long after it is dark, watching the phosphoric effects occasioned, or made visible, by the rapid motion of the vessel, and enlightening her course with a continued succession of sparks and even flashes of broad light, mingled with the foam which she flings from her bows and head. A rizard haddock and to bed. Charming weather all day.

"*21st August, 1814.*—Last night went out like a lamb, but this morning came in like a lion, all roar and tumult. The wind shifted and became squally; the mingled and confused tides that run among the Hebrides got us among their eddies, and gave the cutter such concussions, that, besides reeling at every wave, she trembled from head to stern, with a sort of very uncomfortable and ominous vibration. Turned out about three, and went on deck; the prospect dreary enough, as we are beating up a narrow channel between two dark and disconsolate-looking islands, in a gale of wind and rain, guided only by the twinkling glimmer of the light on an island called Ellan Glas.—Go to bed and sleep soundly, notwithstanding the rough rocking. Great bustle about four; the light-keeper having seen our flag, comes off to be our pilot, as in duty bound. Asleep again till eight. When I went on deck, I found we had anchored in the little harbor of Scalpa, upon the coast of Harris, a place dignified by the residence of Charles Edward in his hazardous attempt to escape in 1746. An old man, lately alive here, called Donald Macleod, was his host and temporary protector, and could not, until his dying hour, mention the distresses of the adventurer without tears. From this place, Charles attempted to go to Stornoway; but the people of the Lewis had taken arms to secure him, under an idea that he was coming to plunder the country. And although his faithful attendant, Donald Macleod, induced them by fair words, to lay aside their purpose, yet they insisted upon his leaving the island. So the unfortunate Prince was obliged to return back to Scalpa. He afterwards escaped to South Uist, but was chased in the passage by Captain Fergusson's sloop of war. The harbor seems a little neat secure place of anchorage. Within a small island, there seems more shelter than where we are lying; but it is crowded with vessels, part of those whom we saw in the Long-Hope—so Mr. Wilson chose to remain outside. The ground looks hilly and barren in the extreme; but I can say little for it, as an incessant rain prevents my keeping the deck. Stevenson and Duff, accompanied by Marchie, go to examine the lighthouse on Ellan Glas. Hamilton and Erskine keep their beds, having scarce slept last night—and I bring up my journal. The day continues bad, with little intermission of rain. Our party return with little advantage from their expedition, excepting some fresh butter from the lighthouse. The harbor of Scalpa is composed of a great number of little uninhabited islets. The masts of the vessels at anchor behind them have a good effect. To bed

early, to make amends for last night, with the purpose of sailing for Dunvegan in the Isle of Skye with daylight."

Chapter XXXI

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1814

"*22d August, 1814.*—Sailed early in the morning from Scalpa Harbor, in order to cross the Minch, or Channel, for Dunvegan; but the breeze being contrary, we can only creep along the Harris shore, until we shall gain the advantage of the tide. The east coast of Harris, as we now see it, is of a character which sets human industry at utter defiance, consisting of high sterile hills, covered entirely with stones, with a very slight sprinkling of stunted heather. Within, appear still higher peaks of mountains. I have never seen anything more unpropitious, excepting the southern side of Griban, on the shores of Loch-na-Gaoil, in the Isle of Mull. We sail along this desolate coast (which exhibits no mark of human habitation) with the advantage of a pleasant day, and a brisk, though not a favorable gale. *Two o'clock*—Row ashore to see the little harbor and village of Rowdill, on the coast of Harris. There is a decent three-storied house, belonging to the laird, Mr. Macleod of the Harris, where we were told two of his female relations lived. A large vessel had been stranded last year, and two or three carpenters were about repairing her, but in such a style of Highland laziness that I suppose she may float next century. The harbor is neat enough, but wants a little more cover to the eastward. The ground, on landing, does not seem altogether so desolate as from the sea. In the former point of view, we overlook all the retired glens and crevices, which, by infinite address and labor, are rendered capable of a little cultivation. But few and evil are the patches so cultivated in Harris, as far as we have seen. Above the house is situated the ancient church of Rowdill. This pile was unfortunately burned down by accident some years since, by fire taking to a quantity of wood laid in for fitting it up. It is a building in the form of a cross, with a rude tower at the eastern end, like some old English churches. Upon this tower are certain pieces of sculpture, of a kind the last which one would have expected on a building

dedicated to religious purposes. Some have lately fallen in a storm, but enough remains to astonish us at the grossness of the architect and the age.

"Within the church are two ancient monuments. The first, on the right hand of the pulpit, presents the effigy of a warrior completely armed in plate armor, with his hand on his two-handed broadsword. His helmet is peaked, with a gorget or upper corselet which seems to be made of mail. His figure lies flat on the monument, and is in bas-relief, of the natural size. The arch which surmounts this monument is curiously carved with the figures of the apostles. In the flat space of the wall beneath the arch, and above the tombstone, are a variety of compartments, exhibiting the arms of the Macleods, being a galley with the sails spread, a rude view of Dunvegan Castle, some saints and religious emblems, and a Latin inscription, of which our time (or skill) was inadequate to decipher the first line; but the others announced the tenant of the monument to be *Alexander, filius Willielmi MacLeod, de Dunvegan, Anno Dni* M.CCCC.XXVIII. A much older monument (said also to represent a laird of Macleod) lies in the transept, but without any arch over it. It represents the grim figure of a Highland chief, not in feudal armor like the former, but dressed in a plaid—(or perhaps a shirt of mail)—reaching down below the knees, with a broad sort of hem upon its lower extremity. The figure wears a high-peaked open helmet, or skull-cap, with a sort of tippet of mail attached to it, which falls over the breast of the warrior, pretty much as women wear a handkerchief or short shawl. This remarkable figure is bearded most tyrannically, and has one hand on his long two-handed sword, the other on his dirk, both of which hang at a broad belt. Another weapon, probably his knife, seems to have been also attached to the baldric. His feet rest on his two dogs entwined together, and a similar emblem is said to have supported his head, but is now defaced, as indeed the whole monument bears marks of the unfortunate fire. A lion is placed at each end of the stone. Who the hero was, whom this martial monument commemorated, we could not learn. Indeed, our cicerone was but imperfect. He chanced to be a poor devil of an excise-officer who had lately made a seizure of a still upon a neighboring island, after a desperate resistance. Upon seeing our cutter, he mistook it, as has often happened to us, for an armed vessel belonging to the revenue, which the appearance and equipment of the yacht, and the number of men, make her resemble considerably. He was much disappointed when he found

we had nothing to do with the tribute to Cæsar, and begged us not to undeceive the natives, who were so much irritated against him that he found it necessary to wear a loaded pair of pistols in each pocket, which he showed to our Master, Wilson, to convince him of the perilous state in which he found himself while exercising so obnoxious a duty in the midst of a fierce-tempered people, and at many miles' distance from any possible countenance or assistance. The village of Rowdill consists of Highland huts of the common construction, *i. e.*, a low circular wall of large stones, without mortar, deeply sunk in the ground, surmounted by a thatched roof secured by ropes, without any chimney but a hole in the roof. There may be forty such houses in the village. We heard that the laird was procuring a schoolmaster—he of the parish being ten miles distant—and there was a neatness about the large house which seems to indicate that things are going on well. Adjacent to the churchyard were two eminences, apparently artificial. Upon one was fixed a stone, seemingly the staff of a cross; upon another the head of a cross, with a sculpture of the crucifixion. These monuments (which refer themselves to Catholic times of course) are popularly called *The Croshlets*—crosslets, or little crosses.

"Get on board at five, and stand across the Sound for Skye with the ebb-tide in our favor. The sunset being delightful, we enjoy it upon deck, admiring the Sound on each side bounded by islands. That of Skye lies in the east, with some very high mountains in the centre, and a bold rocky coast in front, opening up into several lochs, or arms of the sea;—that of Loch Folliart, near the upper end of which Dunvegan is situated, is opposite to us, but our breeze has failed us, and the flood-tide will soon set in, which is likely to carry us to the northward of this object of our curiosity until next morning. To the west of us lies Harris, with its variegated ridges of mountains, now clear, distinct, and free from clouds. The sun is just setting behind the Island of Bernera, of which we see one conical hill. North Uist and Benbecula continue from Harris to the southerly line of what is called the Long Island. They are as bold and mountainous, and probably as barren as Harris—worse they cannot be. Unnumbered islets and holms, each of which has its name and its history, skirt these larger isles, and are visible in this clear evening as distinct and separate objects, lying lone and quiet upon the face of the undisturbed and scarce rippling sea. To our berths at ten, after admiring the scenery for some time.

"*23d August, 1814.*—Wake under the Castle of Dunvegan, in the Loch of Folliart. I had sent a card to the Laird of Macleod in the morning, who came off before we were dressed, and carried us to his castle to breakfast. A part of Dunvegan is very old; 'its birth tradition notes not.' Another large tower was built by the same Alaster Macleod whose burial-place and monument we saw yesterday at Rowdill. He had a Gaelic surname, signifying the Hump-backed. Roderick More (knighted by James VI.) erected a long edifice combining these two ancient towers: and other pieces of building, forming a square, were accomplished at different times. The whole castle occupies a precipitous mass of rock overhanging the lake, divided by two or three islands in that place, which form a snug little harbor under the walls. There is a courtyard looking out upon the sea, protected by a battery, at least a succession of embrasures, for only two guns are pointed, and these unfit for service. The ancient entrance rose up a flight of steps cut in the rock, and passed into this courtyard through a portal, but this is now demolished. You land under the castle, and walking round, find yourself in front of it. This was originally inaccessible, for a brook coming down on the one side, a chasm of the rocks on the other, and a ditch in front, made it impervious. But the late Macleod built a bridge over the stream, and the present laird is executing an entrance suitable to the character of this remarkable fortalice, by making a portal between two advanced towers and an outer court, from which he proposes to throw a drawbridge over to the high rock in front of the castle. This, if well executed, cannot fail to have a good and characteristic effect. We were most kindly and hospitably received by the chieftain, his lady, and his sister; the two last are pretty and accomplished young women, a sort of persons whom we have not seen for some time; and I was quite as much pleased with renewing my acquaintance with them as with the sight of a good field of barley just cut (the first harvest we have seen), not to mention an extensive young plantation and some middle-aged trees, though all had been strangers to mine eyes since I left Leith. In the garden—or rather the orchard which was formerly the garden—is a pretty cascade, divided into two branches, and called Rorie More's Nurse, because he loved to be lulled to sleep by the sound of it. The day was rainy, or at least inconstant, so we could not walk far from the castle. Besides the assistance of the laird himself, who was most politely and easily attentive, we had that of an intelligent gentlemanlike clergyman, Mr. Suter, minister of Kilmore, to explain the

carte-de-pays. Within the castle we saw a remarkable drinking-cup, with an inscription dated A. D. 993, which I have described particularly elsewhere. I saw also a fairy flag, a pennon of silk, with something like round red rowan-berries wrought upon it. We also saw the drinking-horn of Rorie More, holding about three pints English measure—an ox's horn tipped with silver, not nearly so large as Watt of Harden's bugle. The rest of the curiosities in the castle are chiefly Indian, excepting an old dirk and the fragment of a two-handed sword. We learn that most of the Highland superstitions, even that of the second-sight, are still in force. Gruagach, a sort of tutelary divinity, often mentioned by Martin in his history of the Western Islands, has still his place and credit, but is modernized into a tall man, always a Lowlander, with a long coat and white waistcoat. Passed a very pleasant day. I should have said the fairy flag had three properties: produced in battle, it multiplied the numbers of the Macleods—spread on the nuptial bed, it insured fertility—and lastly, it brought herring into the loch.

"*24th August, 1814*.—This morning resist with difficulty Macleod's kind and pressing entreaty to send round the ship, and go to the cave at Airds by land; but our party is too large to be accommodated without inconvenience, and divisions are always awkward. Walk and see Macleod's farm. The plantations seem to thrive admirably, although I think he hazards planting his trees greatly too tall. Macleod is a spirited and judicious improver, and if he does not hurry too fast, cannot fail to be of service to his people. He seems to think and act much like a chief, without the fanfaronade of the character. See a female school patronized by Mrs. M. There are about twenty girls, who learn reading, writing, and spinning; and being compelled to observe habits of cleanliness and neatness when at school, will probably be the means of introducing them by degrees at home. The roads around the castle are, generally speaking, very good; some are old, some made under the operation of the late act. Macleod says almost all the contractors for these last roads have failed, being tightly looked after by Government, which I confess I think very right. If Government is to give relief where a disadvantageous contract has been engaged in, it is plain it cannot be refused in similar instances, so that all calculations of expenses in such operations are at an end. The day being delightfully fair and warm, we walk up to the Church of Kilmore. In a cottage, at no great distance, we heard the

women singing as they *waulked* the cloth, by rubbing it with their hands and feet, and screaming all the while in a sort of chorus. At a distance, the sound was wild and sweet enough, but rather discordant when you approached too near the performers. In the churchyard (otherwise not remarkable) was a pyramidical monument erected to the father of the celebrated Simon, Lord Lovat, who was fostered at Dunvegan. It is now nearly ruinous, and the inscription has fallen down. Return to the castle, take our luncheon, and go aboard at three—Macleod accompanying us in proper style with his piper. We take leave of the castle, where we have been so kindly entertained, with a salute of seven guns. The chief returns ashore, with his piper playing the Macleod's Gathering, heard to advantage along the calm and placid loch, and dying as it retreated from us.

"The towers of Dunvegan, with the banner which floated over them in honor of their guests, now showed to great advantage. On the right were a succession of three remarkable hills, with round flat tops, popularly called Macleod's Dining-Tables. Far behind these, in the interior of the island, arise the much higher and more romantic mountains, called Quillen, or Cuillin, a name which they have been said to owe to no less a person than Cuthullin, or Cuchullin, celebrated by Ossian. I ought, I believe, to notice, that Macleod and Mr. Suter have both heard a tacksman of Macleod's, called Grant, recite the celebrated Address to the Sun; and another person, whom they named, repeat the description of Cuchullin's car. But all agree as to the gross infidelity of Macpherson as a translator and editor. It ends in the explanation of the Adventures in the cave of Montesinos, afforded to the Knight of La Mancha, by the ape of Gines de Passamonte—some are true and some are false. There is little poetical tradition in this country, yet there should be a great deal, considering how lately the bards and genealogists existed as a distinct order. Macleod's *hereditary* piper is called MacCrimmon, but the present holder of the office has risen above his profession. He is an old man, a lieutenant in the army, and a most capital piper, possessing about 200 tunes and pibrochs, most of which will probably die with him, as he declines to have any of his sons instructed in his art. He plays to Macleod and his lady, but only in the same room, and maintains his minstrel privilege by putting on his bonnet so soon as he begins to play. These MacCrimmons formerly kept a college in Skye for teaching the pipe-music. Macleod's present piper is of the name, but

scarcely as yet a deacon of his craft. He played every day at dinner.—After losing sight of the Castle of Dunvegan, we open another branch of the loch on which it is situated, and see a small village upon its distant bank. The mountains of Quillen continue to form a background to the wild landscape with their variegated and peaked outline. We approach Dunvegan-head, a bold bluff cape, where the loch joins the ocean. The weather, hitherto so beautiful that we had dined on deck *en seigneurs*, becomes overcast and hazy, with little or no wind. Laugh and lie down.

"*25th August, 1814.*—Rise about eight o'clock, the yacht gliding delightfully along the coast of Skye, with a fair wind and excellent day. On the opposite side lie the islands of Canna, Rum, and Muick, popularly Muck. On opening the sound between Rum and Canna, see a steep circular rock, forming one side of the harbor, on the point of which we can discern the remains of a tower of small dimensions, built, it is said, by a King of the Isles to secure a wife of whom he was jealous. But, as we kept the Skye side of the Sound, we saw little of these islands but what our spy-glasses could show us. The coast of Skye is highly romantic, and at the same time displayed a richness of vegetation on the lower grounds, to which we have hitherto been strangers. We passed three salt-water lochs, or deep embayments, called Loch Bracadale, Loch Eynort, and Loch Britta—and about eleven o'clock open Loch Scavig. We were now under the western termination of the high mountains of Quillen, whose weather-beaten and serrated peaks we had admired at a distance from Dunvegan. They sunk here upon the sea, but with the same bold and peremptory aspect which their distant appearance indicated. They seemed to consist of precipitous sheets of naked rock, down which the torrents were leaping in a hundred lines of foam. The tops, apparently inaccessible to human foot, were rent and split into the most tremendous pinnacles; towards the base of these bare and precipitous crags, the ground, enriched by the soil washed away from them, is verdant and productive. Having passed within the small isle of Soa, we enter Loch Scavig under the shoulder of one of these grisly mountains, and observe that the opposite side of the loch is of a milder character softened down into steep green declivities. From the depth of the bay advanced a headland of high rocks which divided the lake into two recesses, from each of which a brook seemed to issue. Here Macleod had intimated we should find a fine romantic loch, but we were uncertain up what inlet we

should proceed in search of it. We chose, against our better judgment, the southerly inlet, where we saw a house which might afford us information. On manning our boat and rowing ashore, we observed a hurry among the inhabitants, owing to our being as usual suspected for *king's men*, although, Heaven knows, we have nothing to do with the revenue but to spend the part of it corresponding to our equipment. We find that there is a lake adjoining to each branch of the bay, and foolishly walk a couple of miles to see that next the farmhouse, merely because the honest man seemed jealous of the honor of his own loch, though we were speedily convinced it was not that which we had been recommended to examine. It had no peculiar merit excepting from its neighborhood to a very high cliff or mountain of precipitous granite; otherwise, the sheet of water does not equal even Cauldshiels Loch. Returned and reëmbarked in our boat, for our guide shook his head at our proposal to climb over the peninsula which divides the two bays and the two lakes. In rowing round the headland, surprised at the infinite number of sea-fowl, then busy apparently with a shoal of fish; at the depth of the bay find that the discharge from this second lake forms a sort of waterfall or rather rapid; round this place were assembled hundreds of trout, and salmon struggling to get up into the fresh water; with a net we might have had twenty salmon at a haul, and a sailor, with no better hook than a crooked pin, caught a dish of trouts, during our absence.

"Advancing up this huddling and riotous brook, we found ourselves in a most extraordinary scene: we were surrounded by hills of the boldest and most precipitous character, and on the margin of a lake which seemed to have sustained the constant ravages of torrents from these rude neighbors. The shores consisted of huge layers of naked granite, here and there intermixed with bogs, and heaps of gravel and sand marking the course of torrents. Vegetation there was little or none, and the mountains rose so perpendicularly from the water's edge, that Borrowdale is a jest to them. We proceeded about one mile and a half up this deep, dark, and solitary lake, which is about two miles long, half a mile broad, and, as we learned, of extreme depth. The vapor which enveloped the mountain ridges obliged us by assuming a thousand shapes, varying its veils in all sorts of forms, but sometimes clearing off altogether. It is true, it made us pay the penalty by some heavy and downright showers, from the frequency of which, a Highland boy, whom we brought from the farm, told us the lake was

popularly called the Water Kettle. The proper name is Loch Corriskin, from the deep *corrie* or hollow in the mountains of Cuillin, which affords the basin for this wonderful sheet of water. It is as exquisite as a savage scene, as Loch Katrine is as a scene of stern beauty. After having penetrated so far as distinctly to observe the termination of the lake, under an immense mountain which rises abruptly from the head of the waters, we returned, and often stopped to admire the ravages which storms must have made in these recesses when all human witnesses were driven to places of more shelter and security. Stones, or rather large massive fragments of rock of a composite kind, perfectly different from the granite barriers of the lake, lay upon the rocky beach in the strangest and most precarious situations, as if abandoned by the torrents which had borne them down from above; some lay loose and tottering upon the ledges of the natural rock, with so little security that the slightest push moved them, though their weight exceeded many tons. These detached rocks were chiefly what are called plum-pudding stones. Those which formed the shore were granite. The opposite side of the lake seemed quite pathless, as a huge mountain, one of the detached ridges of the Quillen, sinks in a profound and almost perpendicular precipice down to the water. On the left-hand side, which we traversed, rose a higher and equally inaccessible mountain, the top of which seemed to contain the crater of an exhausted volcano. I never saw a spot on which there was less appearance of vegetation of any kind; the eye rested on nothing but brown and naked crags, and the rocks on which we walked by the side of the loch were as bare as the pavement of Cheapside. There are one or two spots of islets in the loch which seem to bear juniper, or some such low bushy shrub.

"Returned from our extraordinary walk and went on board. During dinner, our vessel quitted Loch Scavig, and having doubled its southern cape, opened the bay or salt-water Loch of Sleapin. There went again on shore to visit the late discovered and much celebrated cavern, called Macallister's cave. It opens at the end of a deep ravine running upward from the sea, and the proprietor, Mr. Macallister of Strath Aird, finding that visitors injured it, by breaking and carrying away the stalactites with which it abounds, has secured this cavern by an eight or nine feet wall, with a door. Upon inquiring for the key, we found it was three miles up the loch at the laird's house. It was now late, and to stay until a messenger had gone and returned

three miles, was not to be thought of, any more than the alternative of going up the loch and lying there all night. We therefore, with regret, resolved to scale the wall, in which attempt, by the assistance of a rope and some ancient acquaintance with orchard breaking, we easily succeeded. The first entrance to this celebrated cave is rude and unpromising, but the light of the torches with which we were provided is soon reflected from roof, floor, and walls, which seem as if they were sheeted with marble, partly smooth, partly rough with frost-work and rustic ornaments, and partly wrought into statuary. The floor forms a steep and difficult ascent, and might be fancifully compared to a sheet of water, which, while it rushed whitening and foaming down a declivity, had been suddenly arrested and consolidated by the spell of an enchanter. Upon attaining the summit of this ascent, the cave descends with equal rapidity to the brink of a pool of the most limpid water, about four or five yards broad. There opens beyond this pool a portal arch, with beautiful white chasing upon the sides, which promises a continuation of the cave. One of our sailors swam across, for there was no other mode of passing, and informed us (as indeed we partly saw by the light he carried), that the enchantment of Macallister's cave terminated with this portal, beyond which there was only a rude ordinary cavern speedily choked with stones and earth. But the pool, on the brink of which we stood, surrounded by the most fanciful mouldings in a substance resembling white marble, and distinguished by the depth and purity of its waters, might be the bathing grotto of a Naiad. I think a statuary might catch beautiful hints from the fanciful and romantic disposition of the stalactites. There is scarce a form or group that an active fancy may not trace among the grotesque ornaments which have been gradually moulded in this cavern by the dropping of the calcareous water, and its hardening into petrifactions; many of these have been destroyed by the senseless rage of appropriation among recent tourists, and the grotto has lost (I am informed), through the smoke of torches, much of that vivid silver tint which was originally one of its chief distinctions. But enough of beauty remains to compensate for all that may be lost. As the easiest mode of return, I slid down the polished sheet of marble which forms the rising ascent, and thereby injured my pantaloons in a way which my jacket is ill calculated to conceal. Our wearables, after a month's hard service, begin to be frail, and there are daily demands for repairs. Our eatables also begin to assume a real nautical appearance—no soft bread—milk a rare commodity—and those gentlemen most in favor

with John Peters, the steward, who prefer salt beef to fresh. To make amends, we never hear of sea-sickness, and the good-humor and harmony of the party continue uninterrupted. When we left the cave we carried off two grandsons of Mr. Macallister's, remarkably fine boys; and Erskine, who may be called *L'ami des Enfans*, treated them most kindly, and showed them all the curiosities in the vessel, causing even the guns to be fired for their amusement, besides filling their pockets with almonds and raisins. So that, with a handsome letter of apology, I hope we may erase any evil impression Mr. Macallister may adopt from our storming the exterior defences of his cavern. After having sent them ashore in safety, stand out of the bay with little or no wind, for the opposite island of Egg."

Chapter XXXII

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Diary Continued. — Cave of Egg. — Iona. — Staffa. — Dunstaffnage. — Dunluce Castle. — Giant's Causeway. — Isle of Arran, Etc. — Diary Concluded

1814

"*26th August, 1814.*—At seven this morning were in the Sound which divides the Isle of Rum from that of Egg. Rum is rude, barren, and mountainous; Egg, although hilly and rocky, and traversed by one remarkable ridge called Scuir-Egg, has, in point of soil, a much more promising appearance. Southward of both lies Muick, or Muck, a low and fertile island, and though the least, yet probably the most valuable of the three. Caverns being still the order of the day, we man the boat and row along the shore of Egg, in quest of that which was the memorable scene of a horrid feudal vengeance. We had rounded more than half the island, admiring the entrance of many a bold natural cave which its rocks exhibit, but without finding that which we sought, until we procured a guide. This noted cave has a very narrow entrance, through which one can hardly creep on knees and hands. It rises steep and lofty within, and runs into the bowels of the rock to the depth of 255 measured feet. The height at the entrance may be about three feet, but rises to eighteen or twenty, and the breadth may vary in the same proportion. The rude and stony bottom of this cave is strewed with the bones of men, women, and children, being the sad relics of the ancient inhabitants of the island, 200 in number, who were slain on the following occasion: The Macdonalds of the Isle of Egg, a people dependent on Clanranald, had done some injury to the Laird of Macleod. The tradition of the isle says, that it was by a personal attack on the chieftain, in which his back was broken; but that of the other isles bears that the injury was offered to two or three of the Macleods, who, landing upon Egg and using some freedom with the young women, were seized by the islanders, bound hand and foot, and turned adrift in a boat, which the winds and waves safely conducted to Skye. To avenge the offence given, Macleod sailed with such a body of men as rendered resistance hopeless. The natives, fearing his

vengeance, concealed themselves in this cavern, and after strict search, the Macleods went on board their galleys, after doing what mischief they could, concluding the inhabitants had left the isle. But next morning they espied from their vessel a man upon the island, and, immediately landing again, they traced his retreat, by means of a light snow on the ground, to this cavern. Macleod then summoned the subterraneous garrison, and demanded that the individuals who had offended him should be delivered up. This was peremptorily refused. The chieftain thereupon caused his people to divert the course of a rill of water, which, falling over the mouth of the cave, would have prevented his purposed vengeance. He then kindled at the entrance of the cavern a huge fire, and maintained it until all within were destroyed by suffocation. The date of this dreadful deed must have been recent, if one can judge from the fresh appearance of those relics. I brought off, in spite of the prejudices of our sailors, a skull, which seems that of a young woman.

"Before reëmbarking, we visit another cave opening to the sea, but of a character widely different, being a large open vault as high as that of a cathedral, and running back a great way into the rock at the same height; the height and width of the opening give light to the whole. Here, after 1745, when the Catholic priests were scarcely tolerated, the priest of Egg used to perform the Romish service. A huge ledge of rock, almost halfway up one side of the vault, served for altar and pulpit; and the appearance of a priest and Highland congregation in such an extraordinary place of worship might have engaged the pencil of Salvator. Most of the inhabitants of Egg are still Catholics, and laugh at their neighbors of Rum, who, having been converted by the cane of their chieftain, are called *Protestants of the yellow stick*. The Presbyterian minister and Catholic priest live upon this little island on very good terms. The people here were much irritated against the men of a revenue vessel who had seized all the stills, etc., in the neighboring Isle of Muck, with so much severity as to take even the people's bedding. We had been mistaken for some time for this obnoxious vessel. Got on board about two o'clock, and agreed to stand over for Coll, and to be ruled by the wind as to what was next to be done. Bring up my journal.

"*27th August, 1814*.—The wind, to which we resigned ourselves, proves exceedingly tyrannical, and blows squally the whole night, which, with the swell of the Atlantic, now unbroken by any islands to windward, proves a

means of great combustion in the cabin. The dishes and glasses in the steward's cupboards become locomotive—portmanteaus and writing-desks are more active than necessary—it is scarce possible to keep one's self within bed, and impossible to stand upright if you rise. Having crept upon deck about four in the morning, I find we are beating to windward off the Isle of Tyree, with the determination on the part of Mr. Stevenson that his constituents should visit a reef of rocks called Skerry Vhor where he thought it would be essential to have a lighthouse. Loud remonstrances on the part of the Commissioners, who one and all declare they will subscribe to his opinion, whatever it may be, rather than continue this infernal buffeting. Quiet perseverance on the part of Mr. S., and great kicking, bouncing, and squabbling upon that of the Yacht, who seems to like the idea of Skerry Vhor as little as the Commissioners. At length, by dint of exertion, come in sight of this long ridge of rocks (chiefly under water), on which the tide breaks in a most tremendous style. There appear a few low broad rocks at one end of the reef, which is about a mile in length. These are never entirely under water, though the surf dashes over them. To go through all the forms, Hamilton, Duff, and I resolve to land upon these bare rocks in company with Mr. Stevenson. Pull through a very heavy swell with great difficulty, and approach a tremendous surf dashing over black pointed rocks. Our rowers, however, get the boat into a quiet creek between two rocks, where we contrive to land well wetted. I saw nothing remarkable in my way, excepting several seals, which we might have shot, but, in the doubtful circumstances of the landing, we did not care to bring guns. We took possession of the rock in name of the Commissioners, and generously bestowed our own great names on its crags and creeks. The rock was carefully measured by Mr. S. It will be a most desolate position for a lighthouse—the Bell Rock and Eddystone a joke to it, for the nearest land is the wild island of Tyree, at fourteen miles' distance. So much for the Skerry Vhor.

"Came on board proud of our achievement; and, to the great delight of all parties, put the ship before the wind, and run swimmingly down for Iona. See a large square-rigged vessel, supposed an American. Reach Iona about five o'clock. The inhabitants of the Isle of Columba, understanding their interest as well as if they had been Deal boatmen, charged two guineas for pilotage, which Captain W. abridged into fifteen shillings, too much for ten

minutes' work. We soon got on shore, and landed in the bay of Martyrs, beautiful for its white sandy beach. Here all dead bodies are still landed, and laid for a time upon a small rocky eminence, called the Sweyne, before they are interred. Iona, the last time I saw it, seemed to me to contain the most wretched people I had anywhere seen. But either they have got better since I was here, or my eyes, familiarized with the wretchedness of Zetland and the Harris, are less shocked with that of Iona. Certainly their houses are better than either, and the appearance of the people not worse. This little fertile isle contains upwards of 400 inhabitants, all living upon small farms, which they divide and subdivide as their families increase, so that the country is greatly over-peopled, and in some danger of a famine in case of a year of scarcity. Visit the nunnery and *Reilig Oran*, or burial-place of St. Oran, but the night coming on we return on board.

"*28th August, 1814.*—Carry our breakfast ashore—take that repast in the house of Mr. Maclean, the schoolmaster and cicerone of the island—and resume our investigation of the ruins of the cathedral and the cemetery. Of these monuments, more than of any other, it may be said with propriety,—

> 'You never tread upon them but you set
> Your feet upon some ancient history.'

I do not mean to attempt a description of what is so well known as the ruins of Iona. Yet I think it has been as yet inadequately performed, for the vast number of carved tombs containing the reliques of the great exceeds credibility. In general, even in the most noble churches, the number of the vulgar dead exceed in all proportion the few of eminence who are deposited under monuments. Iona is in all respects the reverse: until lately, the inhabitants of the isle did not presume to mix their vulgar dust with that of chiefs, reguli, and abbots. The number, therefore, of carved and inscribed tombstones is quite marvellous, and I can easily credit the story told by Sacheverell, who assures us that 300 inscriptions had been collected, and were lost in the troubles of the seventeenth century. Even now, many more might be deciphered than have yet been made public, but the rustic step of the peasants and of Sassenach visitants is fast destroying these faint memorials of the valiant of the Isles. A skilful antiquary remaining here a week, and having (or assuming) the power of raising the half-sunk monuments, might make a curious collection. We could only gaze and

grieve; yet had the day not been Sunday, we would have brought our seamen ashore, and endeavored to have raised some of these monuments. The celebrated ridges called *Jomaire na'n Righrean*, or Graves of the Kings, can now scarce be said to exist, though their site is still pointed out. Undoubtedly, the thirst of spoil, and the frequent custom of burying treasures with the ancient princes, occasioned their early violation; nor am I any sturdy believer in their being regularly ticketed off by inscriptions into the tombs of the Kings of Scotland, of Ireland, of Norway, and so forth. If such inscriptions ever existed, I should deem them the work of some crafty bishop or abbot, for the credit of his diocese or convent. Macbeth is said to have been the last King of Scotland here buried; sixty preceded him, all doubtless as powerful in their day, but now unknown—*carent quia vate sacro*. A few weeks' labor of Shakespeare, an obscure player, has done more for the memory of Macbeth than all the gifts, wealth, and monuments of this cemetery of princes have been able to secure to the rest of its inhabitants. It also occurred to me in Iona (as it has on many similar occasions) that the traditional recollections concerning the monks themselves are wonderfully faint, contrasted with the beautiful and interesting monuments of architecture which they have left behind them. In Scotland particularly, the people have frequently traditions wonderfully vivid of the persons and achievements of ancient warriors, whose towers have long been levelled with the soil. But of the monks of Melrose, Kelso, Aberbrothock, Iona, etc., etc., etc., they can tell nothing but that such a race existed, and inhabited the stately ruins of these monasteries. The quiet, slow, and uniform life of those recluse beings glided on, it may be, like a dark and silent stream, fed from unknown resources, and vanishing from the eye without leaving any marked trace of its course. The life of the chieftain was a mountain torrent thundering over rock and precipice, which, less deep and profound in itself, leaves on the minds of the terrified spectators those deep impressions of awe and wonder which are most readily handed down to posterity.

"Among the various monuments exhibited at Iona is one where a Maclean lies in the same grave with one of the Macfies or Macduffies of Colonsay, with whom he had lived in alternate friendship and enmity during their lives. 'He lies above him during death,' said one of Maclean's followers, as his chief was interred, 'as he was above him during life.' There is a very

ancient monument lying among those of the Macleans, but perhaps more ancient than any of them; it has a knight riding on horseback, and behind him a minstrel playing on a harp: this is conjectured to be Reginald Macdonald of the Isles, but there seems no reason for disjoining him from his kindred who sleep in the cathedral. A supposed ancestor of the Stewarts, called Paul Purser, or Paul the Purse-bearer (treasurer to the King of Scotland), is said to lie under a stone near the Lords of the Isles. Most of the monuments engraved by Pennant are still in the same state of preservation, as are the few ancient crosses which are left. What a sight Iona must have been, when 360 crosses, of the same size and beautiful workmanship, were ranked upon the little rocky ridge of eminences which form the background to the cathedral! Part of the tower of the cathedral has fallen since I was here. It would require a better architect than I am, to say anything concerning the antiquity of these ruins, but I conceive those of the nunnery and of the *Reilig nan Oran*, or Oran's chapel, are decidedly the most ancient. Upon the cathedral and buildings attached to it, there are marks of repairs at different times, some of them of a late date being obviously designed not to enlarge the buildings, but to retrench them. We take a reluctant leave of Iona, and go on board.

"The haze and dulness of the atmosphere seem to render it dubious if we can proceed, as we intended, to Staffa to-day—for mist among these islands is rather unpleasant. Erskine reads prayers on deck to all hands, and introduces a very apt allusion to our being now in sight of the first Christian Church from which Revelation was diffused over Scotland and all its islands. There is a very good form of prayer for the Lighthouse Service, composed by the Rev. Mr. Brunton. A pleasure vessel lies under our lee from Belfast, with an Irish party related to Macneil of Colonsay. The haze is fast degenerating into downright rain, and that right heavy—verifying the words of Collins:—

> 'And thither where beneath the *showery west*
> The mighty Kings of three fair realms are laid.'

After dinner, the weather being somewhat cleared, sailed for Staffa, and took boat. The surf running heavy up between the island and the adjacent rock, called Booshala, we landed at a creek near the Cormorant's cave. The mist now returned so thick as to hide all view of Iona, which was our land-

mark; and although Duff, Stevenson, and I had been formerly on the isle, we could not agree upon the proper road to the cave. I engaged myself, with Duff and Erskine, in a clamber of great toil and danger, and which at length brought me to the *Cannon-ball*, as they call a round granite stone moved by the sea up and down in a groove of rock, which it has worn for itself, with a noise resembling thunder. Here I gave up my research, and returned to my companions, who had not been more fortunate. As night was now falling, we resolved to go aboard and postpone the adventure of the enchanted cavern until next day. The yacht came to an anchor with the purpose of remaining off the island all night, but the hardness of the ground, and the weather becoming squally, obliged us to return to our safer mooring at Y-Columb-Kill.

"*29th August, 1814*.—Night squally and rainy—morning ditto—we weigh, however, and return toward Staffa, and, very happily, the day clears as we approach the isle. As we ascertained the situation of the cave, I shall only make this memorandum, that when the weather will serve, the best landing is to the lee of Booshala, a little conical islet or rock, composed of basaltic columns placed in an oblique or sloping position. In this way, you land at once on the flat causeway, formed by the heads of truncated pillars, which leads to the cave. But if the state of tide renders it impossible to land under Booshala, then take one of the adjacent creeks; in which case, keeping to the left hand along the top of the ledge of rocks which girdles in the isle, you find a dangerous and precipitous descent to the causeway aforesaid, from the table. Here we were under the necessity of towing our Commodore, Hamilton, whose gallant heart never fails him, whatever the tenderness of his toes may do. He was successfully lowered by a rope down the precipice, and proceeding along the flat terrace or causeway already mentioned, we reached the celebrated cave. I am not sure whether I was not more affected by this second, than by the first view of it. The stupendous columnar side walls—the depth and strength of the ocean with which the cavern is filled—the variety of tints formed by stalactites dropping and petrifying between the pillars, and resembling a sort of chasing of yellow or cream-colored marble filling the interstices of the roof—the corresponding variety below, where the ocean rolls over a red, and in some places a violet-colored rock, the basis of the basaltic pillars—the dreadful noise of those august billows so well corresponding with the grandeur of the scene—are

all circumstances elsewhere unparalleled. We have now seen in our voyage the three grandest caverns in Scotland,—Smowe, Macallister's cave, and Staffa; so that, like the Troglodytes of yore, we may be supposed to know something of the matter. It is, however, impossible to compare scenes of natures so different, nor, were I compelled to assign a preference to any of the three, could I do it but with reference to their distinct characters, which might affect different individuals in different degrees. The characteristic of the Smowe cave may in this case be called the terrific, for the difficulties which oppose the stranger are of a nature so uncommonly wild, as, for the first time at least, convey an impression of terror—with which the scenes to which he is introduced fully correspond. On the other hand, the dazzling whiteness of the incrustations in Macallister's cave, the elegance of the entablature, the beauty of its limpid pool, and the graceful dignity of its arch, render its leading features those of severe and chastened beauty. Staffa, the third of these subterraneous wonders, may challenge sublimity as its principal characteristic. Without the savage gloom of the Smowe cave, and investigated with more apparent ease, though, perhaps, with equal real danger, the stately regularity of its columns forms a contrast to the grotesque imagery of Macallister's cave, combining at once the sentiments of grandeur and beauty. The former is, however, predominant, as it must necessarily be in any scene of the kind.

"We had scarce left Staffa when the wind and rain returned. It was Erskine's object and mine to dine at Torloisk on Loch Tua, the seat of my valued friend, Mrs. Maclean Clephane, and her accomplished daughters. But in going up Loch Tua between Ulva and Mull with this purpose,—

> 'So thick was the mist on the ocean green,
> Nor cape nor headland could be seen.'

It was late before we came to anchor in a small bay presented by the little island of Gometra, which may be regarded as a continuation of Ulva. We therefore dine aboard, and after dinner, Erskine and I take the boat and row across the loch under a heavy rain. We could not see the house of Torloisk, so very thick was the haze, and we were a good deal puzzled how and where to achieve a landing; at length, espying a cartroad, we resolved to trust to its guidance, as we knew we must be near the house. We therefore went ashore with our servants, *à la bonne aventure*, under a drizzling rain.

This was soon a matter of little consequence, for the necessity of crossing a swollen brook wetted me considerably, and Erskine, whose foot slipped, most completely. In wet and weary plight we reached the house, after a walk of a mile, in darkness, dirt, and rain, and it is hardly necessary to say, that the pleasure of seeing our friends soon banished all recollection of our unpleasant voyage and journey.

"*30th August, 1814.*—The rest of our friends come ashore by invitation, and breakfast with the ladies, whose kindness would fain have delayed us for a few days, and at last condescended to ask for one day only—but even this could not be, our time wearing short. Torloisk is finely situated upon the coast of Mull, facing Staffa. It is a good comfortable house, to which Mrs. Clephane has made some additions. The grounds around have been dressed, so as to smooth their ruggedness, without destroying the irregular and wild character peculiar to the scene and country. In this, much taste has been displayed. At Torloisk, as at Dunvegan, trees grow freely and rapidly; and the extensive plantations formed by Mrs. C. serve to show that nothing but a little expense and patience on the part of the proprietors, with attention to planting in proper places at first, and in keeping up fences afterward, are a-wanting to remove the reproach of nakedness, so often thrown upon the Western Isles. With planting comes shelter, and the proper allotment and division of fields. With all this Mrs. Clephane is busied, and, I trust, successfully; I am sure, actively and usefully. Take leave of my fair friends, with regret that I cannot prolong my stay for a day or two. When we come on board, we learn that Staffa-Macdonald is just come to his house of Ulva: this is a sort of unpleasant dilemma, for we cannot now go there without some neglect towards Mrs. Maclean Clephane; and, on the other hand, from his habits with all of us, he may be justly displeased with our quitting his very threshold without asking for him. However, upon the whole matter, and being already under weigh, we judged it best to work out of the loch, and continue our purpose of rounding the northern extremity of Mull, and then running down the Sound between Mull and the mainland. We had not long pursued our voyage before we found it was like to be a very slow one. The wind fell away entirely, and after repeated tacks we could hardly clear the extreme north-western point of Mull by six o'clock—which must have afforded amusement to the ladies whose hospitable entreaties we had

resisted, as we were almost all the while visible from Torloisk. A fine evening, but scarce a breath of wind.

"*31st August, 1814.*—Went on deck between three and four in the morning, and found the vessel almost motionless in a calm sea, scarce three miles advanced on her voyage. We had, however, rounded the north-western side of Mull, and were advancing between the north-eastern side and the rocky and wild shores of Ardnamurchan on the mainland of Scotland. Astern were visible in bright moonlight the distant mountains of Rum; yet nearer, the remarkable ridge in the Isle of Egg, called Scuir-Egg; and nearest of all, the low isle of Muick. After enjoying this prospect for some time, returned to my berth. Rise before eight—a delightful day, but very calm, and the little wind there is, decidedly against us. Creeping on slowly, we observe, upon the shore of Ardnamurchan, a large old castle called Mingary. It appears to be surrounded with a very high wall, forming a kind of polygon, in order to adapt itself to the angles of a precipice overhanging the sea, on which the castle is founded. Within or beyond the wall, and probably forming part of an inner court, I observed a steep roof and windows, probably of the seventeenth century. The whole, as seen with a spy-glass, seems ruinous. As we proceed, we open on the left hand Loch Sunart, running deep into the mainland, crossed by distant ridges of rocks, and terminating apparently among the high mountains above Strontian. On the right hand we open the Sound of Mull, and pass the Bloody Bay, which acquired that name from a desperate battle fought between an ancient Lord of the Isles and his son. The latter was assisted by the Macleans of Mull, then in the plenitude of their power, but was defeated. This was a sea-fight; galleys being employed on each side. It has bequeathed a name to a famous pibroch.

"Proceeding southward, we open the beautiful bay of Tobermory, or Mary's Well. The mouth of this fine natural roadstead is closed by an isle called Colvay, having two passages, of which only one, the northerly, is passable for ships. The bay is surrounded by steep hills, covered with copsewood, through which several brooks seek the sea in a succession of beautiful cascades. The village has been established as a fishing station by the Society for British Fisheries. The houses along the quay are two and three stories high, and well built; the feuars paying to the Society sixpence per foot of their line of front. On the top of a steep bank, rising above the first town, runs another line of second-rate cottages, which pay fourpence per

foot; and behind are huts, much superior to the ordinary sheds of the country, which pay only twopence per foot. The town is all built upon a regular plan, laid down by the Society. The new part is reasonably clean, and the old not unreasonably dirty. We landed at an excellent quay, which is not yet finished, and found the little place looked thriving and active. The people were getting in their patches of corn; and the shrill voices of the children attending their parents in the field, and loading the little ponies which are used in transporting the grain, formed a chorus not disagreeable to those whom it reminds of similar sounds at home. The praise of comparative cleanliness does not extend to the lanes around Tobermory, in one of which I had nearly been effectually bogged. But the richness of the round steep green knolls, clothed with copse, and glancing with cascades, and a pleasant peep at a small fresh-water loch embosomed among them—the view of the bay, surrounded and guarded by the island of Colvay—the gliding of two or three vessels in the more distant Sound—and the row of the gigantic Ardnamurchan mountains closing the scene to the north, almost justify the eulogium of Sacheverell, who, in 1688, declared the bay of Tobermory might equal any prospect in Italy. It is said that Sacheverell made some money by weighing up the treasures lost in the Florida, a vessel of the Spanish Armada, which was wrecked in the harbor. He himself affirms, that though the use of the diving-bells was at first successful, yet the attempt was afterwards disconcerted by bad weather.

"Tobermory takes its name from a spring dedicated to the Virgin, which was graced by a chapel; but no vestiges remain of the chapel, and the spring rises in the middle of a swamp, whose depth and dirt discouraged the nearer approach of Protestant pilgrims. Mr. Stevenson, whose judgment is unquestionable, thinks that the village should have been built on the island called Colvay, and united to the continent by a key, or causeway, built along the southernmost channel, which is very shallow. By this means the people would have been much nearer the fishings, than retired into the depth of the bay.

"About three o'clock we get on board, and a brisk and favorable breeze arises, which carries us smoothly down the Sound. We soon pass Arros, with its fragment of a castle, behind which is the house of Mr. Maxwell (an odd name for this country), chamberlain to the Duke of Argyle, which reminds me of much kindness and hospitality received from him and Mr.

Stewart, the Sheriff-Substitute, when I was formerly in Mull. On the shore of Morven, on the opposite side, pass the ruins of a small fortalice, called Donagail, situated as usual on a precipice overhanging the sea. The 'woody Morven,' though the quantity of shaggy diminutive copse, which springs up where it obtains any shelter, still shows that it must once have merited the epithet, is now, as visible from the Sound of Mull, a bare country—of which the hills towards the sea have a slope much resembling those in Selkirkshire, and accordingly afford excellent pasture, and around several farmhouses well-cultivated and improved fields. I think I observe considerable improvement in husbandry, even since I was here last: but there is a difference in coming from Oban and Cape Wrath.—Open Loch Alline, a beautiful salt-water lake, with a narrow outlet to the Sound. It is surrounded by round hills, sweetly fringed with green copse below, and one of which exhibits to the spy-glass ruins of a castle. There is great promise of beauty in its interior, but we cannot see everything. The land on the southern bank of the entrance slopes away into a sort of promontory, at the extremity of which are the very imperfect ruins of the castle of Ardtornish, to which the Lords of the Isles summoned parliaments, and from whence one of them dated a treaty with the Crown of England as an independent Prince. These ruins are seen to most advantage from the south, where they are brought into a line with one high fragment towards the west predominating over the rest. The shore of the promontory on the south side becomes rocky, and when it slopes round to the west, rises into a very bold and high precipitous bank, skirting the bay on the western side, partly cliffy, partly covered with brushwood, with various streams dashing over it from a great height. Above the old castle of Ardtornish, and about where the promontory joins the land, stands the present mansion, a neat whitewashed house, with several well-enclosed and well-cultivated fields surrounding it.

"The high and dignified character assumed by the shores of Morven, after leaving Ardtornish, continues till we open the Loch Linnhe, the commencement of the great chain of inland lakes running up to Fort William, and which it is proposed to unite with Inverness by means of the Caledonian Canal. The wisdom of the plan adopted in this national measure seems very dubious. Had the canal been of more moderate depth, and the burdens imposed upon passing vessels less expensive, there can be no doubt that the coasters, sloops, and barks would have carried on a great trade by

means of it. But the expense and plague of lochs, etc., may prevent these humble vessels from taking this abridged voyage, while ships above twenty or thirty tons will hesitate to engage themselves in the intricacies of a long lake navigation, exposed, without room for manœuvring, to all the sudden squalls of the mountainous country. Ahead of us, in the mouth of Loch Linnhe, lies the low and fertile isle of Lismore, formerly the appanage of the Bishops of the Isles, who, as usual, knew where to choose church patrimony. The coast of the Mull, on the right hand of the Sound, has a black, rugged, and unimproved character. Above Scallister Bay are symptoms of improvement. Moonlight has risen upon us as we pass Duart Castle, now an indistinct mass upon its projecting promontory. It was garrisoned for Government so late as 1780, but is now ruinous. We see, at about a mile's distance, the fatal shelve on which Duart exposed the daughter of Argyle, on which Miss Baillie's play of The Family Legend is founded, but now,—

> 'Without either sign or sound of their shock,
> The waves flowed over the Lady's rock.'

The placid state of the sea is very different from what I have seen it, when six stout rowers could scarce give a boat headway through the conflicting tides. These fits of violence so much surprised and offended a body of the Camerons, who were bound upon some expedition to Mull, and had been accustomed to the quietness of lake-navigation, that they drew their dirks, and began to stab the waves—from which popular tale this run of tide is called *the Men of Lochaber*. The weather being delightfully moderate, we agree to hover hereabout all night, or anchor under the Mull shore, should it be necessary, in order to see Dunstaffnage to-morrow morning. The isle of Kerrera is now in sight, forming the bay of Oban. Beyond lie the varied and magnificent summits of the chain of mountains bordering Loch Linnhe, as well as those between Loch Awe and Loch Etive, over which the summit of Ben Cruachan is proudly prominent. Walk on deck, admiring this romantic prospect, until ten; then below, and turn in.

"*1st September, 1814.*—Rise betwixt six and seven, and having discreetly secured our breakfast, take boat for the old castle of Dunstaffnage, situated upon a promontory on the side of Loch Linnhe and near to Loch Etive. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the day and of the prospect. We coasted

the low, large, and fertile isle of Lismore, where a Catholic Bishop, Chisholm, has established a seminary of young men intended for priests, and what is a better thing, a valuable lime-work. Report speaks well of the lime, but indifferently of the progress of the students. Tacking to the shore of the loch, we land at Dunstaffnage, once, it is said, the seat of the Scottish monarchy, till success over the Picts and Saxons transferred their throne to Scoone, Dunfermline, and at length to Edinburgh. The castle is still the King's (nominally), and the Duke of Argyle (nominally also) is hereditary keeper. But the real right of property is in the family of the depute-keeper, to which it was assigned as an appanage, the first possessor being a natural son of an Earl of Argyle. The shell of the castle, for little more now remains, bears marks of extreme antiquity. It is square in form, with round towers at three of the angles, and is situated upon a lofty precipice, carefully scarped on all sides to render it perpendicular. The entrance is by a staircase, which conducts you to a wooden landing-place in front of the portal-door. This landing-place could formerly be raised at pleasure, being of the nature of a drawbridge. When raised, the place was inaccessible. You pass under an ancient arch, with a low vault (being the porter's lodge) on the right hand, and flanked by loopholes, for firing upon any hostile guest who might force his passage thus far. This admits you into the inner court, which is about eighty feet square. It contains two mean-looking buildings, about sixty or seventy years old; the ancient castle having been consumed by fire in 1715. It is said that the nephew of the proprietor was the incendiary. We went into the apartments, and found they did not exceed the promise of the exterior; but they admitted us to walk upon the battlements of the old castle, which displayed a most splendid prospect. Beneath, and far projected into the loch, were seen the woods and houses of Campbell of Lochnell. A little summer-house, upon an eminence, belonging to this wooded bank, resembles an ancient monument. On the right, Loch Etive, after pouring its waters like a furious cataract over a strait called Connell Ferry, comes between the castle and a round island belonging to its demesne, and nearly insulates the situation. In front is a low rocky eminence on the opposite side of the arm, through which Loch Etive flows into Loch Linnhe. Here was situated *Beregenium*, once, it is said, a British capital city; and, as our informant told us, the largest market town in Scotland. Of this splendor are no remains but a few trenches and excavations, which the distance did not allow us to examine. The ancient masonry of Dunstaffnage is mouldering

fast under time and neglect. The foundations are beginning to decay, and exhibit gaps between the rock and the wall; and the battlements are become ruinous. The inner court is encumbered with ruins. A hundred pounds or two would put this very ancient fortress in a state of preservation for ages, but I fear this is not to be expected. The stumps of large trees, which had once shaded the vicinity of the castle, gave symptoms of decay in the family of Dunstaffnage. We were told of some ancient spurs and other curiosities preserved in the castle, but they were locked up. In the vicinity of the castle is a chapel which had once been elegant, but by the building up of windows, etc., is now heavy enough. I have often observed that the means adopted in Scotland for repairing old buildings are generally as destructive of their grace and beauty, as if that had been the express object. Unfortunately most churches, particularly, have gone through both stages of destruction, having been first repaired by the building up of the beautiful shafted windows, and then the roof being suffered to fall in, they became ruins indeed, but without any touch of the picturesque farther than their massive walls and columns may afford. Near the chapel of Dunstaffnage is a remarkable echo.

"Reëmbarked, and, rowing about a mile and a half or better along the shore of the lake, again landed under the ruins of the old castle of Dunolly. This fortress, which, like that of Dunstaffnage, forms a marked feature in this exquisite landscape, is situated on a bold and precipitous promontory overhanging the lake. The principal part of the ruins now remaining is a square tower or keep of the ordinary size, which had been the citadel of the castle; but fragments of other buildings, overgrown with ivy, show that Dunolly had once been a place of considerable importance. These had enclosed a courtyard, of which the keep probably formed one side, the entrance being by a very steep ascent from the land side, which had formerly been cut across by a deep moat, and defended doubtless by outworks and a drawbridge. Beneath the castle stands the modern house of Dunolly,—a decent mansion, suited to the reduced state of the MacDougalls of Lorn, who, from being Barons powerful enough to give battle to and defeat Robert Bruce, are now declined into private gentlemen of moderate fortune.

"This very ancient family is descended from Somerled, Thane, or rather, under that name, *King* of Argyle and the Hebrides. He had two sons, to one

of whom he left his insular possessions—and he became founder of the dynasty of the Lords of the Isles, who maintained a stirring independence during the Middle Ages. The other was founder of the family of the MacDougalls of Lorn. One of them being married to a niece of the Red Cumming, in revenge of his slaughter at Dumfries, took a vigorous part against Robert Bruce in his struggles to maintain the independence of Scotland. At length the King, turning his whole strength towards MacDougall, encountered him at a pass near Loch Awe; but the Highlanders, being possessed of the strong ground, compelled Bruce to retreat, and again gave him battle at Dalry, near Tynedrum, where he had concentrated his forces. Here he was again defeated; and the tradition of the MacDougall family bears, that in the conflict the Lord of Lorn engaged hand to hand with Bruce, and was struck down by that monarch. As they grappled together on the ground, Bruce being uppermost, a vassal of MacDougall, called MacKeoch, relieved his master by pulling Bruce from him. In this close struggle the King left his mantle and brooch in the hands of his enemies, and the latter trophy was long preserved in the family, until it was lost in an accidental fire. Barbour tells the same story, but I think with circumstances somewhat different. When Bruce had gained the throne for which he fought so long, he displayed his resentment against the MacDougalls of Lorn, by depriving them of the greatest part of their domains, which were bestowed chiefly upon the Steward of Scotland. Sir Colin Campbell, the Knight of Loch Awe, and the Knight of Glenurchy, Sir Dugald Campbell, married daughters of the Steward, and received with them great portion of the forfeiture of MacDougall. Bruce even compelled or persuaded the Lord of the Isles to divorce his wife, who was a daughter of MacDougall, and take in marriage a relation of his own. The son of the divorced lady was not permitted to succeed to the principality of the Isles, on account of his connection with the obnoxious MacDougall. But a large appanage was allowed him upon the Mainland, where he founded the family of Glengarry.

"The family of MacDougall suffered farther reduction during the great civil war, in which they adhered to the Stewarts, and in 1715 they forfeited the small estate of Dunolly, which was then all that remained of what had once been a principality. The then representative of the family fled to France, and his son (father of the present proprietor) would have been without any

means of education, but for the spirit of clanship, which induced one of the name, in the humble situation of keeper of a public-house at Dumbarton, to take his young chief to reside with him, and be at the expense of his education and maintenance until his fifteenth or sixteenth year. He proved a clever and intelligent man, and made good use of the education he received. When the affair of 1745 was in agitation, it was expected by the south-western clans that Charles Edward would have landed near Oban, instead of which he disembarked at Loch-nan-augh, in Arisaig. Stuart of Appin sent information of his landing to MacDougall, who gave orders to his brother to hold the clan in readiness to rise, and went himself to consult with the chamberlain of the Earl of Breadalbane, who was also in the secret. He found this person indisposed to rise, alleging that Charles had disappointed them both in the place of landing, and the support he had promised. MacDougall then resolved to play cautious, and went to visit the Duke of Argyle, then residing at Roseneath, probably without any determined purpose as to his future proceedings. While he was waiting the Duke's leisure, he saw a horseman arrive at full gallop, and shortly after, the Duke entering the apartment where MacDougall was, with a map in his hand, requested him, after friendly salutations, to point out Loch-nan-augh on that map. MacDougall instantly saw that the secret of Charles's landing had transpired, and resolved to make a merit of being the first who should give details. The persuasions of the Duke determined him to remain quiet, and the reward was the restoration of the little estate of Dunolly, lost by his father in 1715. This gentleman lived to a very advanced stage of life, and was succeeded by Peter MacDougall, Esq., now of Dunolly. I had these particulars respecting the restoration of the estate from a near relation of the family, whom we met at Dunstaffnage.

"The modern house of Dunolly is on the neck of land under the old castle, having on the one hand the lake with its islands and mountains; on the other, two romantic eminences tufted with copsewood, of which the higher is called Barmore, and is now planted. I have seldom seen a more romantic and delightful situation, to which the peculiar state of the family gave a sort of moral interest. Mrs. MacDougall, observing strangers surveying the ruins, met us on our return, and most politely insisted upon our accepting fruit and refreshments. This was a compliment meant to absolute strangers, but when our names became known to her, the good lady's entreaties that

we would stay till Mr. MacDougall returned from his ride became very pressing. She was in deep mourning for the loss of an eldest son, who had fallen bravely in Spain and under Wellington, a death well becoming the descendant of so famed a race. The second son, a lieutenant in the navy, had, upon this family misfortune, obtained leave to visit his parents for the first time after many years' service, but had now returned to his ship. Mrs. M. spoke with melancholy pride of the death of her eldest son, with hope and animation of the prospects of the survivor. A third is educated for the law. Declining the hospitality offered us, Mrs. M. had the goodness to walk with us along the shore towards Oban, as far as the property of Dunolly extends, and showed us a fine spring, called *Tobar nan Gall*, or the Well of the Stranger, where our sailors supplied themselves with excellent water, which has been rather a scarce article with us, as it soon becomes past a landsman's use on board ship. On the seashore, about a quarter of a mile from the castle, is a huge fragment of the rock called *plum-pudding stone*, which art or nature has formed into a gigantic pillar. Here, it is said, Fion or Fingal tied his dog Bran—here also the celebrated Lord of the Isles tied up his dogs when he came upon a visit to the Lords of Lorn. Hence it is called *Clach nan Con*; *i. e.*, the Dog's Stone. A tree grew once on the top of this bare mass of composite stone, but it was cut down by a curious damsel of the family, who was desirous to see a treasure said to be deposited beneath it. Enjoyed a pleasant walk of a mile along the beach to Oban, a town of some consequence, built in a semicircular form, around a good harbor formed by the opposite isle of Kerrera, on which Mrs. M. pointed out the place where Alexander II. died, while, at the head of a powerful armament, he meditated the reduction of the Hebrides. The field is still called Dal-ry—the King's field.

"Having taken leave of Mrs. MacDougall, we soon satisfied our curiosity concerning Oban, which owed its principal trade to the industry of two brothers, Messrs. Stevenson, who dealt in ship-building. One is now dead, the other almost retired from business, and trade is dull in the place. Heard of an active and industrious man, who had set up a nursery of young trees, which ought to succeed, since at present, whoever wants plants must send to Glasgow; and how much the plants suffer during a voyage of such length, any one may conceive. Go on board after a day delightful for the serenity and clearness of the weather, as well as for the objects we had visited. I

forgot to say, that through Mr. MacDougall's absence we lost an opportunity of seeing a bronze figure of one of his ancestors, called *Bacach*, or the lame, armed and mounted as for a tournament. The hero flourished in the twelfth century. After a grand council of war, we determine, as we are so near the coast of Ulster, that we will stand over and view the celebrated Giant's Causeway; and Captain Wilson receives directions accordingly.

"2d September, 1814.—Another most beautiful day. The heat, for the first time since we sailed from Leith, is somewhat incommodious; so we spread a handsome awning to save our complexions, God wot, and breakfast beneath it in style. The breeze is gentle, and quite favorable. It has conducted us from the extreme cape of Mull, called the Black Head of Mull, into the Sound of Islay. We view in passing that large and fertile island, the property of Campbell of Shawfield, who has introduced an admirable style of farming among his tenants. Still farther behind us retreats the Island of Jura, with the remarkable mountains called the Paps of Jura, which form a landmark at a great distance. They are very high, but in our eyes, so much accustomed of late to immense height, do not excite much surprise. Still farther astern is the small isle of Scarba, which, as we see it, seems to be a single hill. In the passage or sound between Scarba and the extremity of Jura, is a terrible run of tide, which, contending with the sunk rocks and islets of that foul channel, occasions the succession of whirlpools called the Gulf of Corrievreckan. Seen at this distance, we cannot judge of its terrors. The sight of Corrievreckan and of the low rocky isle of Colonsay, betwixt which and Islay we are now passing, strongly recalls to my mind poor John Leyden and his tale of the Mermaid and MacPhail of Colonsay. Probably the name of the hero should have been MacFie, for to the MacDuffies (by abridgment MacFies) Colonsay of old pertained. It is said the last of these MacDuffies was executed as an oppressor by order of the Lord of the Isles, and lies buried in the adjacent small island of Oransay, where there is an old chapel with several curious monuments, which, to avoid losing this favorable breeze, we are compelled to leave unvisited. Colonsay now belongs to a gentleman named MacNeil. On the right beyond it, opens at a distance the western coast of Mull, which we already visited in coming from the northward. We see the promontory of Ross, which is terminated by Y-Columb-kill, also now visible. The shores of Loch Tua and Ulva are in the blue distance, with the little archipelago which lies around

Staffa. Still farther, the hills of Rum can just be distinguished from the blue sky. We are now arrived at the extreme point of Islay, termed, from the strong tides, the *Runs of Islay*. We here only feel them as a large but soft swell of the sea, the weather being delightfully clear and serene. In the course of the evening we lose sight of the Hebrides, excepting Islay, having now attained the western side of that island.

"*3d September, 1814.*—In the morning early, we are off Innistulhan, an islet very like Inchkeith in size and appearance, and, like Inchkeith, displaying a lighthouse. Messrs. Hamilton, Duff, and Stevenson go ashore to visit the Irish lighthouse and compare notes. A fishing-boat comes off with four or five stout lads, without neckerchiefs or hats, and the best of whose joint garments selected would hardly equip an Edinburgh beggar. Buy from this specimen of Paddy in his native land some fine John Dories for threepence each. The mainland of Ireland adjoining to this island (being part of the county of Donegal) resembles Scotland, and, though hilly, seems well cultivated upon the whole. A brisk breeze directly against us. We beat to windward by assistance of a strong tide-stream, in order to weather the head of Innishowen, which covers the entrance of Lough Foyle, with the purpose of running up the loch to see Londonderry, so celebrated for its siege in 1689. But short tacks and long tacks were in vain, and at dinner-time, having lost our tide, we find ourselves at all disadvantage both against wind and sea. Much combustion at our meal, and the manœuvres by which we attempted to eat and drink remind me of the enchanted drinking-cup in the old ballad,—

> 'Some shed it on their shoulder,
> Some shed it on their thigh;
> And he that did not hit his mouth
> Was sure to hit his eye.'

In the evening, backgammon and cards are in great request. We have had our guns shotted all this day for fear of the Yankees—a privateer having been seen off Tyree Islands, and taken some vessels—as is reported.—About nine o'clock weather the Innishowen head, and enter the Lough, and fire a gun as a signal for a pilot. The people here are great smugglers, and at the report of the gun, we see several lights on shore disappear.—About the middle of the day, too, our appearance (much resembling a revenue cutter)

occasioned a smoke being made in the midst of a very rugged cliff on the shore—a signal probably to any of the smugglers' craft that might be at sea. Come to anchor in eight fathom water, expecting our pilot.

"4th September, 1814.—Waked in the morning with good hope of hearing service in Derry Cathedral, as we had felt ourselves under weigh since daylight; but these expectations vanished when, going on deck, we found ourselves only halfway up Lough Foyle, and at least ten miles from Derry. Very little wind, and that against us; and the navigation both shoally and intricate. Called a council of war; and after considering the difficulty of getting up to Derry, and the chance of being wind-bound when we do get there, we resolve to renounce our intended visit to that town. We had hardly put the ship about, when the Irish Æolus shifted his trumpet, and opposed our exit, as he had formerly been unfavorable to our progress up the lake. At length, we are compelled to betake ourselves to towing, the wind fading into an absolute calm. This gives us time enough to admire the northern, or Donegal, side of Lough Foyle—the other being hidden from us by haze and distance. Nothing can be more favorable than this specimen of Ireland.—A beautiful variety of cultivated slopes, intermixed with banks of wood; rocks skirted with a distant ridge of heathy hills, watered by various brooks; the glens or banks being, in general, planted or covered with copse; and finally, studded by a succession of villas and gentlemen's seats, good farmhouses, and neat white-washed cabins. Some of the last are happily situated upon the verge of the sea, with banks of copse or a rock or two rising behind them, and the white sand in front. The land, in general, seems well cultivated and enclosed—but in some places the enclosures seem too small, and the ridges too crooked, for proper farming. We pass two gentlemen's seats, called White Castle and Red Castle; the last a large good-looking mansion, with trees, and a pretty vale sloping upwards from the sea. As we approach the termination of the Lough, the ground becomes more rocky and barren, and the cultivation interrupted by impracticable patches, which have been necessarily abandoned. Come in view of Green Castle, a large ruinous castle, said to have belonged to the MacWilliams. The remains are romantically situated upon a green bank sloping down to the sea, and are partly covered with ivy. From their extent, the place must have been a chieftain's residence of the very first consequence. Part of the ruins appear to be founded upon a high red rock, which the eye at first blends with the

masonry. To the east of the ruins, upon a cliff overhanging the sea, are a modern fortification and barrack-yard, and beneath, a large battery for protection of the shipping which may enter the Lough; the guns are not yet mounted. The Custom-house boat boards us and confirms the account that American cruisers are upon the coast. Drift out of the Lough, and leave behind us this fine country, all of which belongs in property to Lord Donegal; other possessors only having long leases, at sixty years, or so forth. Red Castle, however, before distinguished as a very good-looking house, is upon a perpetual lease. We discharge our pilot—the gentlemen go ashore with him in the boat, in order to put foot on Irish land. I shall defer that pleasure till I can promise myself something to see. When our gentlemen return, we read prayers on deck. After dinner go ashore at the small fishing-village of Port Rush, pleasantly situated upon a peninsula, which forms a little harbor. Here we are received by Dr. Richardson, the inventor of the fiorin-grass (or of some of its excellencies). He cultivates this celebrated vegetable on a very small scale, his whole farm not exceeding four acres. Here I learn, with inexpressible surprise and distress, the death of one of the most valued of the few friends whom these memoranda might interest. She was, indeed, a rare example of the soundest good sense, and the most exquisite purity of moral feeling, united with the utmost grace and elegance of personal beauty, and with manners becoming the most dignified rank in British society. There was a feminine softness in all her deportment, which won universal love, as her firmness of mind and correctness of principle commanded veneration. To her family her loss is inexpressibly great. I know not whether it was the purity of her mind, or the ethereal cast of her features and form, but I could never associate in my mind her idea and that of mortality; so that the shock is the more heavy, as being totally unexpected. God grant comfort to the afflicted survivor and his family!

"*5th September, 1814.*—Wake, or rather rise at six, for I have waked the whole night, or fallen into broken sleeps only to be hag-ridden by the nightmare. Go ashore with a heavy heart, to see sights which I had much rather leave alone. Land under Dunluce, a ruined castle built by the MacGilligans, or MacQuillens, but afterwards taken from them by a Macdonnell, ancestor of the Earls of Antrim, and destroyed by Sir John Perrot, Lord-Lieutenant in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. This Macdonnell

came from the Hebrides at the head of a Scottish colony. The site of the castle much resembles Dunnottar, but it is on a smaller scale. The ruins occupy perhaps more than an acre of ground, being the level top of a high rock advanced into the sea, by which it is surrounded on three sides, and divided from the mainland by a deep chasm. The access was by a narrow bridge, of which there now remains but a single rib, or ledge, forming a doubtful and a precarious access to the ruined castle. On the outer side of the bridge are large remains of outworks, probably for securing cattle, and for domestic offices—and the vestiges of a chapel. Beyond the bridge are an outer and inner gateway, with their defences. The large gateway forms one angle of the square enclosure of the fortress, and at the other landward angle is built a large round tower. There are vestiges of similar towers occupying the angles of the precipice overhanging the sea. These towers were connected by a curtain, on which artillery seems to have been mounted. Within this circuit are the ruins of an establishment of feudal grandeur on the large scale. The great hall, forming, it would seem, one side of the inner court, is sixty paces long, lighted by windows which appear to have been shafted with stone, but are now ruined. Adjacent are the great kitchen and ovens, with a variety of other buildings, but no square tower, or keep. The most remarkable part of Dunluce, however, is that the whole mass of plum-pudding rock on which the fort is built is completely perforated by a cave sloping downwards from the inside of the moat or dry-ditch beneath the bridge, and opening to the sea on the other side. It might serve the purpose of a small harbor, especially if they had, as is believed, a descent to the cave from within the castle. It is difficult to conceive the use of the aperture to the land, unless it was in some way enclosed and defended. Above the ruinous castle is a neat farmhouse. Mrs. More, the good-wife, a Scoto-Hibernian, received us with kindness and hospitality which did honor to the nation of her birth, as well as of her origin, in a house whose cleanliness and neatness might have rivalled England. Her churn was put into immediate motion on our behalf, and we were loaded with all manner of courtesy, as well as good things. We heard here of an armed schooner having been seen off the coast yesterday, which fired on a boat that went off to board her, and would seem therefore to be a privateer, or armed smuggler.

"Return on board for breakfast, and then again take boat for the Giant's Causeway—having first shotted the guns, and agreed on a signal, in case this alarming stranger should again make his appearance. Visit two caves, both worth seeing, but not equal to those we have seen: one, called Port Coon, opens in a small cove, or bay—the outer reach opens into an inner cave, and that again into the sea. The other, called Down Kerry, is a sea-cave, like that on the eastern side of Loch Eribol—a high arch up which the sea rolls:—the weather being quiet, we sailed in very nearly to the upper end. We then rowed on to the celebrated Causeway, a platform composed of basaltic pillars, projecting into the sea like the pier of a harbor. As I was tired, and had a violent headache, I did not land, but could easily see that the regularity of the columns was the same as at Staffa; but that island contains a much more extensive and curious specimen of this curious phenomenon.

"Row along the shores of this celebrated point, which are extremely striking as well as curious. They open into a succession of little bays, each of which has precipitous banks graced with long ranges of the basaltic pillars, sometimes placed above each other, and divided by masses of interweaving strata, or by green sloping banks of earth of extreme steepness. These remarkable ranges of columns are in some places chequered by horizontal strata of a red rock or earth, of the appearance of ochre; so that the green of the grassy banks, the dark-gray or black appearance of the columns, with those red seams and other varieties of the interposed strata, have most uncommon and striking effects. The outline of these cliffs is as singular as their coloring. In several places the earth has wasted away from single columns, and left them standing insulated and erect, like the ruined colonnade of an ancient temple, upon the verge of the precipice. In other places, the disposition of the basaltic ranges presents singular appearances, to which the guides give names agreeable to the images which they are supposed to represent. Each of the little bays or inlets has also its appropriate name. One is called the Spanish Bay, from one of the Spanish Armada having been wrecked there. Thus our voyage has repeatedly traced the memorable remnants of that celebrated squadron. The general name of the cape adjacent to the Causeway is Bengore Head. To those who have seen Staffa, the peculiar appearance of the Causeway itself will lose much of its effect; but the grandeur of the neighboring scenery will still maintain

the reputation of Bengore Head. The people ascribe all these wonders to Fin MacCoul, whom they couple with a Scottish giant called Ben-an something or other. The traveller is plied by guides, who make their profit by selling pieces of crystal, agate, or chalcedony, found in the interstices of the rocks. Our party brought off some curious joints of the columns, and, had I been quite as I am wont to be, I would have selected four to be capitals of a rustic porch at Abbotsford. But, alas! alas! I am much out of love with vanity at this moment. From what we hear at the Causeway, we have every reason to think that the pretended privateer has been a gentleman's pleasure-vessel.—Continue our voyage southward, and pass between the Main of Ireland and the Isle of Rachrin, a rude heathy-looking island, once a place of refuge to Robert Bruce. This is said, in ancient times, to have been the abode of banditti, who plundered the neighboring coast. At present it is under a long lease to a Mr. Gage, who is said to maintain excellent order among the islanders. Those of bad character he expels to Ireland, and hence it is a phrase among the people of Rachrin, when they wish ill to any one, '*May Ireland be his hinder end*.' On the Main we see the village of Ballintry, and a number of people collected, the remains of an Irish fair. Close by is a small island, called Sheep Island. We now take leave of the Irish coast, having heard nothing of its popular complaints, excepting that the good lady at Dunluce made a heavy moan against the tithes, which had compelled her husband to throw his whole farm into pasture. Stand over toward Scotland, and see the Mull of Cantyre light.

"*6th September, 1814.*—Under the lighthouse at the Mull of Cantyre; situated on a desolate spot among rocks, like a Chinese pagoda in Indian drawings. Duff and Stevenson go ashore at six. Hamilton follows, but is unable to land, the sea having got up. The boat brings back letters, and I have the great comfort to learn all are well at Abbotsford. About eight the tide begins to run very strong, and the wind rising at the same time, makes us somewhat apprehensive for our boat, which had returned to attend D. and S. We observe them set off along the hills on foot, to walk, as we understand, to a bay called Carskey, five or six miles off, but the nearest spot at which they can hope to reëmbark in this state of the weather. It now becomes very squally, and one of our jibsails splits. We are rather awkwardly divided into three parties—the pedestrians on shore, with whom we now observe Captain Wilson, mounted upon a pony—the boat with four

sailors, which is stealing along in-shore, unable to row, and scarce venturing to carry any sail—and we in the yacht, tossing about most exceedingly. At length we reach Carskey, a quiet-looking bay, where the boat gets into shore, and fetches off our gentlemen.—After this the coast of Cantyre seems cultivated and arable, but bleak and unenclosed, like many other parts of Scotland. We then learn that we have been repeatedly in the route of two American privateers, who have made many captures in the Irish Channel, particularly at Innistruhul, at the back of Islay, and on the Lewis. They are the Peacock, of twenty-two guns, and 165 men, and a schooner of eighteen guns, called the Prince of Neuchatel. These news, added to the increasing inclemency of the weather, induce us to defer a projected visit to the coast of Galloway; and indeed it is time one of us was home on many accounts. We therefore resolve, after visiting the lighthouse at Pladda, to proceed for Greenock. About four drop anchor off Pladda, a small islet lying on the south side of Arran. Go ashore and visit the establishment. When we return on board, the wind being unfavorable for the mouth of Clyde, we resolve to weigh anchor and go into Lamlash Bay.

"*7th September, 1814.*—We had ample room to repent last night's resolution, for the wind, with its usual caprice, changed so soon as we had weighed anchor, blew very hard, and almost directly against us, so that we were beating up against it by short tacks, which made a most disagreeable night; as, between the noise of the wind and the sea, the clattering of the ropes and sails above, and of the movables below, and the eternal '*ready about*,' which was repeated every ten minutes when the vessel was about to tack, with the lurch and clamor which succeeds, sleep was much out of the question. We are not now in the least sick, but want of sleep is uncomfortable, and I have no agreeable reflections to amuse waking hours, excepting the hope of again rejoining my family. About six o'clock went on deck to see Lamlash Bay, which we have at length reached after a hard struggle. The morning is fine and the wind abated, so that the coast of Arran looks extremely well. It is indented with two deep bays. That called Lamlash, being covered by an island with an entrance at either end, makes a secure roadstead. The other bay, which takes its name from Brodick Castle, a seat of the Duke of Hamilton, is open. The situation of the castle is very fine, among extensive plantations, laid out with perhaps too much formality, but pleasant to the eye, as the first tract of plantation we have seen for a

long time. One stripe, however, with singular want of taste, runs straight up a finely rounded hill, and turning by an obtuse angle, cuts down the opposite side with equal lack of remorse. This vile habit of opposing the line of the plantation to the natural line and bearing of the ground is one of the greatest practical errors of early planters. As to the rest, the fields about Brodick, and the lowland of Arran in general, seem rich, well enclosed, and in good cultivation. Behind and around rise an amphitheatre of mountains, the principal a long ridge with fine swelling serrated tops, called Goat-Fell. Our wind now altogether dies away, while we want its assistance to get to the mouth of the Firth of Clyde, now opening between the extremity of the large and fertile Isle of Bute, and the lesser islands called the Cumbrays. The fertile coast of Ayrshire trends away to the south-westward, displaying many villages, and much appearance of beauty and cultivation. On the north-eastward arises the bold and magnificent screen formed by the mountains of Argyleshire and Dumbartonshire, rising above each other in gigantic succession. About noon a favorable breath of wind enables us to enter the mouth of the Clyde, passing between the larger Cumbray and the extremity of Bute. As we advance beyond the Cumbray, and open the opposite coast, see Largs, renowned for the final defeat of the Norwegian invaders by Alexander III. [A. D. 1263]. The ground of battle was a sloping, but rather gentle, ascent from the sea, above the modern Kirk of Largs. Had Haco gained the victory, it would have opened all the south-west of Scotland to his arms. On Bute, a fine and well-improved island, we open the Marquis of Bute's house of Mount Stewart, neither apparently large nor elegant in architecture, but beautifully situated among well-grown trees, with an open and straight avenue to the seashore. The whole isle is prettily varied by the rotation of crops: and the rocky ridges of Goat-Fell and other mountains in Arran are now seen behind Bute as a background. These ridges resemble much the romantic and savage outline of the mountains of Cullin, in Skye. On the southward of Largs is Kelburn, the seat of Lord Glasgow, with extensive plantations; on the northward Skelmorlie, an ancient seat of the Montgomeries. The Firth, closed to appearance by Bute and the Cumbrays, now resembles a long irregular inland lake, bordered on the one side by the low and rich coast of Renfrewshire, studded with villages and seats, and on the other by the Highland mountains. Our breeze dies totally away, and leaves us to admire this prospect till sunset. I learn incidentally, that, in the opinion of honest Captain Wilson, I have been

myself the cause of all this contradictory weather. 'It is all,' says the Captain to Stevenson, 'owing to the cave at the Isle of Egg,'—from which I had abstracted a skull. Under this odium I may labor yet longer, for assuredly the weather has been doggedly unfavorable. Night quiet and serene, but dead calm—a fine contrast to the pitching, rolling, and walloping of last night.

"*8th September*.—Waked very much in the same situation—a dead calm, but the weather very serene. With much difficulty, and by the assistance of the tide, we advanced up the Firth, and, passing the village of Gourock, at length reached Greenock. Took an early dinner, and embarked in the steamboat for Glasgow. We took leave of our little yacht under the repeated cheers of the sailors, who had been much pleased with their erratic mode of travelling about, so different from the tedium of a regular voyage. After we reached Glasgow—a journey which we performed at the rate of about eight miles an hour, and with a smoothness of motion which probably resembles flying—we supped together and prepared to separate.—Erskine and I go to-morrow to the Advocate's at Killermont, and thence to Edinburgh. So closes my journal. But I must not omit to say, that among five or six persons, some of whom were doubtless different in tastes and pursuits, there did not occur, during the close communication of more than six weeks aboard a small vessel, the slightest difference of opinion. Each seemed anxious to submit his own wishes to those of his friends. The consequence was, that by judicious arrangement all were gratified in their turn, and frequently he who made some sacrifices to the views of his companions was rewarded by some unexpected gratification calculated particularly for his own amusement. Thus ends my little excursion, in which, bating one circumstance, which must have made me miserable for the time wherever I had learned it, I have enjoyed as much pleasure as in any six weeks of my life. We had constant exertion, a succession of wild and uncommon scenery, good-humor on board, and objects of animation and interest when we went ashore—

> 'Sed fugit interea—fugit irrevocabile tempus.'"

Chapter XXXIII

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Letter in Verse From Zetland and Orkney. — Death of the Duchess of Buccleuch. — Correspondence With the Duke. — Altrive Lake. — Negotiation Concerning the Lord of the Isles Completed. — Success of Waverley. — Contemporaneous Criticisms on the Novel. — Letters to Scott From Mr. Morritt, Mr. Lewis, and Miss Maclean Clephane. — Letter From James Ballantyne to Miss Edgeworth

1814

I question if any man ever drew his own character more fully or more pleasingly than Scott has done in the preceding diary of a six weeks' pleasure voyage. We have before us, according to the scene and occasion, the poet, the antiquary, the magistrate, the planter, and the agriculturist; but everywhere the warm yet sagacious philanthropist—everywhere the courtesy, based on the unselfishness, of the thorough-bred gentleman;—and surely never was the tenderness of a manly heart portrayed more touchingly than in the closing pages. I ought to mention that Erskine received the news of the Duchess of Buccleuch's death on the day when the party landed at Dunstaffnage; but, knowing how it would affect Scott, took means to prevent its reaching him until the expedition should be concluded. He heard the event casually mentioned by a stranger during dinner at Port Rush, and was for the moment quite overpowered.

Of the letters which Scott wrote to his friends during those happy six weeks, I have recovered only one, and it is, thanks to the leisure of the yacht, in verse. The strong and easy heroics of the first section prove, I think, that Mr. Canning did not err when he told him that if he chose he might emulate even Dryden's command that noble measure; and the dancing anapæsts of the second show that he could with equal facility have rivalled the gay graces of Cotton, Anstey, or Moore. This epistle did not reach the Duke of Buccleuch till his lovely Duchess was no more; and I shall annex to it some communications relating to that affliction, which

afford a contrast, not less interesting than melancholy, to the light-hearted glee reflected in the rhymes from the region of Magnus Troil.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC., ETC., ETC.

Lighthouse Yacht in the Sound of Lerwick,
Zetland, 8th August, 1814.

Health to the chieftain from his clansman true!
From her true Minstrel, health to fair Buccleuch!
Health from the isles, where dewy Morning weaves
Her chaplet with the tints that Twilight leaves;
Where late the sun scarce vanished from the sight,
And his bright pathway graced the short-lived night,
Though darker now as autumn's shades extend,
The north winds whistle and the mists ascend!—
Health from the land where eddying whirlwinds toss
The storm-rocked *cradle* of the Cape of Noss;
On outstretched cords the giddy engine slides,
His own strong arm the bold adventurer guides,
And he that lists such desperate feat to try,
May, like the sea-mew, skim 'twixt surf and sky,
And feel the mid-air gales around him blow,
And see the billows rage five hundred feet below.

Here by each stormy peak and desert shore,
The hardy islesman tugs the daring oar,
Practised alike his venturous course to keep,
Through the white breakers or the pathless deep,
By ceaseless peril and by toil to gain
A wretched pittance from the niggard main.
And when the worn-out drudge old ocean leaves,
What comfort greets him, and what hut receives?
Lady! the worst your presence ere has cheered
(When want and sorrow fled as you appeared)
Were to a Zetlander as the high dome
Of proud Drumlanrig to my humble home.

Here rise no groves, and here no gardens blow,
Here even the hardy heath scarce dares to grow;
But rocks on rocks, in mist and storm arrayed,
Stretch far to sea their giant colonnade,
With many a cavern seam'd, the dreary haunt
Of the dun seal and swarthy cormorant.
Wild round their rifted brows with frequent cry,
As of lament, the gulls and gannets fly,
And from their sable base, with sullen sound,
In sheets of whitening foam the waves rebound.

Yet even these coasts a touch of envy gain
From those whose land has known oppression's chain;
For here the industrious Dutchman comes once more
To moor his fishing craft by Bressay's shore;
Greets every former mate and brother tar,
Marvels how Lerwick 'scaped the rage of war,
Tells many a tale of Gallic outrage done,
And ends by blessing God and Wellington.
Here too the Greenland tar, a fiercer guest,
Claims a brief hour of riot, not of rest;
Proves each wild frolic that in wine has birth,
And wakes the land with brawls and boisterous mirth.
A sadder sight on yon poor vessel's prow
The captive Norse-man sits in silent woe,
And eyes the flags of Britain as they flow.
Hard fate of war, which bade her terrors sway
His destined course, and seize so mean a prey;
A bark with planks so warp'd and seams so riven,
She scarce might face the gentlest airs of heaven:
Pensive he sits, and questions oft if none
Can list his speech and understand his moan;
In vain—no islesman now can use the tongue
Of the bold Norse, from whom their lineage sprung.
Not thus of old the Norse-men hither came,
Won by the love of danger or of fame;
On every storm-beat cape a shapeless tower

Tells of their wars, their conquests, and their power;
For ne'er for Grecia's vales, nor Latian land,
Was fiercer strife than for this barren strand;
A race severe—the isle and ocean lords,
Loved for its own delight the strife of swords;
With scornful laugh the mortal pang defied,
And blest their gods that they in battle died.

Such were the sires of Zetland's simple race,
And still the eye may faint resemblance trace
In the blue eye, tall form, proportion fair,
The limbs athletic, and the long light hair—
(Such was the mien, as Scald and Minstrel sings,
Of fair-haired Harold, first of Norway's Kings);
But their high deeds to scale these crags confined,
Their only warfare is with waves and wind.

Why should I talk of Mousa's castled coast?
Why of the horrors of the Sumburgh Rost?
May not these bald disjointed lines suffice,
Penn'd while my comrades whirl the rattling dice—
While down the cabin skylight lessening shine
The rays, and eve is chased with mirth and wine?
Imagined, while down Mousa's desert bay
Our well-trimm'd vessel urged her nimble way,
While to the freshening breeze she leaned her side,
And bade her bowsprit kiss the foamy tide?

Such are the lays that Zetland Isles supply;
Drenched with the drizzly spray and dropping sky,
Weary and wet, a sea-sick minstrel I.——W. Scott.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

Kirkwall, Orkney, August 13, 1814.

In respect that your Grace has commissioned a Kraken,
You will please be informed that they seldom are taken;
It is January two years, the Zetland folks say,

Since they saw the last Kraken in Scalloway bay;
He lay in the offing a fortnight or more,
But the devil a Zetlander put from the shore,
Though bold in the seas of the North to assail
The morse and the sea-horse, the grampus and whale.
If your Grace thinks I'm writing the thing that is not,
You may ask at a namesake of ours, Mr. Scott—
(He's not from our clan, though his merits deserve it,
But springs, I'm informed, from the Scotts of Scotstarvet;)
He questioned the folks who beheld it with eyes,
But they differed confoundedly as to its size.
For instance, the modest and diffident swore
That it seemed like the keel of a ship, and no more—
Those of eyesight more clear, or of fancy more high,
Said it rose like an island 'twixt ocean and sky—
But all of the hulk had a steady opinion
That 't was sure a *live* subject of Neptune's dominion—
And I think, my Lord Duke, your Grace hardly would wish,
To cumber your house, such a kettle of fish.
Had your order related to nightcaps or hose,
Or mittens of worsted, there's plenty of those.
Or would you be pleased but to fancy a whale?
And direct me to send it—by sea or by mail?
The season, I'm told, is nigh over, but still
I could get you one fit for the lake at Bowhill.
Indeed, as to whales, there's no need to be thrifty,
Since one day last fortnight two hundred and fifty,
Pursued by seven Orkneymen's boats and no more,
Betwixt Truffness and Luffness were drawn on the shore!
You'll ask if I saw this same wonderful sight;
I own that I did not, but easily might—
For this mighty shoal of leviathans lay
On our lee-beam a mile, in the loop of the bay,
And the islesmen of Sanda were all at the spoil,
And *flinching* (so term it) the blubber to boil;
(Ye spirits of lavender, drown the reflection
That awakes at the thoughts of this odorous dissection.)

To see this huge marvel full fain would we go,
But Wilson, the wind, and the current said no.
We have now got to Kirkwall, and needs I must stare
When I think that in verse I have once called it *fair*;
'Tis a base little borough, both dirty and mean—
There is nothing to hear, and there's nought to be seen,
Save a church, where, of old times, a prelate harangued,
And a palace that's built by an earl that was hanged.
But farewell to Kirkwall—aboard we are going,
The anchor's a-peak and the breezes are blowing;
Our commodore calls all his band to their places,
And 't is time to release you—good-night to your Graces!

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC.

Glasgow, September 8, 1814.

My dear Lord Duke,—I take the earliest opportunity, after landing, to discharge a task so distressing to me, that I find reluctance and fear even in making the attempt, and for the first time address so kind and generous a friend without either comfort and confidence in myself, or the power of offering a single word of consolation to his affliction. I learned the late calamitous news (which indeed no preparation could have greatly mitigated) quite unexpectedly, when upon the Irish coast; nor could the shock of an earthquake have affected me in the same proportion. Since that time I have been detained at sea, thinking of nothing but what has happened, and of the painful duty I am now to perform. If the deepest interest in this inexpressible loss could qualify me for expressing myself upon a subject so distressing, I know few whose attachment and respect for the lamented object of our sorrows can or ought to exceed my own, for never was more attractive kindness and condescension displayed by one of her sphere, or returned with deeper and more heartfelt gratitude by one in my own. But selfish regret and sorrow, while they claim a painful and unavailing ascendance, cannot drown the recollection of the virtues lost to the world, just when their scene of acting had opened wider, and to her family when the prospect of their speedy entry upon life rendered her precept and example peculiarly important. And such an example! for of all whom I have ever seen, in whatever rank, she possessed most the power of

rendering virtue lovely—combining purity of feeling and soundness of judgment with a sweetness and affability which won the affections of all who had the happiness of approaching her. And this is the partner of whom it has been God's pleasure to deprive your Grace, and the friend for whom I now sorrow, and shall sorrow while I can remember anything. The recollection of her excellencies can but add bitterness, at least in the first pangs of calamity, yet it is impossible to forbear the topic; it runs to my pen as to my thoughts, till I almost call in question, for an instant, the Eternal Wisdom which has so early summoned her from this wretched world, where pain and grief and sorrow is our portion, to join those to whom her virtues, while upon earth, gave her so strong a resemblance. Would to God I could say, *be comforted*; but I feel every common topic of consolation must be, for the time at least, even an irritation to affliction. Grieve, then, my dear Lord, or I should say my dear and much honored friend,—for sorrow for the time levels the highest distinctions of rank; but do not grieve as those who have no hope. I know the last earthly thoughts of the departed sharer of your joys and sorrows must have been for your Grace and the dear pledges she has left to your care. Do not, for their sake, suffer grief to take that exclusive possession which disclaims care for the living, and is not only useless to the dead, but is what their wishes would have most earnestly deprecated. To time, and to God, whose are both time and eternity, belongs the office of future consolation; it is enough to require from the sufferer under such a dispensation to bear his burthen of sorrow with fortitude, and to resist those feelings which prompt us to believe that that which is galling and grievous is therefore altogether beyond our strength to support. Most bitterly do I regret some levity which I fear must have reached you when your distress was most poignant, and most dearly have I paid for venturing to anticipate the time which is not ours, since I received these deplorable news at the very moment when I was collecting some trifles that I thought might give satisfaction to the person whom I so highly honored, and who, among her numerous excellencies, never failed to seem pleased with what she knew was meant to afford her pleasure.

But I must break off, and have perhaps already written too much. I learn by a letter from Mrs. Scott, this day received, that your Grace is at Bowhill—in the beginning of next week I will be in the vicinity; and when your Grace can receive me without additional pain, I shall have the honor of waiting

upon you. I remain, with the deepest sympathy, my Lord Duke, your Grace's truly distressed and most grateful servant,

Walter Scott.

The following letter was addressed to Scott by the Duke of Buccleuch, before he received that which the Poet penned on landing at Glasgow. I present it here, because it will give a more exact notion of what Scott's relations with his noble patron really were, than any other single document which I could produce: and to set that matter in its just light is essential to the business of this narrative. But I am not ashamed to confess that I embrace with satisfaction the opportunity of thus offering to the readers of the present time a most instructive lesson. They will here see what pure and simple virtues and humble piety may be cultivated as the only sources of real comfort in this world and consolation in the prospect of futurity,—among circles which the giddy and envious mob are apt to regard as intoxicated with the pomps and vanities of wealth and rank; which so many of our popular writers represent systematically as sunk in selfish indulgence—as viewing all below them with apathy and indifference—and last, not least, as upholding, when they do uphold, the religious institutions of their country, merely because they have been taught to believe that their own hereditary privileges and possessions derive security from the prevalence of Christian maxims and feelings among the mass of the people.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., POST OFFICE, GREENOCK.

Bowhill, September 3, 1814.

My dear Sir,—It is not with the view of distressing you with my griefs, in order to relieve my own feelings, that I address you at this moment. But knowing your attachment to myself, and more particularly the real affection which you bore to my poor wife, I thought that a few lines from me would be acceptable, both to explain the state of my mind at present, and to mention a few circumstances connected with that melancholy event.

I am calm and resigned. The blow was so severe that it stunned me, and I did not feel that agony of mind which might have been expected. I now see the full extent of my misfortune; but that extended view of it has come gradually upon me. I am fully aware how imperative it is upon me to exert

myself to the utmost on account of my children. I must not depress their spirits by a display of my own melancholy feelings. I have many new duties to perform,—or rather, perhaps, I now feel more pressingly the obligation of duties which the unceasing exertions of my poor wife rendered less necessary, or induced me to attend to with less than sufficient accuracy. I have been taught a severe lesson; it may and ought to be a useful one. I feel that my lot, though a hard one, is accompanied by many alleviations denied to others. I have a numerous family, thank God, in health, and profiting, according to their different ages, by the admirable lessons they have been taught. My daughter, Anne, worthy of so excellent a mother, exerts herself to the utmost to supply her place, and has displayed a fortitude and strength of mind beyond her years, and (as I had foolishly thought) beyond her powers. I have most kind friends willing and ready to afford me every assistance. These are my worldly comforts, and they are numerous and great.

Painful as it may be, I cannot reconcile it to myself to be totally silent as to the last scene of this cruel tragedy. As she had lived, so she died,—an example of every noble feeling—of love, attachment, and the total want of everything selfish. Endeavoring to the last to conceal her suffering, she evinced a fortitude, a resignation, a Christian courage, beyond all power of description. Her last injunction was to attend to her poor people. It was a dreadful but instructive moment. I have learned that the most truly heroic spirit may be lodged in the tenderest and the gentlest breast. Need I tell *you* that she expired in the full hope and expectation, nay, in the firmest certainty, of passing to a better world, through a steady reliance on her Saviour? If ever there was a proof of the efficacy of our religion in moments of the deepest affliction, and in the hour of death, it was exemplified in her conduct. But I will no longer dwell upon a subject which must be painful to you. Knowing her sincere friendship for you, I have thought it would give you pleasure, though a melancholy one, to hear from me that her last moments were such as to be envied by every lover of virtue, piety, and true and genuine religion.

I will endeavor to do in all things what I know she would wish. I have therefore determined to lay myself open to all the comforts my friends can afford me. I shall be most happy to cultivate their society as heretofore. I shall love them more and more, because I know they loved her. Whenever it

suits your convenience I shall be happy to see you here. I feel that it is particularly my duty not to make my house the house of mourning to my children; for I know it was *her* decided opinion that it is most mischievous to give an early impression of gloom to the mind.

You will find me tranquil, and capable of going through the common occupations of society. Adieu for the present. Yours very sincerely,

Buccleuch, etc.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC., ETC., ETC.

Edinburgh, 11th September, 1814.

My dear Lord Duke,—I received your letter (which had missed me at Greenock) upon its being returned to this place, and cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for the kindness which, at such a moment, could undertake the task of writing upon such a subject to relieve the feelings of a friend. Depend upon it, I am so far worthy of your Grace's kindness, that, among many proofs of it, this affecting and most distressing one can never be forgotten. It gives me great though melancholy satisfaction to find that your Grace has had the manly and Christian fortitude to adopt that resigned and patient frame of spirit, which can extract from the most bitter calamity a wholesome mental medicine. I trust in God, that, as so many and such high duties are attached to your station, and as He has blessed you with the disposition that draws pleasure from the discharge of them, your Grace will find your first exertions, however painful, rewarded with strength to persevere, and finally with that comfort which attends perseverance in that which is right. The happiness of hundreds depends upon your Grace almost directly, and the effect of your example in the country, and of your constancy in support of a constitution daily undermined by the wicked and designing, is almost incalculable. Justly, then, and well, has your Grace resolved to sacrifice all that is selfish in the indulgence of grief, to the duties of your social and public situation. Long may you have health and strength to be to your dear and hopeful family an example and guide in all that becomes their high rank. It is enough that one light, and alas, what a light that was!—has been recalled by the Divine Will to another and a better sphere.

I wrote a hasty and unconnected letter immediately on landing. I am detained for two days in this place, but shall wait upon your Grace immediately on my return to Abbotsford. If my society cannot, in the circumstances, give much pleasure, it will, I trust, impose no restraint.

Mrs. Scott desires me to offer her deepest sympathy upon this calamitous occasion. She has much reason, for she has lost the countenance of a friend such as she cannot expect the course of human life again to supply. I am ever, with much and affectionate respect, your Grace's truly faithful humble servant,

Walter Scott.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., WORTHING.

Edinburgh, September 14, 1814.

My dear Morritt,—"At the end of my tour on the 22d August"!!! Lord help us!—this comes of going to the Levant and the Hellespont, and your Euxine, and so forth. A poor devil who goes to Nova Zembla and Thule is treated as if he had been only walking as far as Barnard Castle or Cauldshiels Loch. I would have you to know I only returned on the 10th current, and the most agreeable thing I found was your letter. I am sure you must know I had need of something pleasant, for the news of the death of the beautiful, the kind, the affectionate, and generous Duchess of Buccleuch gave me a shock, which, to speak God's truth, could not have been exceeded unless by my own family's sustaining a similar deprivation. She was indeed a light set upon a hill, and had all the grace which the most accomplished manners and the most affable address could give to those virtues by which she was raised still higher than by rank. As she always distinguished me by her regard and confidence, and as I had many opportunities of seeing her in the active discharge of duties in which she rather resembled a descended angel than an earthly being, you will excuse my saying so much about my own feelings on an occasion where sorrow has been universal. But I will drop the subject. The survivor has displayed a strength and firmness of mind seldom equalled, where the affection has been so strong and mutual, and amidst the very high station and commanding fortune which so often render self-control more difficult, because so far from being habitual. I trust, for his own sake, as well as for

that of thousands to whom his life is directly essential, and hundreds of thousands to whom his example is important, that God, as He has given him fortitude to bear this inexpressible shock, will add strength of constitution to support him in the struggle. He has written to me on the occasion in a style becoming a man and a Christian, submissive to the will of God, and willing to avail himself of the consolations which remain among his family and friends. I am going to see him, and how we shall meet, God knows; but though "an iron man of iron mould" upon many of the occasions of life in which I see people most affected, and a peculiar contemner of the commonplace sorrow which I see paid to the departed, this is a case in which my stoicism will not serve me. They both gave me reason to think they loved me, and I returned their regard with the most sincere attachment —the distinction of rank being, I think, set apart on all sides. But God's will be done. I will dwell no longer upon this subject. It is much to learn that Mrs. Morritt is so much better, and that if I have sustained a severe wound from a quarter so little expected, I may promise myself the happiness of your dear wife's recovery.

I will shortly mention the train of our voyage, reserving particulars till another day. We sailed from Leith, and skirted the Scottish coast, visiting the Buller of Buchan and other remarkable objects—went to Shetland—thence to Orkney—from thence round Cape Wrath to the Hebrides, making descents everywhere, where there was anything to be seen—thence to Lewis and the Long Island—to Skye—to Iona—and so forth, lingering among the Hebrides as long as we could. Then we stood over to the coast of Ireland, and visited the Giant's Causeway and Port Rush, where Dr. Richardson, the inventor (discoverer, I would say) of the celebrated fiorin-grass, resides. By the way, he is a chattering charlatan, and his fiorin a mere humbug. But if he were Cicero, and his invention were potatoes, or anything equally useful, I should detest the recollection of the place and the man, for it was there I learned the death of my friend. Adieu, my dear Morritt; kind compliments to your lady; like poor Tom, "I cannot daub it farther." When I hear where you are, and what you are doing, I will write you a more cheerful epistle. Poor Mackenzie, too, is gone—the brother of our friend Lady Hood—and another Mackenzie, son to the Man of Feeling. So short time have I been absent, and such has been the harvest of mortality among those whom I regarded!

I will attend to your corrections in Waverley. My principal employment for the autumn will be reducing the knowledge I have acquired of the localities of the islands into scenery and stage-room for The Lord of the Isles, of which renowned romance I think I have repeated some portions to you. It was elder born than Rokeby, though it gave place to it in publishing.

After all, scribbling is an odd propensity. I don't believe there is any ointment, even that of the Edinburgh Review, which can cure the infected. Once more, yours entirely,

Walter Scott.

Before I pass from the event which made August, 1814, so black a month in Scott's calendar, I may be excused for once more noticing the kind interest which the Duchess of Buccleuch had always taken in the fortunes of the Ettrick Shepherd, and introducing a most characteristic epistle which she received from him a few months before her death. The Duchess—"fearful" (as she said) "of seeing herself in print"—did not answer the Shepherd, but forwarded his letter to Scott, begging him to explain that circumstances did not allow the Duke to concede what he requested, but to assure him that they both retained a strong wish to serve him whenever a suitable opportunity should present itself. Hogg's letter was as follows:—

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUCH,
DALKEITH PALACE. FAVORED BY MESSRS. GRIEVE AND SCOTT, HATTERS, EDINBURGH.

Ettrickbank, March 17, 1814.

May it please your Grace,—I have often grieved you by my applications for this and that. I am sensible of this, for I have had many instances of your wishes to be of service to me, could you have known what to do for that purpose. But there are some eccentric characters in the world, of whom no person can judge or know what will prove beneficial, or what may prove their bane. I have again and again received of your Grace's private bounty, and though it made me love and respect you the more, I was nevertheless grieved at it. It was never your Grace's money that I wanted, but the honor of your countenance; indeed my heart could never yield to the hope of being patronized by any house save that of Buccleuch, whom I deemed

bound to cherish every plant that indicated anything out of the common way on the Braes of Ettrick and Yarrow.

I know you will be thinking that this long prelude is to end with a request. No, Madam! I have taken the resolution of never making another request. I will, however, tell you a story, which is, I believe, founded on a fact:—

There is a small farm at the head of a water called *****, possessed by a mean fellow named ****. A third of it has been taken off and laid into another farm—the remainder is as yet unappropriated. Now, there is a certain poor bard, who has two old parents, each of them upwards of eighty-four years of age; and that bard has no house nor home to shelter those poor parents in, or cheer the evening of their lives. A single line from a certain very great and very beautiful lady, to a certain Mr. Riddle, would insure that small pendicle to the bard at once. But she will grant no such thing! I appeal to your Grace if she is not a very bad lady that? I am your Grace's ever obliged and grateful

James Hogg,
The Ettrick Shepherd.

Though the Duke of Buccleuch would not dismiss a poor tenant merely because Hogg called him "a mean fellow," he had told Scott that if he could find an unappropriated "pendicle," such as this letter referred to, he would most willingly bestow it on the Shepherd. It so happened, that when Scott paid his first visit at Bowhill after the death of the Duchess, the Ettrick Shepherd was mentioned: "My friend," said the Duke, "I must now consider this poor man's case as *her* legacy;" and to this feeling Hogg owed, very soon afterwards, his establishment at Altrive, on his favorite braes of Yarrow.

As Scott passed through Edinburgh on his return from his voyage, the negotiation as to The Lord of the Isles, which had been protracted through several months, was completed—Constable agreeing to give fifteen hundred guineas for one half of the copyright, while the other moiety was retained by the author. The sum mentioned had been offered by Constable at an early stage of the affair, but it was not until now accepted, in consequence of the earnest wish of Scott and Ballantyne to saddle the publisher of the new poem with part of their old "quire stock,"—which,

however, Constable ultimately persisted in refusing. It may easily be believed that John Ballantyne's management of money matters during Scott's six weeks' absence had been such as to render it doubly convenient for the Poet to have this matter settled on his arrival in Edinburgh—and it may also be supposed that the progress of Waverley during that interval had tended to put the chief parties in good-humor with each other.

In returning to Waverley, I must observe most distinctly that nothing can be more unfounded than the statement which has of late years been frequently repeated in memoirs of Scott's life, that the sale of the first edition of this immortal Tale was slow. It appeared on the 7th of July, and the whole impression (1000 copies) had disappeared within five weeks; an occurrence then unprecedented in the case of an anonymous novel, put forth at what is called among publishers *the dead season*. A second edition, of 2000 copies, was at least projected by the 24th of the same month;—that appeared before the end of August, and it, too, had gone off so rapidly, that when Scott passed through Edinburgh, on his way from the Hebrides, he found Constable eager to treat, on the same terms as before, for a third of 1000 copies. This third edition was published in October, and when a fourth of the like extent was called for in November, I find Scott writing to John Ballantyne, "I suppose Constable won't quarrel with a work on which he has netted £612 in four months, with a certainty of making it £1000 before the year is out;" and, in fact, owing to the diminished expense of advertising, the profits of this fourth edition were to each party £440. To avoid recurring to these details, I may as well state at once, that a fifth edition of 1000 copies appeared in January, 1815; a sixth of 1500 in June, 1816; a seventh of 2000 in October, 1817; an eighth of 2000 in April, 1821; that in the collective editions, prior to 1829, 11,000 were disposed of; and that the sale of the current edition, with notes, begun in 1829, has already reached 40,000 copies. Well might Constable regret that he had not ventured to offer £1000 for the whole copyright of Waverley!

I must now look back for a moment to the history of the composition.—The letter of September, 1810, was not the only piece of discouragement which Scott had received, during the progress of Waverley, from his first confidant. James Ballantyne, in his deathbed *memorandum*, says: "When Mr. Scott first questioned me as to my hopes of him as a novelist, it somehow or other did chance that they were not very high. He saw this, and said: 'Well, I don't see why I should not succeed as well as other people. At

all events, faint heart never won fair lady—'tis only trying.' When the first volume was completed, I still could not get myself to think much of the Waverley-Honor scenes; and in this I afterwards found that I sympathized with many. But, to my utter shame be it spoken, when I reached the exquisite descriptions of scenes and manners at Tully-Veolan, what did I do but pronounce them at once to be utterly vulgar!—When the success of the work so entirely knocked me down as a man of taste, all that the good-natured author said was: 'Well, I really thought you were wrong about the Scotch. Why, Burns, by his poetry, had already attracted universal attention to everything Scottish, and I confess I could n't see why I should not be able to keep the flame alive, merely because I wrote Scotch in prose, and he in rhyme.'"—It is, I think, very agreeable to have this manly avowal to compare with the delicate allusion which Scott makes to the affair in his Preface to the Novel.

The only other friends originally entrusted with his secret appear to have been Mr. Erskine and Mr. Morritt. I know not at what stage the former altered the opinion which he formed on seeing the tiny fragment of 1805. The latter did not, as we have seen, receive the book until it was completed; but he anticipated, before he closed the first volume, the station which public opinion would ultimately assign to Waverley. "How the story may continue," Mr. Morritt then wrote, "I am not able to divine; but, as far as I have read, pray let us thank you for the Castle of Tully-Veolan, and the delightful drinking-bout at Lucky Mac-Leary's, for the characters of the Laird of Balmawhapple and the Baron of Bradwardine; and no less for Davie Gelatly, whom I take to be a transcript of William Rose's motley follower, commonly yclept Caliban. If the completion be equal to what we have just devoured, it deserves a place among our standard works far better than its modest appearance and anonymous title-page will at first gain it in these days of prolific story-telling. Your manner of narrating is so different from the slipshod sauntering verbiage of common novels, and from the stiff, precise, and prim sententiousness of some of our female moralists, that I think it can't fail to strike anybody who knows what style means; but, amongst the gentle class, who swallow every blue-backed book in a circulating library for the sake of the story, I should fear half the knowledge of nature it contains, and all the real humor, may be thrown away. Sir Everard, Mrs. Rachael, and the Baron are, I think, in the first rank of portraits for nature and character; and I could depone to their likeness in

any court of taste. The ballad of St. Swithin, and scraps of *old songs*, were measures of danger if you meant to continue your concealment; but, in truth, you wear your disguise something after the manner of Bottom the weaver; and in spite of you the truth will soon peep out." And next day he resumes: "We have finished Waverley, and were I to tell you all my admiration, you would accuse me of complimenting. You have quite attained the point which your *postscript-preface* mentions as your object—the discrimination of Scottish character, which had hitherto been slurred over with clumsy national daubing." He adds, a week or two later: "After all, I need not much thank you for your confidence. How could you have hoped that I should not discover you? I had heard you tell half the anecdotes before—some turns you owe to myself; and no doubt most of your friends must have the same sort of thing to say."

Monk Lewis's letter on the subject is so short that I must give it as it stands:—

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., ABBOTSFORD.

The Albany, August 17, 1814.

My Dear Scott,—I return some books of yours which you lent me '*sixty years since*'—and I hope they will reach you safe. I write in great haste; and yet I must mention, that hearing Waverley ascribed to you, I bought it, and read it with all impatience. I am now told it is not yours, but William Erskine's. If this is so, pray tell him from me that I think it excellent in every respect, and that I believe every word of it.

Ever yours,

M. G. Lewis.

Another friend (and he had, I think, none more dear), the late Margaret Maclean Clephane of Torloisk, afterwards Marchioness of Northampton, writes thus from Kirkness, in Kinross-shire, on the 11th October:—

> "In this place I feel a sort of pleasure, not unallied to pain, from the many recollections that every venerable tree, and every sunny bank, and every honeysuckle bower, occasions; and I have found something here that speaks to me in the voice of a valued friend—*Waverley*. The question that rises, it is perhaps

> improper to give utterance to. If so, let it pass as an exclamation.—Is it possible that Mr. Erskine can have written it? The poetry, I think, would prove a different descent in any court in Christendom. The turn of the phrases in many places is so peculiarly yours, that I fancy I hear your voice repeating them; and there wants but verse to make all Waverley an enchanting poem—varying to be sure from grave to gay, but with so deepening an interest as to leave an impression on the mind that few—very few poems—could awaken. But, why did not the author allow me to be his Gaelic Dragoman? Oh! Mr. ——, whoever you are, you might have safely trusted—M. M. C."

There was one person with whom it would, of course, have been more than vain to affect any concealment. On the publication of the third edition, I find him writing thus to his brother Thomas, who had by this time gone to Canada as paymaster of the 70th regiment:—

Dear Tom,—A novel here called Waverley has had enormous success. I sent you a copy, and will send you another, with The Lord of the Isles, which will be out at Christmas. The success which it has had, with some other circumstances, has induced people

> "To lay the bantling at a certain door,
> Where lying store of faults, they'd fain heap more."

You will guess for yourself how far such a report has credibility; but by no means give the weight of your opinion to the transatlantic public; for you must know there is also a counter-report, that *you* have written the said Waverley. Send me a novel intermixing your exuberant and natural humor with any incidents and descriptions of scenery you may see—particularly with characters and traits of manners. I will give it all the cobbling that is necessary, and, if you do but exert yourself, I have not the least doubt it will be worth £500; and, to encourage you, you may, when you send the MS., draw on me for £100, at fifty days' sight—so that your labors will at any rate not be quite thrown away. You have more fun and descriptive talent than most people; and all that you want—*i. e.*, the mere practice of composition—I can supply, or the devil's in it. Keep this matter a dead

secret, and look knowing when Waverley is spoken of. If you are not Sir John Falstaff, you are as good a man as he, and may therefore face Colville of the Dale. You may believe I don't want to make you the author of a book you have never seen; but if people will, upon their own judgment, suppose so, and also on their own judgment give you £500 to try your hand on a novel, I don't see that you are a pin's-point the worse. Mind that your MS. attends the draft. I am perfectly serious and confident that in two or three months you might clear the cobs. I beg my compliments to the hero who is afraid of Jeffrey's scalping-knife.

In truth, no one of Scott's intimate friends ever had, or could have had, the slightest doubt as to the parentage of Waverley: nor, although he abstained from communicating the fact formally to most of them, did he ever affect any real concealment in the case of such persons; nor, when any circumstance arose which rendered the withholding of direct confidence on the subject incompatible with perfect freedom of feeling on both sides, did he hesitate to make the avowal.

Nor do I believe that the mystification ever answered much purpose, among literary men of eminence beyond the circle of his personal acquaintance. But it would be difficult to suppose that he had ever wished that to be otherwise; it was sufficient for him to set the mob of readers at gaze, and above all, to escape the annoyance of having productions, actually known to be his, made the daily and hourly topics of discussion in his presence.

Mr. Jeffrey had known Scott from his youth—and, in reviewing Waverley, he was at no pains to conceal his conviction of its authorship. He quarrelled, as usual, with carelessness of style, and some inartificialities of plot, but rendered justice to the substantial merits of the work, in language which I shall not mar by abridgment. The Quarterly was far less favorable in its verdict. Indeed, the articles on Waverley, and afterwards on Guy Mannering, which appeared in that journal, will bear the test of ultimate opinion as badly as any critical pieces which our time has produced. They are written in a captious, cavilling strain of quibble, which shows as complete blindness to the essential interest of the narrative, as the critic betrays on the subject of the Scottish dialogue, which forms its liveliest ornament, when he pronounces that to be "a dark dialogue of Anglified Erse." With this remarkable exception, the professional critics were, on the

whole, not slow to confess their belief, that, under a hackneyed name and trivial form, there had at last appeared a work of original creative genius, worthy of being placed by the side of the very few real masterpieces of prose fiction. Loftier romance was never blended with easier, quainter humor, by Cervantes himself. In his familiar delineations he had combined the strength of Smollett with the native elegance and unaffected pathos of Goldsmith; in his darker scenes he had revived that real tragedy which appeared to have left our stage with the age of Shakespeare; and elements of interest so diverse had been blended and interwoven with that nameless grace, which, more surely perhaps than even the highest perfection in the command of any one strain of sentiment, marks the master-mind cast in Nature's most felicitous mould.

Scott, with the consciousness (avowed long afterwards in his General Preface) that he should never in all likelihood have thought of a Scotch novel had he not read Maria Edgeworth's exquisite pieces of Irish character, desired James Ballantyne to send her a copy of Waverley on its first appearance, inscribed "from the author." Miss Edgeworth, whom Scott had never then seen, though some literary correspondence had passed between them, thanked the nameless novelist, under cover to Ballantyne, with the cordial generosity of kindred genius; and the following answer, not from Scott, but from Ballantyne—(who had kept a copy, now before me)—is not to be omitted:—

TO MISS EDGEWORTH, EDGEWORTHSTOWN, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, 11th November, 1814.

Madam,—I am desired by the Author of Waverley to acknowledge, in his name, the honor you have done him by your most flattering approbation of his work—a distinction which he receives as one of the highest that could be paid him, and which he would have been proud to have himself stated his sense of, only that being *impersonal*, he thought it more respectful to require my assistance than to write an anonymous letter.

There are very few who have had the opportunities that have been presented to me, of knowing how very elevated is the admiration entertained by the Author of Waverley for the genius of Miss Edgeworth. From the intercourse that took place betwixt us while the work was going through my press, *I know* that the exquisite truth and power of your characters operated on his mind at once to excite and subdue it. He felt that the success of his book was to depend upon the characters, much more than upon the story; and he entertained so just and so high an opinion of your eminence in the management of both, as to have strong apprehensions of any comparison which might be instituted betwixt his picture and story and yours; besides, that there is a richness and *naïveté* in Irish character and humor, in which the Scotch are certainly defective, and which could hardly fail, as he thought, to render his delineations cold and tame by the contrast. "If I could but hit Miss Edgeworth's wonderful power of vivifying all her persons, and making them live as *beings* in your mind, I should not be afraid:"—Often has the Author of Waverley used such language to me; and I knew that I gratified him most when I could say,—"Positively this *is* equal to Miss Edgeworth." You will thus judge, Madam, how deeply he must feel such praise as you have bestowed upon his efforts. I believe he himself thinks the Baron the best drawn character in his book—I mean the Bailie—honest Bailie Macwheeble. He protests it is the most *true*, though from many causes he did not expect it to be the most popular. It appears to me, that amongst so many splendid portraits, all drawn with such strength and truth, it is more easy to say which is your favorite, than which is best. Mr. Henry Mackenzie agrees with you in your objection to the resemblance to Fielding. He says you should never be forced to recollect, *maugre* all its

internal evidence to the contrary, that such a work is a work of fiction, and all its fine creations but of air. The character of Rose is less finished than the author had at one period intended; but I believe the characters of humor grew upon his liking, to the prejudice, in some degree, of those of a more elevated and sentimental kind. Yet what can surpass Flora, and her gallant brother?

I am not authorized to say—but I will not resist my impulse to say to Miss Edgeworth, that another novel, descriptive of more ancient manners still, may be expected erelong from the Author of Waverley. But I request her to observe, that I say this in strict confidence—not certainly meaning to exclude from the knowledge of what will give them pleasure, her respectable family.

Mr. Scott's poem, The Lord of the Isles, promises fully to equal the most admired of his productions. It is, I think, equally powerful, and certainly more uniformly polished and sustained. I have seen three cantos. It will consist of six.

I have the honor to be, Madam, with the utmost admiration and respect,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

James Ballantyne.

Chapter XXXIV

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Progress of the Lord of the Isles. — Correspondence With Mr. Joseph Train. — Rapid Completion of the Lord of the Isles. — "Refreshing the Machine." — "Six Weeks at a Christmas." — Publication of the Poem, — and of Guy Mannering. — Letters to Morritt, Terry, and John Ballantyne. — Anecdotes by James Ballantyne. — Visit to London. — Meeting With Lord Byron. — Dinners at Carlton House.

1814-1815.

By the 11th of November, then, The Lord of the Isles had made great progress, and Scott had also authorized Ballantyne to negotiate among the booksellers for the publication of a second novel. But before I go further into these transactions, I must introduce the circumstances of Scott's first connection with an able and amiable man, whose services were of high importance to him, at this time and ever after, in the prosecution of his literary labors. Calling at Ballantyne's printing-office while Waverley was in the press, he happened to take up a proof sheet of a volume entitled "Poems, with notes illustrative of traditions in Galloway and Ayrshire, by Joseph Train, Supervisor of Excise at Newton-Stewart." The sheet contained a ballad on an Ayrshire tradition, about a certain "Witch of Carrick," whose skill in the black art was, it seems, instrumental in the destruction of one of the scattered vessels of the Spanish Armada. The ballad begins:—

"Why gallops the palfrey with Lady Dunore?
Who drives away Turnberry's kine from the shore?
Go tell it in Carrick, and tell it in Kyle—
Although the proud Dons are now passing the Moil,
On this magic clew,
That in fairyland grew,
Old Elcine de Aggart has taken in hand
To wind up their lives ere they win to our strand."

Scott immediately wrote to the author, begging to be included in his list of subscribers for a dozen copies, and suggesting at the same time a verbal alteration in one of the stanzas of this ballad. Mr. Train acknowledged his letter with gratitude, and the little book reached him just as he was about to embark in the lighthouse yacht. He took it with him on his voyage, and, on returning home again, wrote to Mr. Train, expressing the gratification he had received from several of his metrical pieces, but still more from his notes, and requesting him, as he seemed to be enthusiastic about traditions and legends, to communicate any matters of that order connected with Galloway which he might not himself think of turning to account; "for," said Scott, "nothing interests me so much as local anecdotes; and, as the applications for charity usually conclude, the smallest donation will be thankfully accepted."

Mr. Train, in a little narrative with which he has favored me, says, that for some years before this time he had been engaged, in alliance with a friend of his, Mr. Denniston, in collecting materials for a History of Galloway; they had circulated lists of queries among the clergy and parish schoolmasters, and had thus, and by their own personal researches, accumulated "a great variety of the most excellent materials for that purpose;" but that, from the hour of his correspondence with Walter Scott, he "renounced every idea of authorship for himself," resolving, "that thenceforth his chief pursuit should be collecting whatever he thought would be most interesting to *him*;" and that Mr. Denniston was easily persuaded to acquiesce in the abandonment of their original design. "Upon receiving Mr. Scott's letter," says Mr. Train, "I became still more zealous in the pursuit of ancient lore, and being the first person who had attempted to collect old stories in that quarter with any view to publication, I became so noted, that even beggars, in the hope of reward, came frequently from afar to Newton-Stewart, to recite old ballads and relate old stories to me." Erelong, Mr. Train visited Scott both at Edinburgh and at Abbotsford; a true affection continued ever afterwards to be maintained between them; and this generous ally was, as the prefaces to the Waverley Novels signify, one of the earliest confidants of that series of works, and certainly the most efficient of all the author's friends in furnishing him with materials for their composition. Nor did he confine himself to literary services: whatever portable object of antiquarian curiosity met his eye, this good man secured and treasured up with the same destination; and if ever a catalogue of the

museum at Abbotsford shall appear, no single contributor, most assuredly, will fill so large a space in it as Mr. Train.

His first considerable communication, after he had formed the unselfish determination above mentioned, consisted of a collection of anecdotes concerning the Galloway gypsies, and "a local story of an astrologer, who calling at a farmhouse at the moment when the goodwife was in travail, had, it was said, predicted the future fortune of the child, almost in the words placed in the mouth of John MacKinlay, in the Introduction to Guy Mannering." Scott told him, in reply, that the story of the astrologer reminded him of "one he had heard in his youth;" that is to say, as the Introduction explains, from this MacKinlay; but Mr. Train has, since his friend's death, recovered a rude *Durham* ballad, which in fact contains a great deal more of the main fable of Guy Mannering than either his own written, or MacKinlay's oral edition of the *Gallovidian* anecdote had conveyed; and—possessing, as I do, numberless evidences of the haste with which Scott drew up his beautiful Prefaces and Introductions of 1829, 1830, and 1831—I am strongly inclined to think that he must in his boyhood have read the Durham Broadside or Chapbook itself—as well as heard the old serving-man's Scottish version of it.

However this may have been, Scott's answer to Mr. Train proceeded in these words:—

I am now to solicit a favor, which I think your interest in Scottish antiquities will induce you readily to comply with. I am very desirous to have some account of the present state of *Turnberry Castle*—whether any vestiges of it remain—what is the appearance of the ground—the names of the neighboring places—and, above all, what are the traditions of the place (if any) concerning its memorable surprise by Bruce, upon his return from the coast of Ireland, in the commencement of the brilliant part of his career. The purpose of this is to furnish some hints for notes to a work in which I am now engaged, and I need not say I will have great pleasure in mentioning the source from which I derive my information. I have only to add, with the modest importunity of a lazy correspondent, that the sooner you oblige me with an answer (if you can assist me on the subject), the greater will the obligation be on me, who am already your obliged humble servant,

W. Scott.

The recurrence of the word *Turnberry*, in the ballad of Elcine de Aggart, had of course suggested this application, which was dated on the 7th of November. "I had often," says Mr. Train, "when a boy, climbed the brown hills, and traversed the shores of Carrick, but I could not sufficiently remember the exact places and distances as to which Mr. Scott inquired; so, immediately on receipt of his letter, I made a journey into Ayrshire to collect all the information I possibly could, and forwarded it to him on the 18th of the same month." Among the particulars thus communicated, was the local superstition, that on the anniversary of the night when Bruce landed at Turnberry from Arran, the same meteoric gleam which had attended his voyage reappeared, unfailingly, in the same quarter of the heavens. With this circumstance Scott was much struck. "Your information," he writes on the 22d November, "was particularly interesting and acceptable, especially that which relates to the supposed preternatural appearance of the fire, etc., which I hope to make some use of." What use he did make of it, if any reader has forgotten, will be seen by reference to stanzas 7-17 of the 5th Canto of the Poem; and the notes to the same Canto embody, with due acknowledgment, the more authentic results of Mr. Train's pilgrimage to Carrick.

I shall recur presently to this communication from Mr. Train; but must pause for a moment to introduce two letters, both written in the same week with Scott's request as to the localities of Turnberry. They both give us amusing sketches of his buoyant spirits at this period of gigantic exertion;—and the first of them, which relates chiefly to Maturin's Tragedy of Bertram, shows how he could still contrive to steal time for attention to the affairs of brother authors less energetic than himself.

TO DANIEL TERRY, ESQ.

Abbotsford, November 10, 1814.

My Dear Terry,—I should have long since answered your kind letter by our friend Young, but he would tell you of my departure with our trusty and well-beloved Erskine, on a sort of a voyage to Nova Zembla. Since my return, I have fallen under the tyrannical dominion of a certain Lord of the Isles. Those Lords were famous for oppression in the days of yore, and if I can judge by the posthumous despotism exercised over me, they have not improved by their demise. The *peine forte et dure* is, you know, nothing in

comparison to being obliged to grind verses; and so devilish repulsive is my disposition, that I can never put my wheel into constant and regular motion, till Ballantyne's devil claps in his proofs, like the hot cinder which you Bath folks used to clap in beside an unexperienced turnspit, as a hint to be expeditious in his duty. O long life to the old hermit of Prague, who never saw pen and ink!—much happier in that negative circumstance than in his alliance with the niece of King Gorboduc.

To talk upon a blither subject, I wish you saw Abbotsford, which begins this season to look the whimsical, gay, odd cabin, that we had chalked out. I have been obliged to relinquish Stark's plan, which was greatly too expensive. So I have made the old farmhouse my *corps de logis*, with some outlying places for kitchen, laundry, and two spare bedrooms, which run along the east wall of the farm-court, not without some picturesque effect. A perforated cross, the spoils of the old kirk of Galashiels, decorates an advanced door, and looks very well. This little sly bit of sacrilege has given our spare rooms the name of *the chapel*. I earnestly invite you to a *pew* there, which you will find as commodious for the purpose of a nap as you have ever experienced when, under the guidance of old Mrs. Smollett, you were led to St. George's, Edinburgh.

I have been recommending to John Kemble (I dare say without any chance of success) to peruse a MS. Tragedy of Maturin's author of Montorio: it is one of those things which will either succeed greatly or be damned gloriously, for its merits are marked, deep, and striking, and its faults of a nature obnoxious to ridicule. He had our old friend Satan (none of your sneaking St. John Street devils, but the arch-fiend himself) brought on the stage bodily. I believe I have exorcised the foul fiend—for, though in reading he was a most terrible fellow, I feared for his reception in public. The last act is ill contrived. He piddles (so to speak) through a cullender, and divides the whole horrors of the catastrophe (though God wot there are enough of them) into a kind of drippity-droppity of four or five scenes, instead of inundating the audience with them at once in the finale, with a grand "*gardez l'eau*." With all this, which I should say had I written the thing myself, it is grand and powerful; the language most animated and poetical; and the characters sketched with a masterly enthusiasm. Many thanks for Captain Richard Falconer. To your kindness I owe the two books in the world I most longed to see, not so much for their intrinsic merits, as

because they bring back with vivid associations the sentiments of my childhood—I might almost say infancy. Nothing ever disturbed my feelings more than when, sitting by the old oak table, my aunt, Lady Raeburn, used to read the lamentable catastrophe of the ship's departing without Captain Falconer, in consequence of the whole party making free with lime-punch on the eve of its being launched. This and Captain Bingfield, I much wished to read once more, and I owe the possession of both to your kindness. Everybody that I see talks highly of your steady interest with the public, wherewith, as I never doubted of it, I am pleased but not surprised. We are just now leaving this for the winter: the children went yesterday. Tom Purdie, Finella, and the greyhounds, all in excellent health; the latter have not been hunted this season!!! Can add nothing more to excite your admiration. Mrs. Scott sends her kind compliments.

W. Scott.

The following, dated a day after, refers to some lines which Mr. Morritt had sent him from Worthing.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., WORTHING.

Abbotsford, November 11, 1814.

My dear Morritt,—I had your kind letter with the beautiful verses. May the Muse meet you often on the verge of the sea or among your own woods of Rokeby! May you have spirits to profit by her visits (and that implies all good wishes for the continuance of Mrs. M.'s convalescence), and may I often, by the fruits of your inspiration, have my share of pleasure! My Muse is a Tyranness, and not a Christian queen, and compels me to attend to longs and shorts, and I know not what, when, God wot, I had rather be planting evergreens by my new old fountain. You must know that, like the complaint of a fine young boy who was complimented by a stranger on his being a smart fellow, "I am sair halded down by *the bubbly jock*." In other words, the turkey cock, at the head of a family of some forty or fifty infidels, lays waste all my shrubs. In vain I remonstrate with Charlotte upon these occasions; she is in league with the hen-wife, the natural protectress of these pirates; and I have only the inhuman consolation that I may one day, like a cannibal, eat up my enemies. This is but dull fun, but what else have I to tell you about? It would be worse if, like Justice Shallow's Davy, I should

consult you upon sowing down the headland with wheat. My literary tormentor is a certain Lord of the Isles, famed for his tyranny of yore, and not unjustly. I am bothering some tale of him I have had long by me into a sort of romance. I think you will like it: it is Scottified up to the teeth, and somehow I feel myself like the liberated chiefs of the Rolliad, "who boast their native philabeg restored." I believe the frolics one can cut in this loose garb are all set down by you Sassenachs to the real agility of the wearer, and not the brave, free, and independent character of his clothing. It is, in a word, the real Highland fling, and no one is supposed able to dance it but a native. I always thought that epithet of Gallia *Braccata* implied subjugation, and was never surprised at Cæsar's easy conquests, considering that his Labienus and all his merry men wore, as we say, bottomless breeks.

Ever yours,
W. S.

Well might he describe himself as being hard at work with his Lord of the Isles. The date of Ballantyne's letter to Miss Edgeworth (November 11), in which he mentions the third Canto as completed; that of the communication from Mr. Train (November 18), on which so much of Canto Fifth was grounded; and that of a note from Scott to Ballantyne (December 16, 1814), announcing that he had sent the last stanza of the poem: these dates, taken together, afford conclusive evidence of the fiery rapidity with which the three last Cantos of The Lord of the Isles were composed.

He writes, on the 25th December, to Constable that he "had corrected the last proofs, and was setting out for Abbotsford to refresh the machine." And in what did his refreshment of the machine consist? Besides having written within this year the greater part (almost, I believe, the whole) of the Life of Swift—Waverley—and The Lord of the Isles—he had given two essays to the Encyclopædia Supplement, and published, with an Introduction and notes, one of the most curious pieces of family history ever produced to the world, on which he labored with more than usual zeal and diligence, from his warm affection for the noble representative of its author. This inimitable Memorie of the Somervilles came out in October; and it was speedily followed by an annotated reprint of the strange old treatise, entitled "Rowland's letting off the humours of the blood in the head vein, 1611." He had also kept up his private correspondence on a scale which I believe never to have been exemplified in the case of any other

person who wrote continually for the press—except, perhaps, Voltaire; and, to say nothing of strictly professional duties, he had, as a vast heap of documents now before me proves, superintended from day to day, except during his Hebridean voyage, the still perplexed concerns of the Ballantynes, with a watchful assiduity that might have done credit to the most diligent of tradesmen. The "machine" might truly require "refreshment."

It was, as has been seen, on the 7th of November that Scott acknowledged the receipt of that communication from Mr. Train which included the story of the Galloway astrologer. There can be no doubt that this story recalled to his mind, if not the Durham ballad, the similar but more detailed corruption of it which he had heard told by his father's servant, John MacKinlay, in the days of George's Square and Green-breeks, and which he has preserved in the introduction to Guy Mannering, as the groundwork of that tale. It has been shown that the three last Cantos of The Lord of the Isles were written between the 11th of November and the 25th of December; and it is therefore scarcely to be supposed that any part of this novel had been penned before he thus talked of "refreshing the machine." It is quite certain that when James Ballantyne wrote to Miss Edgeworth on the 11th November, he could not have seen one page of Guy Mannering, since he in that letter announces that the new novel of his nameless friend would depict manners *more ancient* than those of 1745. And yet it is equally certain, that before The Lord of the Isles was *published*, which took place on the 18th of January, 1815, two volumes of Guy Mannering had been not only written and copied by an amanuensis, but printed.

Scott thus writes to Morritt, in sending him his copy of The Lord of the Isles:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., WORTHING.

Edinburgh, 19th January, 1815.

My dear Morritt,—I have been very foolishly putting off my writing until I should have time for a good long epistle; and it is astonishing what a number of trifles have interfered to prevent my commencing on a great scale. The last of these has been rather of an extraordinary kind, for your little friend Walter has chose to make himself the town talk, by taking what seemed to be the small-pox, despite of vaccination in infancy, and

inoculation with the variolous matter thereafter, which last I resorted to by way of making assurance double sure. The medical gentleman who attended him is of opinion that he *has* had the real small-pox, but it shall never be averred by me—for the catastrophe of Tom Thumb is enough to deter any thinking person from entering into a feud with the cows. Walter is quite well again, which was the principal matter I was interested in. We had very nearly been in a bad scrape, for I had fixed the Monday on which he sickened, to take him with me for the Christmas vacation to Abbotsford. It is probable that he would not have pleaded headache when there was such a party in view, especially as we were to shoot wild ducks one day together at Cauldshiels Loch; and what the consequence of such a journey might have been, God alone knows.

I am clear of The Lord of the Isles, and I trust you have your copy. It closes my poetic labors upon an extended scale: but I dare say I shall always be dabbling in rhyme until the *solve senescentem*. I have directed the copy to be sent to Portland Place. I want to shake myself free of Waverley, and accordingly have made a considerable exertion to finish an odd little tale within such time as will mystify the public, I trust—unless they suppose me to be Briareus. Two volumes are already printed, and the only persons in my confidence, W. Erskine and Ballantyne, are of opinion that it is much more interesting than Waverley. It is a tale of private life, and only varied by the perilous exploits of smugglers and excisemen. The success of Waverley has given me a spare hundred or two, which I have resolved to spend in London this spring, bringing up Charlotte and Sophia with me. I do not forget my English friends—but I fear they will forget me, unless I show face now and then. My correspondence gradually drops, as must happen when people do not meet; and I long to see Ellis, Heber, Gifford, and one or two more. I do not include Mrs. Morritt and you, because we are much nearer neighbors, and within a whoop and a holla in comparison. I think we should come up by sea, if I were not a little afraid of Charlotte being startled by the March winds—for our vacation begins 12th March.

You will have heard of poor Caberfae's death? What a pity it is he should have outlived his promising young representative. His state was truly pitiable—all his fine faculties lost in paralytic imbecility, and yet not so entirely so but that he perceived his deprivation as in a glass darkly. Sometimes he was fretful and anxious because he did not see his son;

sometimes he expostulated and complained that his boy had been allowed to die without his seeing him; and sometimes, in a less clouded state of intellect, he was sensible of, and lamented his loss in its full extent. These, indeed, are the "fears of the brave, and follies of the wise," which sadden and humiliate the lingering hours of prolonged existence. Our friend Lady Hood will now be Caberfae herself. She has the spirit of a chieftainess in every drop of her blood, but there are few situations in which the cleverest women are so apt to be imposed upon as in the management of landed property, more especially of an Highland estate. I do fear the accomplishment of the prophecy, that when there should be a deaf Caberfae, the house was to fall.

I am delighted to find Mrs. Morritt is recovering health and strength—better walking on the beach at Worthing than on the *plainstanes* of Prince's Street, for the weather is very severe here indeed. I trust Mrs. M. will, in her milder climate, lay in such a stock of health and strength as may enable you to face the north in Autumn. I have got the nicest crib for you possible, just about twelve feet square, and in the harmonious vicinity of a piggery. You never saw so minute an establishment,—but it has all that we wish for, and all our friends will care about; and we long to see you there. Charlotte sends the kindest remembrances to Mrs. Morritt.

As for politics, I have thought little about them lately; the high and exciting interest is so completely subsided, that the wine is upon the lees. As for America, we have so managed as to give her the appearance of triumph, and what is worse, encouragement to resume the war upon a more favorable opportunity. It was our business to have given them a fearful memento that the babe unborn should have remembered; but, having missed this opportunity, I believe that this country would submit with great reluctance to continue a war, for which there is really no specific object. As for the Continental monarchs, there is no guessing what the folly of Kings and Ministers may do; but God knows! would any of them look at home, enough is to be done which might strengthen and improve their dominions in a different manner than by mere extension. I trust Ministers will go out rather than be engaged in war again, upon any account. If France is wise (I have no fear that any superfluous feeling of humanity will stand in the way), she will send 10,000 of her most refractory troops to fight with

Christophe and the yellow fever in the Island of St. Domingo, and then I presume they may sit down in quiet at home.

But my sheet grows to an end, and so does the pleading of the learned counsel, who is thumping the poor bar as I write. He hems twice. Forward, sweet Orator Higgins!—at least till I sign myself, dear Morritt,

Yours most truly,
Walter Scott.

Guy Mannering was published on the 24th of February—that is, exactly two months after The Lord of the Isles was dismissed from the author's desk; and—making but a narrow allowance for the operations of the transcriber, printer, bookseller, etc., I think the dates I have gathered together confirm the accuracy of what I have often heard Scott say, that his second novel "was the work of six weeks at a Christmas." Such was his recipe "for refreshing the machine."

I am sorry to have to add, that this severity of labor, like the repetition of it which had such deplorable effects at a later period of his life, was the result of his anxiety to acquit himself of obligations arising out of his connection with the commercial speculations of the Ballantynes. The approach of Christmas, 1814, brought with it the prospect of such a recurrence of difficulties about the discount of John's bills, as to render it absolutely necessary that Scott should either apply again for assistance to his private friends, or task his literary powers with some such extravagant effort as has now been recorded. The great object, which was still to get rid of the heavy stock that had been accumulated before the storm of May, 1813, at length determined the chief partner to break up, as soon as possible, the concern which his own sanguine rashness, and the gross irregularities of his mercurial lieutenant, had so lamentably perplexed; but Constable, having already enabled the firm to avoid public exposure more than once, was not now, any more than when he made his contract for The Lord of the Isles, disposed to burden himself with an additional load of Weber's Beaumont and Fletcher, and other almost as unsalable books. While they were still in hopes of overcoming his scruples, it happened that a worthy friend of Scott's, the late Mr. Charles Erskine, his sheriff-substitute in Selkirkshire, had immediate occasion for a sum of money which he had some time before advanced, at Scott's personal request, to the firm of John

Ballantyne and Company; and on receiving his application, Scott wrote as follows:—

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE, BOOKSELLER,
EDINBURGH.

Abbotsford, October 14, 1814.

Dear John,—Charles Erskine wishes his money, as he has made a purchase of land. This is a new perplexity—for paid he must be forthwith—as his advance was friendly and confidential. I do not at this moment see how it is to be raised, but believe I shall find means. In the mean while, it will be necessary to propitiate the Leviathans of Paternoster Row. My idea is, that you or James should write to them to the following effect: That a novel is offered you by the Author of Waverley; that the author is desirous it should be out before Mr. Scott's poem, or as soon thereafter as possible; and that having resolved, as they are aware, to relinquish publishing, you only wish to avail yourselves of this offer to the extent of helping off some of your stock. I leave it to you to consider whether you should condescend on any particular work to offer them as bread to their butter—or on any particular amount—as £500. One thing must be provided, that Constable shares to the extent of the Scottish sale—they, however, managing. My reason for letting them have this scent of roast meat is, in case it should be necessary for us to apply to them to renew bills in December. Yours,

W. S.

Upon receiving this letter, John Ballantyne suggested to Scott that he should be allowed to offer, not only the new novel, but the next edition of Waverley, to Longman, Murray, or Blackwood—in the hope that the prospect of being let in to the profits of the already established favorite, would overcome effectually the hesitation of one or other of these houses about venturing on the encumbrance which Constable seemed to shrink from with such pertinacity; but upon this ingenious proposition Scott at once set his *veto*. He writes (October 17, 1814):—

Dear John,—

Your expedients are all wretched, as far as regards me. I never will give Constable, or any one, room to say I have broken my word with him in the

slightest degree. If I lose everything else, I will at least keep my honor unblemished; and I do hold myself bound in honor to offer him a Waverley, while he shall continue to comply with the conditions annexed. I intend the new novel to operate as something more permanent than a mere accommodation; and if I can but be permitted to do so, I will print it before it is sold to any one, and then propose, first to Constable and Longman—second, to Murray and Blackwood—to take the whole at such a rate as will give them one half of the fair profits; granting acceptances which, upon an edition of 3000, which we shall be quite authorized to print, will amount to an immediate command of £1500; and to this we may couple the condition, that they must take £500 or £600 of the old stock. I own I am not solicitous to deal with Constable alone, nor am I at all bound to offer him the new novel on any terms; but he, knowing of the intention, may expect to be treated with, at least, although it is possible we may not deal. However, if Murray and Blackwood were to come forward with any handsome proposal as to the stock, I should certainly have no objection to James's giving the pledge of the Author of W. for his next work. You are like the crane in the fable, when you boast of not having got anything from the business; you may thank God that it did not bite your head off. Would to God I were at let-a-be for let-a-be;—but you have done your best, and so must I.

Yours truly,
W. S.

Both Mr. Murray, and Longman's partner, Mr. Rees, were in Scotland about this time; and the former at least paid Scott a visit at Abbotsford. Of course, however, whatever propositions they may have made were received by one or other of the Ballantynes. The result was, that the house of Longman undertook Guy Mannering on the terms dictated by Scott—namely, granting bills for £1500, and relieving John Ballantyne and Company of stock to the extent of £500 more; and Constable's first information of the transaction was from Messrs. Longman themselves, when they, in compliance with Scott's wish, as signified in the letter last quoted, offered him a share in the edition which they had purchased. With one or two exceptions, originating in circumstances nearly similar, the house of Constable published all the subsequent series of the Waverley Novels.

I must not, however, forget that The Lord of the Isles was published a month before Guy Mannering. The poem was received with an interest

much heightened by the recent and growing success of the mysterious Waverley. Its appearance, so rapidly following that novel, and accompanied with the announcement of another prose tale, just about to be published, by the same hand, puzzled and confounded the mob of dulness. The more sagacious few said to themselves—Scott is making one serious effort more in his old line, and by this it will be determined whether he does or does not altogether renounce that for his new one.

The Edinburgh Review on The Lord of the Isles begins with,—

> "Here is another genuine Lay of the Great Minstrel, with all his characteristic faults, beauties, and irregularities. The same glow of coloring—the same energy of narration—the same amplitude of description are conspicuous—with the same still more characteristic disdain of puny graces and small originalities—the true poetical hardihood, in the strength of which he urges on his Pegasus fearlessly through dense and rare, and aiming gallantly at the great ends of truth and effect, stoops but rarely to study the means by which they are to be attained; avails himself without scruple of common sentiments and common images wherever they seem fitted for his purpose; and is original by the very boldness of his borrowing, and impressive by his disregard of epigram and emphasis."

The conclusion of the contemporaneous article in the Quarterly Review is as follows:—

> "The many beautiful passages which we have extracted from the poem, combined with the brief remarks subjoined to each canto, will sufficiently show, that although The Lord of the Isles is not likely to add very much to the reputation of Mr. Scott, yet this must be imputed rather to the greatness of his previous reputation, than to the absolute inferiority of the poem itself. Unfortunately, its merits are merely incidental, while its defects are mixed up with the very elements of the poem. But it is not in the power of Mr. Scott to write with tameness; be the subject what it will (and he could not easily have chosen one more impracticable), he impresses upon whatever scenes he describes so much movement and activity,—he infuses into his

> narrative such a flow of life, and, if we may so express ourselves, of animal spirits, that without satisfying the judgment, or moving the feelings, or elevating the mind, or even very greatly interesting the curiosity, he is able to seize upon, and, as it were, exhilarate the imagination of his readers, in a manner which is often truly unaccountable. This quality Mr. Scott possesses in an admirable degree; and supposing that he had no other object in view than to convince the world of the great poetical powers with which he is gifted, the poem before us would be quite sufficient for his purpose. But this is of very inferior importance to the public; what they want is a good poem, and, as experience has shown, this can only be constructed upon a solid foundation of taste, and judgment, and meditation."

These passages appear to me to condense the result of deliberate and candid reflection, and I have therefore quoted them. The most important remarks of either Essayist on the details of the plot and execution are annexed to the last edition of the poem; and show such an exact coincidence of judgment in two masters of their calling, as had not hitherto been exemplified in the professional criticism of his metrical romances. The defects which both point out are, I presume, but too completely explained by the preceding statement of the rapidity with which this, the last of those great performances, had been thrown off; nor do I see that either Reviewer has failed to do sufficient justice to the beauties which redeem the imperfections of The Lord of the Isles—except as regards the whole character of Bruce, its real hero, and the picture of the battle of Bannockburn, which, now that one can compare these works from something like the same point of view, does not appear to me in the slightest particular inferior to the Flodden of Marmion.

This poem is now, I believe, about as popular as Rokeby; but it has never reached the same station in general favor with the Lay, Marmion, or The Lady of the Lake. The first edition of 1800 copies in quarto was, however, rapidly disposed of, and the separate editions in 8vo, which ensued before his poetical works were collected, amounted together to 12,250 copies. This, in the case of almost any other author, would have been splendid success; but as compared with what he had previously

experienced, even in his Rokeby, and still more so as compared with the enormous circulation at once attained by Lord Byron's early tales, which were then following each other in almost breathless succession, the falling off was decided. One evening, some days after the poem had been published, Scott requested James Ballantyne to call on him, and the printer found him alone in his library, working at the third volume of Guy Mannering. I give what follows from Ballantyne's Memoranda:—

> "'Well, James,' he said, 'I have given you a week—what are people saying about The Lord of the Isles?' I hesitated a little, after the fashion of Gil Blas, but he speedily brought the matter to a point. 'Come,' he said, 'speak out, my good fellow; what has put it into your head to be on so much ceremony *with me* all of a sudden? But, I see how it is, the result is given in one word—*Disappointment*.' My silence admitted his inference to the fullest extent. His countenance certainly did look rather blank for a few seconds; in truth, he had been wholly unprepared for the event; for it is a singular fact, that before the public, or rather the booksellers, had given their decision, he no more knew whether he had written well or ill, than whether a die thrown out of a box was to turn up a size or an ace. However, he instantly resumed his spirits, and expressed his wonder rather that his poetical popularity should have lasted so long, than that it should have now at last given way. At length he said, with perfect cheerfulness, 'Well, well, James, so be it—but you know we must not droop, for we can't afford to give over. Since one line has failed, we must just stick to something else:'—and so he dismissed me and resumed his novel."

Ballantyne concludes the anecdote in these words:—

"He spoke thus, probably unaware of the undiscovered wonders then slumbering in his mind. Yet still he could not but have felt that the production of a few poems was nothing in comparison of what must be in reserve for him, for he was at this time scarcely more than forty. An evening or two after, I called again on him, and found on the table a copy of The Giaour, which he seemed to have been reading. Having an enthusiastic young lady in my house, I asked him if I might carry the book home with

me, but chancing to glance on the autograph blazon, '*To the Monarch of Parnassus from one of his subjects*,' instantly retracted my request, and said I had not observed Lord Byron's inscription before. 'What inscription?' said he; 'oh yes, I had forgot, but inscription or no inscription, you are equally welcome.' I again took it up, and he continued, 'James, Byron hits the mark where I don't even pretend to fledge my arrow.' At this time he had never seen Byron, but I knew he meant soon to be in London, when, no doubt, the mighty consummation of the meeting of the two bards would be accomplished; and I ventured to say that he must be looking forward to it with some interest. His countenance became fixed, and he answered impressively, 'Oh, of course.' In a minute or two afterwards he rose from his chair, paced the room at a very rapid rate, which was his practice in certain moods of mind, then made a dead halt, and bursting into an extravaganza of laughter, 'James,' cried he, 'I'll tell you what Byron should say to me when we are about to accost each other,—

"Art thou the man whom men famed Grizzle call?"

And then how germane would be my answer,—

"Art thou the still more famed Tom Thumb the small?"'

"This," says the printer, "is a specimen of his peculiar humor; it kept him full of mirth for the rest of the evening."

The whole of the scene strikes me as equally and delightfully characteristic; I may add, hardly more so of Scott than of his printer; for Ballantyne, with all his profound worship of his friend and benefactor, was in truth, even more than he, an undoubting acquiescer in "the decision of the public, or rather of the booksellers;" and among the many absurdities into which his reverence for the popedom of Paternoster Row led him, I never could but consider with special astonishment, the facility with which he seemed to have adopted the notion that the Byron of 1814 was really entitled to supplant Scott as a popular poet. Appreciating, as a man of his talents could hardly fail to do, the splendidly original glow and depth of Childe Harold, he always appeared to me quite blind to the fact, that in The Giaour, in The Bride of Abydos, in Parisina, and indeed in all his early serious narratives, Byron owed at least half his success to clever, though perhaps unconscious imitation of Scott, and no trivial share of the rest to the lavish use of

materials which Scott never employed, only because his genius was, from the beginning to the end of his career, under the guidance of high and chivalrous feelings of moral rectitude. All this Lord Byron himself seems to have felt most completely—as witness the whole sequence of his letters and diaries; and I think I see many symptoms that both the decision of the million, and its index, "the decision of the booksellers," tend the same way at present; but my business is to record, as far as my means may permit, the growth and structure of one great mind, and the effect which it produced upon the actual witnesses of its manifestations, not to obtrude the conjectures of a partial individual as to what rank posterity may assign it amongst or above contemporary rivals.

The following letter was addressed to Lord Byron on the receipt of that copy of The Giaour to which Mr. Ballantyne's Memorandum refers: I believe the inscription to Scott first appeared on the ninth edition of the poem:

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD BYRON, LONDON.

My Lord,—I have long owed you my best thanks for the uncommon pleasure I had in perusing your high-spirited Turkish fragment. But I should hardly have ventured to offer them, well knowing how you must be overwhelmed by volunteer intrusions of approbation (which always look as if the writer valued his opinion at fully more than it may be worth) unless I had to-day learned that I have an apology for entering upon the subject, from your having so kindly sent me a copy of the poem. I did not receive it sooner, owing to my absence from Edinburgh, where it had been lying quietly at my house in Castle Street; so that I must have seemed ungrateful, when, in truth, I was only modest. The last offence may be forgiven, as not common in a lawyer and poet; the first is said to be equal to the crime of witchcraft, but many an act of my life hath shown that I am no conjurer. If I were, however, ten times more modest than twenty years' attendance at the Bar renders probable, your flattering inscription would cure me of so unfashionable a malady. I might, indeed, lately have had a legal title to as much supremacy on Parnassus as can be conferred by a sign-manual, for I had a very flattering offer of the laurel; but as I felt obliged, for a great many reasons, to decline it, I am altogether unconscious of any other title to sit high upon the forked hill.

To return to The Giaour; I had lent my first edition, but the whole being imprinted in my memory, I had no difficulty in tracing the additions, which are great improvements, as I should have conjectured aforehand merely from their being additions. I hope your Lordship intends to proceed with this fascinating style of composition. You have access to a stream of sentiments, imagery, and manners, which are so little known to us as to convey all the interest of novelty, yet so endeared to us by the early perusal of Eastern tales, that we are not embarrassed with utter ignorance upon the subject. Vathek, bating some passages, would have made a charming subject for a tale. The conclusion is truly grand. I would give a great deal to know the originals from which it was drawn. Excuse this hasty scrawl, and believe me, my Lord, your Lordship's much obliged, very humble servant,

Walter Scott.

If January brought the writer of this letter "disappointment," there was abundant consolation in store for February, 1815. Guy Mannering was received with eager curiosity, and pronounced by acclamation fully worthy to share the honors of Waverley. The easy transparent flow of its style; the beautiful simplicity, and here and there the wild solemn magnificence of its sketches of scenery; the rapid, ever heightening interest of the narrative; the unaffected kindliness of feeling, the manly purity of thought, everywhere mingled with a gentle humor and a homely sagacity; but, above all, the rich variety and skilful contrast of characters and manners, at once fresh in fiction, and stamped with the unforgeable seal of truth and nature: these were charms that spoke to every heart and mind; and the few murmurs of pedantic criticism were lost in the voice of general delight, which never fails to welcome the invention that introduces to the sympathy of imagination a new group of immortal realities.

The earlier chapters of the present narrative have anticipated much of what I might, perhaps with better judgment, have reserved for this page. Taken together with the author's Introduction and Notes, those anecdotes of his days of youthful wandering must, however, have enabled the reader to trace almost as minutely as he could wish, the sources from which the novelist drew his materials, both of scenery and character; and the Durham Garland, which I print in the Appendix to this volume, exhausts my information concerning the humble groundwork on which fancy reared this delicious romance.

The first edition was, like that of Waverley, in three little volumes, with a humility of paper and printing which the meanest novelist would now disdain to imitate; the price a guinea. The 2000 copies of which it consisted were sold the day after the publication; and within three months came a second and a third impression, making together 5000 copies more. The sale, before those novels began to be collected, had reached nearly 10,000; and since then (to say nothing of foreign reprints of the text, and myriads of translations into every tongue of Europe) the domestic sale has amounted to 50,000.

On the rising of the Court of Session in March, Mr. and Mrs. Scott went by sea to London with their eldest girl, whom, being yet too young for general society, they again deposited with Joanna Baillie at Hampstead, while they themselves resumed, for two months, their usual quarters at kind Miss Dumergue's in Piccadilly. Six years had elapsed since Scott last appeared in the metropolis; and brilliant as his reception had then been, it was still more so on the present occasion. Scotland had been visited in the interim, chiefly from the interest excited by his writings, by crowds of the English nobility, most of whom had found introduction to his personal acquaintance—not a few had partaken of his hospitality at Ashestiel or Abbotsford. The generation among whom, I presume, a genius of this order feels his own influence with the proudest and sweetest confidence—on whose fresh minds and ears he has himself made the first indelible impressions—the generation with whose earliest romance of the heart and fancy his idea had been blended, was now grown to the full stature; the success of these recent novels, seen on every table, the subject of every conversation, had, with those who did not doubt their parentage, far more than counterweighed his declination, dubious after all, in the poetical balance; while the mystery that hung over them quickened the curiosity of the hesitating and conjecturing many—and the name on which ever and anon some new circumstance accumulated stronger suspicion, loomed larger through the haze in which he had thought fit to envelop it. Moreover, this was a period of high national pride and excitement.

"O who that shared them ever shall forget
The emotions of the spirit-rousing time,
When breathless in the mart the couriers met,
Early and late, at evening and at prime;

When the loud cannon and the merry chime
Hail'd news on news, as field on field was won,
When Hope, long doubtful, soared at length sublime,
And our glad eyes, awake as day begun,
Watch'd Joy's broad banner rise, to meet the rising sun?

"O these were hours, when thrilling joy repaid
A long, long course of darkness, doubts, and fears!
The heart-sick faintness of the hope delayed,
The waste, the woe, the bloodshed, and the tears
That tracked with terror twenty rolling years—
All was forgot in that blithe jubilee.
Her downcast eye even pale Affliction rears,
To sigh a thankful prayer amid the glee
That hailed the Despot's fall, and peace and liberty!"

At such a time, Prince and people were well prepared to hail him who, more perhaps than any other master of the pen, had contributed to sustain the spirit of England throughout the struggle, which was as yet supposed to have been terminated on the field of Toulouse. "Thank Heaven you are coming at last!" Joanna Baillie had written a month or two before. "Make up your mind to be stared at only a little less than the Czar of Muscovy, or old Blücher."

And now took place James Ballantyne's "mighty consummation of the meeting of the two bards." Scott's own account of it, in a letter to Mr. Moore, must have been seen by most of my readers; yet I think it ought also to find a place here. He says:—

"It was in the spring of 1815, that, chancing to be in London, I had the advantage of a personal introduction to Lord Byron. Report had prepared me to meet a man of peculiar habits and a quick temper, and I had some doubts whether we were likely to suit each other in society. I was most agreeably disappointed in this respect. I found Lord Byron in the highest degree courteous, and even kind. We met for an hour or two almost daily, in Mr. Murray's drawing-room, and found a great deal to say to each other. We also met frequently in parties and evening society, so that for about two months I had the advantage of a considerable intimacy with this distinguished individual. Our sentiments agreed a good deal, except upon the subjects of religion and politics, upon neither of which I was inclined to

believe that Lord Byron entertained very fixed opinions. I remember saying to him, that I really thought that if he lived a few years he would alter his sentiments. He answered, rather sharply, 'I suppose you are one of those who prophesy I shall turn Methodist.' I replied: 'No, I don't expect your conversion to be of such an ordinary kind. I would rather look to see you retreat upon the Catholic faith, and distinguish yourself by the austerity of your penances. The species of religion to which you must, or may, one day attach yourself, must exercise a strong power on the imagination.' He smiled gravely, and seemed to allow I might be right.

"On politics, he used sometimes to express a high strain of what is now called Liberalism; but it appeared to me that the pleasure it afforded him, as a vehicle for displaying his wit and satire against individuals in office, was at the bottom of this habit of thinking, rather than any real conviction of the political principles on which he talked. He was certainly proud of his rank and ancient family, and, in that respect, as much an aristocrat as was consistent with good sense and good breeding. Some disgusts, how adopted I know not, seemed to me to have given this peculiar and (as it appeared to me) contradictory cast of mind; but, at heart, I would have termed Byron a patrician on principle.

"Lord Byron's reading did not seem to me to have been very extensive, either in poetry or history. Having the advantage of him in that respect, and possessing a good competent share of such reading as is little read, I was sometimes able to put under his eye objects which had for him the interest of novelty. I remember particularly repeating to him the fine poem of Hardyknute, an imitation of the old Scottish ballad, with which he was so much affected, that some one who was in the same apartment asked me what I could possibly have been telling Byron by which he was so much agitated.

"I saw Byron for the last time in 1815, after I returned from France. He dined, or lunched, with me at Long's, in Bond Street. I never saw him so full of gayety and good-humor, to which the presence of Mr. Mathews, the comedian, added not a little. Poor Terry was also present. After one of the gayest parties I ever was present at, my fellow-traveller, Mr. Scott of Gala, and I set off for Scotland, and I never saw Lord Byron again. Several letters passed between us—one perhaps every half-year. Like the old heroes in Homer, we exchanged gifts. I gave Byron a beautiful dagger mounted with gold, which had been the property of the redoubted Elfi Bey. But I was to

play the part of Diomed in the Iliad, for Byron sent me, some time after, a large sepulchral vase of silver. It was full of dead men's bones, and had inscriptions on two sides of the base. One ran thus: 'The bones contained in this urn were found in certain ancient sepulchres within the long walls of Athens, in the month of February, 1811.' The other face bears the lines of Juvenal: '*Expende—quot libras in duce summo invenies?—Mors sola fatetur quantula sint hominum corpuscula.*'

"To these I have added a third inscription, in these words, 'The gift of Lord Byron to Walter Scott.' There was a letter with this vase, more valuable to me than the gift itself, from the kindness with which the donor expressed himself towards me. I left it naturally in the urn with the bones; but it is now missing. As the theft was not of a nature to be practised by a mere domestic, I am compelled to suspect the inhospitality of some individual of higher station, most gratuitously exercised certainly, since, after what I have here said, no one will probably choose to boast of possessing this literary curiosity.

"We had a good deal of laughing, I remember, on what the public might be supposed to think, or say, concerning the gloomy and ominous nature of our mutual gifts.

"I think I can add little more to my recollections of Byron. He was often melancholy—almost gloomy. When I observed him in this humor, I used either to wait till it went off of its own accord, or till some natural and easy mode occurred of leading him into conversation, when the shadows almost always left his countenance, like the mist rising from a landscape. In conversation he was very animated.

"I met with him very frequently in society; our mutual acquaintances doing me the honor to think that he liked to meet with me. Some very agreeable parties I can recollect—particularly one at Sir George Beaumont's—where the amiable landlord had assembled some persons distinguished for talent. Of these I need only mention the late Sir Humphry Davy, whose talents for literature were as remarkable as his empire over science. Mr. Richard Sharpe and Mr. Rogers were also present.

"I think I also remarked in Byron's temper starts of suspicion, when he seemed to pause and consider whether there had not been a secret, and perhaps offensive, meaning in something casually said to him. In this case, I also judged it best to let his mind, like a troubled spring, work itself clear, which it did in a minute or two. I was considerably older, you will recollect,

than my noble friend, and had no reason to fear his misconstruing my sentiments towards him, nor had I ever the slightest reason to doubt that they were kindly returned on his part. If I had occasion to be mortified by the display of genius which threw into the shade such pretensions as I was then supposed to possess, I might console myself that, in my own case, the materials of mental happiness had been mingled in a greater proportion.

"I rummage my brains in vain for what often rushes into my head unbidden—little traits and sayings which recall his looks, manner, tone, and gestures; and I have always continued to think that a crisis of life was arrived, in which a new career of fame was opened to him, and that had he been permitted to start upon it, he would have obliterated the memory of such parts of his life as friends would wish to forget."

I have nothing to add to this interesting passage, except that Joanna Baillie's tragedy of The Family Legend being performed at one of the theatres during Scott's stay in town, Lord Byron accompanied the authoress and Mr. and Mrs. Scott to witness the representation; and that the vase with the Attic bones appears to have been sent to Scott very soon after his arrival in London, not, as Mr. Moore had gathered from the hasty diction of his Reminiscences, at some "subsequent period of their acquaintance." This is sufficiently proved by the following note:—

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD BYRON, ETC., ETC.

PICCADILLY, MONDAY.

My dear Lord,—I am not a little ashamed of the value of the shrine in which your Lordship has enclosed the Attic relics; but were it yet more costly, the circumstance could not add value to it in my estimation, when considered as a pledge of your Lordship's regard and friendship. The principal pleasure which I have derived from my connection with literature has been the access which it has given me to those who are distinguished by talents and accomplishments; and, standing so high as your Lordship justly does in that rank, my satisfaction in making your acquaintance has been proportionally great. It is one of those wishes which, after having been long and earnestly entertained, I have found completely gratified upon becoming personally known to you; and I trust you will permit me to profit by it frequently, during my stay in town. I am, my dear Lord, your truly obliged and faithful

Walter Scott.

It was also in the spring of 1815 that Scott had, for the first time, the honor of being presented to the Prince Regent. His Royal Highness had (as has been seen from a letter to Joanna Baillie, already quoted) signified, more than a year before this time, his wish that the poet should revisit London—and, on reading his Edinburgh Address in particular, he said to Mr. Dundas, that "Walter Scott's charming behavior about the laureateship had made him doubly desirous of seeing him at Carlton House." More lately, on receiving a copy of The Lord of the Isles, his Royal Highness's librarian had been commanded to write to him in these terms:—

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., EDINBURGH.

Carlton House, January 19, 1815.

My dear Sir,—You are deservedly so great a favorite with the Prince Regent, that his librarian is not only directed to return you the thanks of his Royal Highness for your valuable present, but to inform you that the Prince Regent particularly wishes to see you whenever you come to London; and desires you will always, when you are there, come into his library whenever you please. Believe me always, with sincerity, one of your warmest admirers, and most obliged friends,

J. S. Clarke.

On hearing from Mr. Croker (then Secretary to the Admiralty) that Scott was to be in town by the middle of March, the Prince said, "Let me know when he comes, and I'll get up a snug little dinner that will suit him;" and, after he had been presented and graciously received at the levee, he was invited to dinner accordingly, through his excellent friend Mr. Adam (now Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court in Scotland), who at that time held a confidential office in the royal household. The Regent had consulted with Mr. Adam also as to the composition of the party. "Let us have," said he, "just a few friends of his own—and the more Scotch the better;" and both the Chief Commissioner and Mr. Croker assure me that the party was the most interesting and agreeable one in their recollection. It comprised, I believe, the Duke of York—the late Duke of Gordon (then Marquis of Huntly)—the Marquis of Hertford (then Lord Yarmouth)—the Earl of Fife

—and Scott's early friend Lord Melville. "The Prince and Scott," says Mr. Croker, "were the two most brilliant story-tellers in their several ways, that I have ever happened to meet; they were both aware of their *forte*, and both exerted themselves that evening with delightful effect. On going home, I really could not decide which of them had shone the most. The Regent was enchanted with Scott, as Scott with him; and on all his subsequent visits to London, he was a frequent guest at the royal table." The Lord Chief Commissioner remembers that the Prince was particularly delighted with the poet's anecdotes of the old Scotch judges and lawyers, which his Royal Highness sometimes *capped* by ludicrous traits of certain ermined sages of his own acquaintance. Scott told, among others, a story, which he was fond of telling; and the commentary of his Royal Highness on hearing it amused Scott, who often mentioned it afterwards. The anecdote is this: A certain Judge, whenever he went on a particular circuit, was in the habit of visiting a gentleman of good fortune in the neighborhood of one of the assize towns, and staying at least one night, which, being both of them ardent chess-players, they usually concluded with their favorite game. One Spring circuit the battle was not decided at daybreak, so the Judge said, "Weel, Donald, I must e'en come back this gate in the harvest, and let the game lie ower for the present;" and back he came in October, but not to his old friend's hospitable house; for that gentleman had, in the interim, been apprehended on a capital charge (of forgery), and his name stood on the *Porteous Roll*, or list of those who were about to be tried under his former guest's auspices. The laird was indicted and tried accordingly, and the jury returned a verdict of *guilty*. The Judge forthwith put on his cocked hat (which answers to the black cap in England), and pronounced the sentence of the law in the usual terms: "To be hanged by the neck until you be dead; and may the Lord have mercy upon your unhappy soul!" Having concluded this awful formula in his most sonorous cadence, the Judge, dismounting his formidable beaver, gave a familiar nod to his unfortunate acquaintance, and said to him in a sort of chuckling whisper, "And now, Donald, my man, I think I've checkmated you for ance." The Regent laughed heartily at this specimen of judicial humor; and "I' faith, Walter," said he, "this old big-wig seems to have taken things as coolly as my tyrannical self. Don't you remember Tom Moore's description of me at breakfast,—

'The table spread with tea and toast,
Death-warrants and the Morning Post?'"

Towards midnight, the Prince called for "a bumper, with all the honors, to the Author of Waverley," and looked significantly, as he was charging his own glass, to Scott. Scott seemed somewhat puzzled for a moment, but instantly recovering himself, and filling his glass to the brim, said, "Your Royal Highness looks as if you thought I had some claim to the honors of this toast. I have no such pretensions, but shall take good care that the real Simon Pure hears of the high compliment that has now been paid him." He then drank off his claret, and joined in the cheering, which the Prince himself timed. But before the company could resume their seats, his Royal Highness exclaimed, "Another of the same, if you please, to the Author of Marmion—and now, Walter, my man, I have checkmated you for *ance*." The second bumper was followed by cheers still more prolonged: and Scott then rose and returned thanks in a short address, which struck the Lord Chief Commissioner as "alike grave and graceful." This story has been circulated in a very perverted shape. I now give it on the authority of my venerated friend. He adds, that having occasion, the day after, to call on the Duke of York, his Royal Highness said to him: "Upon my word, Adam, my brother went rather too near the wind about Waverley—but nobody could have turned the thing more prettily than Walter Scott did—and upon the whole I never had better fun."

The Regent, as was his custom with those he most delighted to honor, uniformly addressed the poet, even at their first dinner, by his Christian name, "Walter."

Before he left town, he again dined at Carlton House, when the party was a still smaller one than before, and the merriment, if possible, still more free. That nothing might be wanting, the Prince sung several capital songs in the course of that evening—as witness the lines in Sultan Serendib:—

"I love a Prince will bid the bottle pass,
Exchanging with his subjects glance and glass,
In fitting time can, gayest of the gay,
Keep up the jest and mingle in the lay.
Such Monarchs best our freeborn humor suit,
But despots must be stately, stern, and mute."

Before he returned to Edinburgh, on the 22d of May, the Regent sent him a gold snuff-box, set in brilliants, with a medallion of his Royal Highness's head on the lid, "as a testimony" (writes Mr. Adam, in transmitting it) "of the high opinion his Royal Highness entertains of your genius and merit."

I transcribe what follows from James Ballantyne's *Memoranda*:—

> "After Mr. Scott's first interview with his Sovereign, one or two intimate friends took the liberty of inquiring, what judgment he had formed of the Regent's talents? He declined giving any definite answer—but repeated that 'he was the first gentleman he had seen—certainly the first *English* gentleman of his day; —there was something about him which, independently of the *prestige*, the "divinity, which hedges a King," marked him as standing entirely by himself; but as to his abilities, spoken of as distinct from his charming manners, how could any one form a fair judgment of that man who introduced whatever subject he chose, discussed it just as long as he chose, and dismissed it when he chose?'"

Ballantyne adds:—

> "What I have now to say is more important, not only in itself, but as it will enable you to give a final contradiction to an injurious report which has been in circulation; namely, that the Regent asked him as to the authorship of Waverley, and received a distinct and solemn denial. I took the bold freedom of requesting to know *from him* whether his Royal Highness had questioned him on that subject, and what had been his answer. He glanced at me with a look of mild surprise, and said, 'What answer I might have made to such a question, put to me by my Sovereign, perhaps I do not, or rather perhaps I do know; but I was never put to the test. He is far too well-bred a man ever to put so ill-bred a question.'"

The account I have already given of the convivial scene alluded to would probably have been sufficient; but it can do no harm to place Ballantyne's, or rather Scott's own testimony, also on record.

I ought not to have omitted, that during Scott's residence in London, in April, 1815, he lost one of the English friends, to a meeting with whom he had looked forward with the highest pleasure. Mr. George Ellis died on the 15th of that month, at his seat of Sunning Hill. This threw a cloud over what would otherwise have been a period of unmixed enjoyment. Mr. Canning penned the epitaph for that dearest of his friends, but he submitted it to Scott's consideration before it was engraved.

Chapter XXXV

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1815.

Goethe expressed, I fancy, a very general sentiment, when he said, that to him the great charm and value of my friend's Life of Buonaparte seemed quite independent of the question of its accuracy as to small details; that he turned eagerly to the book, not to find dates sifted, and countermarches analyzed, but to contemplate what could not but be a true record of the broad impressions made on the mind of Scott by the marvellous revolutions of his own time in their progress. Feeling how justly in the main that work has preserved those impressions, though gracefully softened and sobered in the retrospect of peaceful and more advanced years, I the less regret that I have it not in my power to quote any letters of his touching the reappearance of Napoleon on the soil of France—the immortal march from Cannes—the reign of the Hundred Days, and the preparations for another struggle, which fixed the gaze of Europe in May, 1815.

That he should have been among the first civilians who hurried over to see the field of Waterloo, and hear English bugles sound about the walls of Paris, could have surprised none who knew the lively concern he had always taken in the military efforts of his countrymen, and the career of the illustrious captain, who had taught them to reëstablish the renown of Agincourt and Blenheim,—

"Victor of Assaye's Eastern plain,
Victor of all the fields of Spain."

I had often heard him say, however, that his determination was, if not fixed, much quickened by a letter of an old acquaintance of his, who had, on the arrival of the news of the 18th of June, instantly repaired to Brussels, to tender his professional skill in aid of the overburdened medical staff of the conqueror's army. When, therefore, I found the letter in question preserved among Scott's papers, I perused it with a peculiar interest; and I now venture, with the writer's permission, to present it to the reader. It was addressed by Sir Charles Bell to his brother, an eminent barrister in Edinburgh, who transmitted it to Scott. "When I read it," said he, "it set me on fire." The marriage of Miss Maclean Clephane of Torloisk with the Earl Compton (now Marquis of Northampton), which took place on the 24th of July, was in fact the only cause why he did not leave Scotland instantly; for that dear young friend had chosen Scott for her guardian, and on him accordingly devolved the chief care of the arrangements on this occasion. The extract sent to him by Mr. George Joseph Bell is as follows:—

"Brussels, 2d July, 1815.

"This country, the finest in the world, has been of late quite out of our minds. I did not, in any degree, anticipate the pleasure I should enjoy, the admiration forced from me, on coming into one of these antique towns, or in journeying through the rich garden. Can you recollect the time when there were gentlemen meeting at the Cross of Edinburgh, or those whom we thought such? They are all collected here. You see the very men, with their scraggy necks sticking out of the collars of their old-fashioned square-skirted coats—their canes—their cocked-hats; and, when they meet, the formal bow, the hat off to the ground, and the powder flying in the wind. I could divert you with the odd resemblances of the Scottish faces among the peasants, too—but I noted *them* at the time with my pencil, and I write to you only of things that you won't find in my pocket-book.

"I have just returned from seeing the French wounded received in their hospital; and could you see them laid out naked, or almost so—100 in a row of low beds on the ground—though wounded, exhausted, beaten, you would still conclude with me that these were men capable of marching unopposed from the west of Europe to the east of Asia. Strong, thickset, hardy veterans, brave spirits and unsubdued, as they cast their wild glance upon you,—their black eyes and brown cheeks finely contrasted with the fresh sheets,—you

would much admire their capacity of adaptation. These fellows are brought from the field after lying many days on the ground; many dying—many in the agony—many miserably racked with pain and spasms; and the next mimics his fellow, and gives it a tune,—*Aha, vous chantez bien!* How they are wounded you will see in my notes. But I must not have you to lose the present impression on me of the formidable nature of these fellows as exemplars of the breed in France. It is a forced praise; for from all I have seen, and all I have heard of their fierceness, cruelty, and bloodthirstiness, I cannot convey to you my detestation of this race of trained banditti. By what means they are to be kept in subjection until other habits come upon them, I know not; but I am convinced that these men cannot be left to the bent of their propensities.

"This superb city is now ornamented with the finest groups of armed men that the most romantic fancy could dream of. I was struck with the words of a friend—E. 'I saw,' said he, '*that* man returning from the field on the 16th.' (This was a Brunswicker, of the Black or Death Hussars.) 'He was wounded, and had had his arm amputated on the field. He was among the first that came in. He rode straight and stark upon his horse—the bloody clouts about his stump—pale as death, but upright, with a stern, fixed expression of feature, as if loath to lose his revenge.' These troops are very remarkable in their fine military appearance; their dark and ominous dress sets off to advantage their strong, manly, northern features and white mustachios; and there is something more than commonly impressive about the whole effect.

"This is the second Sunday after the battle, and many are not yet dressed. There are 20,000 wounded in this town, besides those in the hospitals, and the many in the other towns;—only 3000 prisoners; 80,000, they say, killed and wounded on both sides."

I think it not wonderful that this extract should have set Scott's imagination effectually on fire; that he should have grasped at the idea of seeing probably the last shadows of real warfare that his own age would afford; or that some parts of the great surgeon's simple phraseology are reproduced, almost verbatim, in the first of Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk. No sooner was Scott's purpose known, than some of his young neighbors in the country proposed to join his excursion; and, in company with three of them, namely,

his kinsman, John Scott of Gala, Alexander Pringle, the younger, of Whytbank (now M. P. for Selkirkshire), and Robert Bruce, advocate (now Sheriff of Argyle), he left Edinburgh for the south, at 5. A. M. on the 27th of July.

They travelled by the stage-coach, and took the route of Hull and Lincoln to Cambridge; for Gala and Whytbank, being both members of that university, were anxious to seize this opportunity of revisiting it themselves, and showing its beautiful architecture to their friend. After this wish had been gratified, they proceeded to Harwich, and thence, on the 3d of August, took ship for Helvoetsluys.

> "The weather was beautiful," says Gala, "so we all went outside the coach from Cambridge to Harwich. At starting, there was a general complaint of thirst, the consequence of some experiments overnight on the celebrated *bishop* of my *Alma Mater*; our friend, however, was in great glee, and never was a merrier *basket* than he made it all the morning. He had cautioned us, on leaving Edinburgh, never to *name names* in such situations, and our adherence to this rule was rewarded by some amusing incidents. For example, as we entered the town where we were to dine, a heavy-looking man, who was to stop there, took occasion to thank Scott for the pleasure his anecdotes had afforded him: 'You have a good memory, sir,' said he; 'mayhap, now, you sometimes write down what you hear or be a-reading about?' He answered, very gravely, that he did occasionally put down a *few* notes, if anything struck him particularly. In the afternoon, it happened that he sat on the box, while the rest of us were behind him. Here, by degrees, he became quite absorbed in his own reflections. He frequently repeated to himself, or *composed* perhaps, for a good while, and often smiled or raised his hand, seeming completely occupied and amused. His neighbor, a vastly scientific and rather grave professor, in a smooth drab Benjamin and broad-brimmed beaver, cast many a curious sidelong glance at him, evidently suspecting that all was not right with the upper story, but preserved perfect politeness. The poet was, however, discovered by the captain of the vessel in which we crossed the

Channel;—and a perilous passage it was, chiefly in consequence of the unceasing tumblers in which this worthy kept drinking his health."

Before leaving Edinburgh, Scott had settled in his mind the plan of Paul's Letters; for on that same day, his agent, John Ballantyne, addressed the following letter, from his marine villa near Newhaven:—

TO MESSRS. CONSTABLE & CO.

Trinity, 27th July, 1815.

Dear Sirs,—Mr. Scott left town to-day for the Continent. He proposes writing from thence a series of letters on a peculiar plan, varied in matter and style, and to different supposititious correspondents.

The work is to form a demy 8vo volume of twenty-two sheets, to sell at 12s. It is to be begun immediately on his arrival in France, and to be published, if possible, the second week of September, when he proposes to return.

We print 3000 of this, and I am empowered to offer you one third of the edition, Messrs. Longman & Co. and Mr. Murray having each the same share: the terms, twelve months' acceptance for paper and print, and half profits at six months, granted now as under. The over copies will pay the charge for advertising, I am, etc.,

John Ballantyne.

	Charge—			
22	sheets printing,	—	£3 15 0	£82 10 0
145	reams demy,	—	1 10 0	217 10 0
				£300 0 0

3000 at 8s.	£1200 0 0	

Cost, 300 0 0

£900 0 0 profit—One half is £450.

Before Scott reached Harwich, he knew that this offer had been accepted without hesitation; and thenceforth, accordingly, he threw his daily letters to his wife into the form of communications meant for an imaginary group, consisting of a spinster sister, a statistical laird, a rural clergyman of the Presbyterian Kirk, and a brother, a veteran officer on half-pay. The rank of this last personage corresponded, however, exactly with that of his own elder brother, John Scott, who also, like the Major of the book, had served in the Duke of York's unfortunate campaign of 1797; the sister is only a slender disguise for his aunt Christian Rutherford, already often mentioned; Lord Somerville, long President of the Board of Agriculture, was Paul's laird; and the shrewd and unbigoted Dr. Douglas of Galashiels was his "minister of the gospel." These epistles, after having been devoured by the little circle at Abbotsford, were transmitted to Major John Scott, his mother, and Miss Rutherford, in Edinburgh; from their hands they passed to those of James Ballantyne and Mr. Erskine, both of whom assured me that the copy ultimately sent to the press consisted, in great part, of the identical sheets that had successively reached Melrose through the post. The rest had of course been, as Ballantyne expresses it, "somewhat cobbled;" but, on the whole, Paul's Letters are to be considered as a true and faithful journal of this expedition; insomuch, that I might perhaps content myself, in this place, with a simple reference to that delightful volume. He found time, however, to write letters during his absence from Britain, to some others of his friends; and a specimen or two of these may interest the reader. I have also gathered, from the companions of the journey, a few more particulars, which Scott's modesty withheld him from recording; and some trivial circumstances which occur to me, from recollection of his own conversation, may also be acceptable.

But I hope that, if the reader has not perused Paul's Letters recently, he will refresh his memory, before he proceeds further, by bestowing an hour on that genuine fragment of the author's autobiography. He is now, unless he had the advantage of Scott's personal familiarity, much better acquainted with the man than he could have been before he took up this compilation of his private correspondence—and especially before he perused the full diary

of the lighthouse yacht in 1814; and a thousand little turns and circumstances which may have, when he originally read the book, passed lightly before his eye, will now, I venture to say, possess a warm and vivid interest, as inimitably characteristic of a departed friend. The kindest of husbands and fathers never portrayed himself with more unaffected truth than in this vain effort, if such he really fancied he was making, to sustain the character of "a cross old bachelor." The whole man, just as he was, breathes in every line, with all his compassionate and benevolent sympathy of heart, all his sharpness of observation, and sober shrewdness of reflection; all his enthusiasm for nature, for country life, for simple manners and simple pleasures, mixed up with an equally glowing enthusiasm, at which many may smile, for the tiniest relics of feudal antiquity—and last, not least, a pulse of physical rapture for the "circumstance of war," which bears witness to the blood of *Boltfoot* and *Fire-the-Braes*.

At Brussels, Scott found the small English garrison left there in command of Major-General Sir Frederick Adam, the son of his highly valued friend, the Lord Chief Commissioner. Sir Frederick had been wounded at Waterloo, and could not as yet mount on horseback; but one of his aides-de-camp, Captain Campbell, escorted Scott and his party to the field of battle, on which occasion they were also accompanied by another old acquaintance of his, Major Pryse Gordon, who being then on half-pay, happened to be domesticated with his family at Brussels. Major Gordon has since published two lively volumes of Personal Memoirs; and Gala bears witness to the fidelity of certain reminiscences of Scott at Brussels and Waterloo, which occupy one of the chapters of this work. I shall, therefore, extract the passage:—

"Sir Walter Scott accepted my services to conduct him to Waterloo: the General's aide-de-camp was also of the party. He made no secret of his having undertaken to write something on the battle; and perhaps he took the greater interest on this account in everything that he saw. Besides, he had never seen the field of such a conflict; and never having been before on the Continent, it was all new to his comprehensive mind. The day was beautiful; and I had the precaution to send out a couple of saddle-horses, that he might not be fatigued in walking over the fields, which had been recently ploughed up. In our rounds we fell in with Monsieur de Costar, with whom he got into conversation. This man had attracted so much notice

by his pretended story of being about the person of Napoleon, that he was of too much importance to be passed by: I did not, indeed, know as much of this fellow's charlatanism at that time as afterwards, when I saw him confronted with a blacksmith of La Belle Alliance, who had been his companion in a hiding-place ten miles from the field during the whole day; a fact which he could not deny. But he had got up a tale so plausible and so profitable, that he could afford to bestow hush-money on the companion of his flight, so that the imposition was but little known; and strangers continued to be gulled. He had picked up a good deal of information about the positions and details of the battle; and, being naturally a sagacious Walloon, and speaking French pretty fluently, he became the favorite cicerone, and every lie he told was taken for gospel. Year after year, until his death in 1824, he continued his popularity, and raised the price of his rounds from a couple of francs to five; besides as much for the hire of a horse, his own property; for he pretended that the fatigue of walking so many hours was beyond his powers. It has been said that in this way he realized every summer a couple of hundred Napoleons.

"When Sir Walter had examined every point of defence and attack, we adjourned to the 'Original Duke of Wellington' at Waterloo, to lunch after the fatigues of the ride. Here he had a crowded levee of peasants, and collected a great many trophies, from cuirasses down to buttons and bullets. He picked up himself many little relics, and was fortunate in purchasing a grand cross of the Legion of Honor. But the most precious memorial was presented to him by my wife—a French soldier's book, well stained with blood, and containing some songs popular in the French army, which he found so interesting that he introduced versions of them in his Paul's Letters; of which, he did me the honor to send me a copy, with a letter, saying, 'that he considered my wife's gift as the most valuable of all his Waterloo relics.'

"On our return from the field, he kindly passed the evening with us, and a few friends whom we invited to meet him. He charmed us with his delightful conversation, and was in great spirits from the agreeable day he had passed; and with great good-humor promised to write a stanza in my wife's album. On the following morning he fulfilled his promise by contributing some beautiful verses on Hougomont. I put him into my little library to prevent interruption, as a great many persons had paraded in the

Parc opposite my window to get a peep of the celebrated man, many having dogged him from his hotel.

"Brussels affords but little worthy of the notice of such a traveller as the Author of Waverley; but he greatly admired the splendid tower of the Maison de Ville, and the ancient sculpture and style of architecture of the buildings which surround the Grand Place.

"He told us, with great humor, a laughable incident which had occurred to him at Antwerp. The morning after his arrival at that city from Holland, he started at an early hour to visit the tomb of Rubens in the church of St. Jacques, before his party were up. After wandering about for some time, without finding the object he had in view, he determined to make inquiry, and observing a person stalking about, he addressed him in his best French; but the stranger, pulling off his hat, very respectfully replied in the pure Highland accent, 'I'm vary sorry, sir, but I canna speak onything besides English.'—'This is very unlucky indeed, Donald,' said Sir Walter, 'but we must help one another; for, to tell you the truth, I'm not good at any other tongue but the English, or rather, the Scotch.'—'Oh, sir, maybe,' replied the Highlander, 'you are a countryman, and ken my maister Captain Cameron of the 79th, and could tell me whare he lodges. I'm just cum in, sir, frae a place they ca' *Machlin*, and ha' forgotten the name of the captain's quarters; it was something like the *Laaborer*.'—'I can, I think, help you with this, my friend,' rejoined Sir Walter. 'There is an inn just opposite to you' (pointing to the *Hôtel du Grand Laboureur*): 'I dare say that will be the captain's quarters;' and it was so. I cannot do justice to the humor with which Sir Walter recounted this dialogue."

The following is the letter which Scott addressed to the Duke of Buccleuch immediately after seeing the field of Waterloo; and it may amuse the reader to compare it with Major Gordon's chapter, and with the writer's own fuller, and, of course, "cobbled" detail, in the pages of Paul:—

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC.

My Dear Lord Duke,—I promised to let you hear of my wanderings, however unimportant; and have now the pleasure of informing your Grace that I am at this present time an inhabitant of the Premier Hôtel de Cambrai, after having been about a week upon the Continent. We landed at Helvoet,

and proceeded to Brussels, by Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp, both of which are very strongly fortified. The ravages of war are little remarked in a country so rich by nature; but everything seems at present stationary, or rather retrograde, where capital is required. The châteaux are deserted, and going to decay; no new houses are built, and those of older date are passing rapidly into the possession of a class inferior to those for whom we must suppose them to have been built. Even the old gentlewoman of Babylon has lost much of her splendor, and her robes and pomp are of a description far subordinate to the costume of her more magnificent days. The dresses of the priests were worn and shabby, both at Antwerp and Brussels, and reminded me of the decayed wardrobe of a bankrupt theatre: yet, though the gentry and priesthood have suffered, the eternal bounty of nature has protected the lower ranks against much distress. The unexampled fertility of the soil gives them all, and more than they want; and could they but sell the grain which they raise in the Netherlands, nothing else would be wanting to render them the richest people (common people, that is to say) in the world.

On Wednesday last, I rode over the field of Waterloo, now forever consecrated to immortality. The more ghastly tokens of the carnage are now removed, the bodies both of men and horses being either burned or buried; but all the ground is still torn with the shot and shells, and covered with cartridges, old hats, and shoes, and various relics of the fray which the peasants have not thought worth removing. Besides, at Waterloo and all the hamlets in the vicinage, there is a mart established for cuirasses; for the eagles worn by the imperial guard on their caps; for casques, swords, carabines, and similar articles. I have bought two handsome cuirasses, and intend them, one for Bowhill, and one for Abbotsford, if I can get them safe over, which Major Pryse Gordon has promised to manage for me. I have also, for your Grace, one of the little memorandum-books, which I picked up on the field, in which every French soldier was obliged to enter his receipts and expenditure, his services, and even his punishments. The field was covered with fragments of these records. I also got a good MS. collection of French songs, probably the work of some young officer, and a croix of the Legion of Honor. I enclose, under another cover, a sketch of the battle, made at Brussels. It is not, I understand, strictly accurate; but sufficiently so to give a good notion of what took place. In fact, it would require twenty separate plans to give an idea of the battle at its various

stages. The front, upon which the armies engaged, does not exceed a long mile. Our line, indeed, originally extended half a mile farther towards the village of Brain-la-Leude; but as the French indicated no disposition to attack in that direction, the troops which occupied this space were gradually concentrated by Lord Wellington, and made to advance till they had reached Hougomont—a sort of château, with a garden and wood attached to it, which was powerfully and effectually maintained by the Guards during the action. This place was particularly interesting. It was a quiet-looking gentleman's house, which had been burnt by the French shells. The defenders, burnt out of the house itself, betook themselves to the little garden, where, breaking loopholes through the brick walls, they kept up a most destructive fire on the assailants, who had possessed themselves of a little wood which surrounds the villa on one side. In this spot vast numbers had fallen; and, being hastily buried, the smell is most offensive at this moment. Indeed, I felt the same annoyance in many parts of the field; and, did I live near the spot, I should be anxious about the diseases which this steaming carnage might occasion. The rest of the ground, excepting this château, and a farmhouse called La Hay Sainte, early taken, and long held, by the French, because it was too close under the brow of the descent on which our artillery was placed to admit of the pieces being depressed so as to play into it,—the rest of the ground, I say, is quite open, and lies between two ridges, one of which (Mont St. Jean) was constantly occupied by the English; the other, upon which is the farm of La Belle Alliance, was the position of the French. The slopes between are gentle and varied; the ground everywhere practicable for cavalry, as was well experienced on that memorable day. The cuirassiers, despite their arms of proof, were quite inferior to our heavy dragoons. The meeting of the two bodies occasioned a noise, not unaptly compared to the tinkering and hammering of a smith's shop. Generally the cuirassiers came on stooping their heads very low, and giving point; the British frequently struck away their casques while they were in this position, and then laid at the bare head. Officers and soldiers all fought hand to hand without distinction; and many of the former owed their life to dexterity at their weapon, and personal strength of body. Shaw, the milling Life-Guardsman, whom your Grace may remember among the champions of The Fancy, maintained the honor of the fist, and killed or disabled upwards of twenty Frenchmen with his single arm, until he was killed by the assault of numbers. At one place, where there is a precipitous

sand or gravel pit, the heavy English cavalry drove many of the cuirassiers over pell-mell, and followed over themselves, like fox-hunters. The conduct of the infantry and artillery was equally, or, if possible, more distinguished, and it was all fully necessary; for, besides that our army was much outnumbered, a great part of the sum-total were foreigners. Of these, the Brunswickers and Hanoverians behaved very well; the Belgians but sorrily enough. On one occasion, when a Belgic regiment fairly ran off, Lord Wellington rode up to them, and said, "My lads, you must be a little blown; come, do take your breath for a moment, and then we'll go back, and try if we can do a little better;" and he actually carried them back to the charge. He was, indeed, upon that day, everywhere, and the soul of everything; nor could less than his personal endeavors have supported the spirits of the men through a contest so long, so desperate, and so unequal. At his last attack, Buonaparte brought up 15,000 of his Guard, who had never drawn trigger during the day. It was upon their failure that his hopes abandoned him.

I spoke long with a shrewd Flemish peasant, called John de Costar, whom he had seized upon as his guide, and who remained beside him the whole day, and afterwards accompanied him in his flight as far as Charleroi. Your Grace may be sure that I interrogated Mynheer very closely about what he heard and saw. He guided me to the spot where Buonaparte remained during the latter part of the action. It was in the highway from Brussels to Charleroi, where it runs between two high banks, on each of which was a French battery. He was pretty well sheltered from the English fire; and, though many bullets flew over his head, neither he nor any of his suite were touched. His other stations, during that day, were still more remote from all danger. The story of his having an observatory erected for him is a mistake. There is such a thing, and he repaired to it during the action; but it was built or erected some months before, for the purpose of a trigonometrical survey of the country, by the King of the Netherlands. Bony's last position was nearly fronting a tree where the Duke of Wellington was stationed; there was not more than a quarter of a mile between them; but Bony was well sheltered, and the Duke so much exposed, that the tree is barked in several places by the cannon-balls levelled at him. As for Bony, De Costar says he was very cool during the whole day, and even gay. As the cannon-balls flew over them, De Costar ducked; at which the Emperor laughed, and told him they would hit him all the same. At length, about the time he made his

grand and last effort, the fire of the Prussian artillery was heard upon his right, and the heads of their columns became visible pressing out of the woods. Aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp came with the tidings of their advance, to which Bony only replied, *Attendez, attendez un instant*, until he saw his troops, *fantassins et cavaliers*, return in disorder from the attack. He then observed hastily to a general beside him, *Je crois qu'ils sont mêlés*. The person to whom he spoke hastily raised the spyglass to his eye; but Bony, whom the first glance had satisfied of their total discomfiture, bent his face to the ground, and shook his head twice, his complexion being then as pale as death. The general then said something, to which Buonaparte answered, *C'est trop tard—sauvons nous*. Just at that moment, the allied troops, cavalry and infantry, appeared in full advance on all hands; and the Prussians, operating upon the right flank of the French, were rapidly gaining their rear. Bony, therefore, was compelled to abandon the high-road, which, besides, was choked with dead, with baggage, and with cannon; and, gaining the open country, kept at full gallop, until he gained, like Johnnie Cope, the van of the flying army. The marshals followed his example; and it was the most complete *sauve qui peut* that can well be imagined. Nevertheless, the prisoners who were brought into Brussels maintained their national impudence, and boldly avowed their intention of sacking the city with every sort of severity. At the same time they had friends there. One man of rank and wealth went over to Bony during the action, and I saw his hotel converted into an hospital for wounded soldiers. It occupied one half of one of the sides of the Place Royale, a noble square, which your Grace has probably seen. But, in general, the inhabitants of Brussels were very differently disposed; and their benevolence to our poor wounded fellows was unbounded. The difficulty was to prevent them from killing their guests with kindness, by giving them butcher's meat and wine during their fever. As I cannot put my letter into post until we get to Paris, I shall continue it as we get along.

12th August, Roye, in Picardy.—I imagine your Grace about this time to be tolerably well fagged with a hard day on the moors. If the weather has been as propitious as with us, it must be delightful. The country through which we have travelled is most uncommonly fertile, and skirted with beautiful woods; but its present political situation is so very uncommon, that I would give the world your Grace had come over for a fortnight. France may be

considered as neither at peace nor war. Valenciennes, for example, is in a state of blockade; we passed through the posts of the allies, all in the utmost state of vigilance, with patrols of cavalry and vedettes of infantry, up to the very gates, and two or three batteries were manned and mounted. The French troops were equally vigilant at the gates, yet made no objections to our passing through the town. Most of them had the white cockade, but looked very sulky, and were in obvious disorder and confusion. They had not yet made their terms with the King, nor accepted a commander appointed by him; but as they obviously feel their party desperate, the soldiers are running from the officers, and the officers from the soldiers. In fact, the multiplied hosts which pour into this country, exhibiting all the various dresses and forms of war which can be imagined, must necessarily render resistance impracticable. Yet, like Satan, these fellows retain the unconquered propensity to defiance, even in the midst of defeat and despair. This morning we passed a great number of the disbanded garrison of Condé, and they were the most horrid-looking cut-throats I ever saw, extremely disposed to be very insolent, and only repressed by the consciousness that all the villages and towns around are occupied by the allies. They began by crying to us in an ironical tone, *Vive le Roi*; then followed, *sotto voce, Sacre B——, Mille diables*, and other graces of French eloquence. I felt very well pleased that we were armed, and four in number; and still more so that it was daylight, for they seemed most mischievous ruffians. As for the appearance of the country, it is, notwithstanding a fine harvest, most melancholy. The windows of all the detached houses on the road are uniformly shut up; and you see few people, excepting the peasants who are employed in driving the contributions to maintain the armies. The towns are little better, having for the most part been partially injured by shells or by storm, as was the case both of Cambrai and Peronne. The men look very sulky; and if you speak three words to a woman, she is sure to fall a-crying. In short, the *politesse* and good-humor of this people have fled with the annihilation of their self-conceit; and they look on you as if they thought you were laughing at them, or come to enjoy the triumph of our arms over theirs. Postmasters and landlords are all the same, and hardly to be propitiated even by English money, although they charge us about three times as much as they durst do to their countryfolks. As for the Prussians, a party of cavalry dined at our hotel at Mons, eat and drank of the best the poor devils had left to give, called for their horses, and laughed in the face

of the landlord when he offered his bill, telling him they should pay as they came back. The English, they say, have always paid honorably, and upon these they indemnify themselves. It is impossible to *marchander*, for if you object, the poor landlady begins to cry, and tells you she will accept whatever *your lordship* pleases, but that she is almost ruined and bankrupt, etc., etc., etc.

This is a long stupid letter, but I will endeavor to send a better from Paris. Ever your Grace's truly obliged,

Walter Scott.

The only letter which Scott addressed to Joanna Baillie, while in Paris, goes over partly the same ground: I transcribe the rest.

Paris, 6th September, 1815.

My Dear Friend,—I owe you a long letter, but my late travels and the date of this epistle will be a tolerable plea for your indulgence. The truth is, I became very restless after the battle of Waterloo, and was only detained by the necessity of attending a friend's marriage, from setting off instantly for the Continent. At length, however, I got away to Brussels, and was on the memorable field of battle about five weeks after it had been fought....

If our army had been all British, the day would have been soon decided; but the Duke, or, as they call him here, from his detestation of all manner of foppery, the *Beau*, had not above 35,000 British. All this was to be supplied by treble exertion on the part of our troops. The Duke was everywhere during the battle; and it was the mercy of Heaven that protected him, when all his staff had been killed or wounded round him. I asked him, among many other questions, if he had seen Buonaparte; he said, "No; but at one time, from the repeated shouts of *Vive l'Empereur*, I thought he must be near." This was when John de Costar placed him in the hollow way. I think, so near as I can judge, there may at that time have been a quarter of a mile between these two great generals.

The fate of the French, after this day of decisive appeal, has been severe enough. There were never people more mortified, more subdued, and apparently more broken in spirit. They submit with sad civility to the extortions of the Prussians and the Russians, and avenge themselves at the

expense of the English, whom they charge three prices for everything, because they are the only people who pay at all. They are in the right, however, to enforce discipline and good order, which not only maintains the national character in the mean time, but will prevent the army from suffering by habits of indulgence. I question if the Prussians will soon regain their discipline and habits of hardihood. At present their powers of eating and drinking, which are really something preternatural, are exerted to the very utmost. A thin Prussian boy, whom I sometimes see, eats in one day as much as three English ploughmen. At daybreak he roars for chocolate and eggs; about nine he breakfasts more solemnly, *à la fourchette*, when, besides all the usual apparatus of an English *déjeuner*, he eats a world of cutlets, oysters, fruit, etc., and drinks a glass of brandy and a bottle of champagne. His dinner might serve Gargantua, at which he gets himself about three parts drunk—a circumstance which does not prevent the charge upon cold meat, with tea and chocolate, about six o'clock; and concluding the whole with an immense supper. Positively the appetite of this lad reminds one of the Eastern tale of a man taken out of the sea by a ship's crew, who, in return, ate up all the provisions of the vessel. He was, I think, flown away with by a roc; but from what quarter of the heavens the French are to look for deliverance from these devourers, I cannot presume to guess.

The needless wreck and ruin which they make in the houses adds much to the inconvenience of their presence. Most of the châteaux, where the Prussians are quartered, are what is technically called *rumped*, that is to say, plundered out and out. In the fine château of Montmorency, for instance, the most splendid apartments, highly ornamented with gilding and carving, were converted into barracks for the dirtiest and most savage-looking hussars I have yet seen. Imagine the work these fellows make with velvet hangings and embroidery. I saw one hag boiling her camp-kettle with part of a picture frame; the picture itself has probably gone to Prussia. With all this greediness and love of mischief, the Prussians are not bloodthirsty; and their utmost violence seldom exceeds a blow or two with the flat of the sabre. They are also very civil to the women, and in both respects behave much better than the French did in their country; but they follow the bad example quite close enough for the sake of humanity and of discipline. As for our people, they live in a most orderly and regular manner. All the young men pique themselves on imitating the Duke of Wellington in

nonchalance and coolness of manner; so they wander about everywhere, with their hands in the pockets of their long waistcoats, or cantering upon Cossack ponies, staring and whistling, and trotting to and fro, as if all Paris was theirs. The French hate them sufficiently for the *hauteur* of their manner and pretensions, but the grounds of dislike against us are drowned in the actual detestation afforded by the other powers.

This morning I saw a grand military spectacle—about 20,000 Russians pass in review before all the Kings and Dominations who are now resident at Paris. The Emperor, King of Prussia, Duke of Wellington, with their numerous and brilliant attendance of generals, staff-officers, etc., were in the centre of what is called the Place Louis Quinze, almost on the very spot where Louis XVI. was beheaded. A very long avenue, which faces the station where they were placed, was like a glowing furnace, so fiercely were the sunbeams reflected from the arms of the host by which it was filled. A body of Cossacks kept the ground with their pikes, and, by their wild appearance, added to the singularity of the scene. On one hand was the extended line of the Tuileries, seen through the gardens and the rows of orange-trees; on the other, the long column of troops advancing to the music. Behind was a long colonnade, forming the front to the palace, where the Chamber of Representatives are to hold their sittings; and in front of the monarchs was a superb row of buildings, on which you distinguish the bronze pillar erected by Napoleon to commemorate his victories over Russia, Prussia, and Austria, whose princes were now reviewing their victorious armies in what was so lately his capital. Your fancy, my dear friend, will anticipate, better than I can express, the thousand sentiments which arose in my mind from witnessing such a splendid scene, in a spot connected with such various associations. It may give you some idea of the feelings of the French—once so fond of *spectacles*—to know that, I think, there were not a hundred of that nation looking on. Yet this country will soon recover the actual losses she has sustained, for never was there a soil so blessed by nature, or so rich in corn, wine, and oil, and in the animated industry of its inhabitants. France is at present the fabled giant, struggling, or rather lying supine, under the load of mountains which have been precipitated on her; but she is not, and cannot be crushed. Remove the incumbent weight of 600,000 or 700,000 foreigners, and she will soon stand upright—happy, if experience shall have taught her to be contented to exert

her natural strength only for her own protection, and not for the annoyance of her neighbors. I am cut short in my lucubrations by an opportunity to send this letter with Lord Castlereagh's despatches, which is of less consequence, as I will endeavor to see you in passing through London. I leave this city for Dieppe on Saturday, but I intend to go round by Harfleur, if possible.

Ever your truly obliged and affectionate

Walter Scott.

"Paul" modestly acknowledges, in his last letter, the personal attentions which he received, while in Paris, from Lords Cathcart, Aberdeen, and Castlereagh; and hints that, through their intervention, he had witnessed several of the splendid *fêtes* given by the Duke of Wellington, where he saw half the crowned heads of Europe grouped among the gallant soldiers who had cut a way for them to the guilty capital of France. Scott's reception, however, had been distinguished to a degree of which Paul's language gives no notion. The Noble Lords above named welcomed him with cordial satisfaction; and the Duke of Wellington, to whom he was first presented by Sir John Malcolm, treated him then, and ever afterwards, with a kindness and confidence, which, I have often heard him say, he considered as "the highest distinction of his life." He used to tell, with great effect, the circumstances of his introduction to the Emperor Alexander, at a dinner given by the Earl of Cathcart. Scott appeared, on that occasion, in the blue and red dress of the Selkirkshire Lieutenancy; and the Czar's first question, glancing at his lameness, was, "In what affair were you wounded?" Scott signified that he suffered from a natural infirmity; upon which the Emperor said, "I thought Lord Cathcart mentioned that you had served." Scott observed that the Earl looked a little embarrassed at this, and promptly answered, "Oh yes; in a certain sense I have served—that is, in the yeomanry cavalry; a home force resembling the Landwehr, or Landsturm."—"Under what commander?"—"Sous M. le Chevalier Rae."—"Were you ever engaged?"—"In some slight actions—such as the battle of the Cross Causeway and the affair of Moredun-Mill."—"This," says Mr. Pringle of Whytbank, "was, as he saw in Lord Cathcart's face, quite sufficient, so he managed to turn the conversation to some other subject." It was at the same dinner that he first met Platoff, who seemed to

take a great fancy to him, though, adds my friend, "I really don't think they had any common language to converse in." Next day, however, when Pringle and Scott were walking together in the Rue de la Paix, the Hetman happened to come up, cantering with some of his Cossacks; as soon as he saw Scott, he jumped off his horse, leaving it to the Pulk, and, running up to him, kissed him on each side of the cheek with extraordinary demonstrations of affection—and then made him understand, through an aide-de-camp, that he wished him to join his staff at the next great review, when he would take care to mount him on the gentlest of his Ukraine horses.

It will seem less surprising that Scott should have been honored with much attention by the leading soldiers and statesmen of Germany then in Paris. The fame of his poetry had already been established for some years in that country. Yet it may be doubted whether Blücher had heard of Marmion any more than Platoff; and old Blücher struck Scott's fellow-travellers as taking more interest in him than any foreign general, except only the Hetman.

A striking passage in Paul's 10th letter indicates the high notion which Scott had formed of the personal qualities of the Prince of Orange. After depicting, with almost prophetic accuracy, the dangers to which the then recent union of Holland and Belgium must be exposed, he concludes with expressing his hope that the firmness and sagacity of the King of the Netherlands, and the admiration which his heir's character and bearing had already excited among all, even Belgian observers, might ultimately prove effective in redeeming this difficult experiment from the usual failure of "*arrondissements*, indemnities, and all the other terms of modern date, under sanction of which cities and districts, and even kingdoms, have been passed from one government to another, as the property of lands or stock is transferred by a bargain between private parties."

It is not less curious to compare, with the subsequent course of affairs in France, the following brief hint in Paul's 16th letter: "The general rallying point of the *Libéralistes* is an avowed dislike to the present monarch and his immediate connections. They will sacrifice, they pretend, so much to the general inclinations of Europe, as to select a king from the Bourbon race; but he must be one of their own choosing, and the Duke of Orleans is most familiar in their mouths." Thus, in its very bud, had his eye detected the *conjuration de quinze ans!*

Among the gay parties of this festive period, Scott mentioned with special pleasure one fine day given to an excursion to Ermenonville, under the auspices of Lady Castlereagh. The company was a large one, including most of the distinguished personages whom I have been naming, and they dined *al fresco* among the scenes of Rousseau's retirement, but in a fashion less accordant with the spirit of his *rêveries d'un promeneur solitaire*, than with the song which commemorates some earlier tenants of that delicious valley,—

> "La belle Gabrielle
> Étoit dans ces lieux—
> Et le souvenir d'elle
> Nous rend heureux," etc.

At some stage of this merry day's proceedings, the ladies got tired of walking, and one of Lord Castlereagh's young diplomatists was despatched into a village in quest of donkeys for their accommodation. The *attaché* returned by and by with a face of disappointment, complaining that the charge the people made was so extravagant, he could not think of yielding to the extortion. "*Marshal Forwards*" said nothing, but nodded to an aide-de-camp. They had passed a Prussian picket a little while before;—three times the requisite number of donkeys appeared presently, driven before half-a-dozen hussars, who were followed by the screaming population of the refractory hamlet; and "an angry man was Blücher," said Scott, "when Lord Castlereagh condescended to go among them, all smiles, and sent them back with more Napoleons than perhaps the fee-simple of the whole stud was worth."

Another evening of more peaceful enjoyment has left a better record. But I need not quote here the lines on Saint Cloud. They were sent, on the 16th of August, to the late Lady Alvanley, with whom and her daughters he spent much of his time while in Paris.

As yet, the literary reputation of Scott had made but little way among the French nation; but some few of their eminent men vied even with the enthusiastic Germans in their courteous and unwearied attentions to him. The venerable *Chevalier*, in particular, seemed anxious to embrace every opportunity of acting as his cicerone; and many mornings were spent in exploring, under his guidance, the most remarkable scenes and objects of historical and antiquarian interest both in Paris and its neighborhood. He

several times also entertained Scott and his young companions at dinner; but the last of those dinners was thoroughly poisoned by a preliminary circumstance. The poet, on entering the saloon, was presented to a stranger, whose physiognomy struck him as the most hideous he had ever seen; nor was his disgust lessened, when he found, a few minutes afterwards, that he had undergone the *accolade* of David "of the blood-stained brush."

From Paris, Mr. Bruce and Mr. Pringle went on to Switzerland, leaving the poet and Gala to return home together, which they did by way of Dieppe, Brighton, and London. It was here, on the 14th of September, that Scott had that last meeting with Lord Byron, alluded to in his communication to Mr. Moore, already quoted. He carried his young friend in the morning to call on Lord Byron, who agreed to dine with them at their hotel, where he met also Charles Mathews and Daniel Terry. The only survivor of the party has recorded it in his note-book as the most interesting day he ever spent. "How I did stare," he says, "at Byron's beautiful pale face, like a spirit's—good or evil. But he was *bitter*—what a contrast to Scott! Among other anecdotes of British prowess and spirit, Scott mentioned that a young gentleman —— —— —— had been awfully shot in the head while conveying an order from the Duke, and yet staggered on, and delivered his message when at the point of death. 'Ha!' said Byron, 'I dare say he could do as well as most people without his head—it was never of much use to him.' Waterloo did not delight him, probably—and Scott could talk or think of scarcely anything else."

Mathews accompanied them as far as Warwick and Kenilworth, both of which castles the poet had seen before, but now reëxamined with particular curiosity. They spent a night at Sheffield; and early next morning Scott sallied forth to provide himself with a planter's knife of the most complex contrivance and finished workmanship. Having secured one to his mind, and which for many years after was his constant pocket-companion, he wrote his name on a card, "Walter Scott, Abbotsford," and directed it to be engraved on the handle. On his mentioning this acquisition at breakfast, young Gala expressed his desire to equip himself in like fashion, and was directed to the shop accordingly. When he had purchased a similar knife, and produced his name in turn for the engraver, the master cutler eyed the signature for a moment, and exclaimed, "John Scott of Gala! Well, I hope your ticket may serve me in as good stead as another Mr. Scott's has just done. Upon my word, one of my best men, an honest fellow from the North,

went out of his senses when he saw it—he offered me a week's work if I would let him keep it to himself—and I took *Saunders* at his word." Scott used to talk of this as one of the most gratifying compliments he ever received in his literary capacity.

Their next halt was at Rokeby; but since Scott had heard from thence, Mrs. Morritt's illness had made such alarming progress, that the travellers regretted having obtruded themselves on the scene of affliction, and resumed their journey early next morning.

Reaching Abbotsford, Scott found with his family his old friend Mr. Skene of Rubislaw, who had expected him to come home sooner, and James Ballantyne, who had arrived with a copious budget of bills, calendars, booksellers' letters, and proof sheets. From each of these visitors' *memoranda* I now extract an anecdote. Mr. Skene's is of a small enough matter, but still it places the man so completely before myself, that I am glad he thought it worth setting down.

> "During Scott's absence," says his friend, "his wife had had the tiny drawing-room of the cottage fitted up with new chintz furniture,—everything had been set out in the best style,—and she and her girls had been looking forward to the pleasure which they supposed the little surprise of the arrangements would give him. He was received in the spruce fresh room, set himself comfortably down in the chair prepared for him, and remained in the full enjoyment of his own fireside, and a return to his family circle, without the least consciousness that any change had taken place—until, at length, Mrs. Scott's patience could hold out no longer, and his attention was expressly called to it. The vexation he showed at having caused such a disappointment, struck me as amiably characteristic—and in the course of the evening he every now and then threw out some word of admiration to reconsole *mamma*."

Ballantyne's note of their next morning's conference is in these terms:—

> "He had just been reviewing a pageant of emperors and kings, which seemed, like another Field of the Cloth of Gold, to have been got up to realize before his eyes some of his own splendid descriptions. I begged him to tell me what was the general

> impression left on his mind. He answered, that he might now say he had seen and conversed with all classes of society, from the palace to the cottage, and including every conceivable shade of science and ignorance—but that he had never felt awed or abashed except in the presence of one man—the Duke of Wellington. I expressed some surprise. He said I ought not, for that the Duke of Wellington possessed every one mighty quality of the mind in a higher degree than any other man did, or had ever done. He said he beheld in him a great soldier and a great statesman—the greatest of each. When it was suggested that the Duke, on his part, saw before him a great poet and novelist, he smiled, and said, 'What would the Duke of Wellington think of a few *bits of novels*, which perhaps he had never read, and for which the strong probability is that he would not care a sixpence if he had?' You are not" (adds Ballantyne) "to suppose that he looked either sheepish or embarrassed in the presence of the Duke—indeed you well know that he did not, and could not do so; but the feeling, qualified and modified as I have described it, unquestionably did exist to a certain extent. Its origin forms a curious moral problem; and may probably be traced to a secret consciousness, which he might not himself advert to, that the Duke, however great as a soldier and statesman, was so defective in imagination as to be incapable of appreciating that which had formed the charm of his own life, as well as of his works."

It is proper to add to Mr. Ballantyne's solution of his "curious moral problem," that he was in his latter days a strenuous opponent of the Duke of Wellington's politics; to which circumstance he ascribes, in these same *memoranda*, the only coolness that ever occurred between him and Scott. I need hardly repeat, what has been already distinctly stated more than once, that Scott never considered any amount of literary distinction as entitled to be spoken of in the same breath with mastery in the higher departments of practical life—least of all, with the glory of a first-rate captain. To have done things worthy to be written was in his eyes a dignity to which no man made any approach, who had only written things worthy to be read. He on two occasions, which I can never forget, betrayed painful uneasiness when

his works were alluded to as reflecting honor on the age that had produced Watt's improvement of the steam-engine, and the safety-lamp of Sir Humphry Davy. Such was his modest creed—but from all I ever saw or heard of his intercourse with the Duke of Wellington, I am not disposed to believe that he partook it with the only man in whose presence he ever felt awe and abashment.

A charming page in Mr. Washington Irving's Abbotsford and Newstead affords us another anecdote connected with this return from Paris. Two years after this time, when the amiable American visited Scott, he walked with him to a quarry, where his people were at work.

> "The face of the humblest dependent," he says, "brightened at his approach—all paused from their labor to have a pleasant 'crack wi' the laird.' Among the rest was a tall straight old fellow, with a healthful complexion and silver hairs, and a small round-crowned white hat. He had been about to shoulder a hod, but paused, and stood looking at Scott with a slight sparkling of his blue eye as if waiting his turn; for the old fellow knew he was a favorite. Scott accosted him in an affable tone, and asked for a pinch of snuff. The old man drew forth a horn snuff-box. 'Hoot man,' said Scott, 'not that old mull. Where's the bonnie French one that I brought you from Paris?'—'Troth, your honor,' replied the old fellow, 'sic a mull as that is nae for week-days.' On leaving the quarry, Scott informed me, that, when absent at Paris, he had purchased several trifling articles as presents for his dependents, and, among others, the gay snuff-box in question, which was so carefully reserved for Sundays by the veteran. 'It was not so much the value of the gifts,' said he, 'that pleased them, as the idea that the laird should think of them when so far away.'"

One more incident of this return—it was told to me by himself, some years afterwards, with gravity, and even sadness. "The last of my chargers," he said, "was a high-spirited and very handsome one, by name Daisy, all over white, without a speck, and with such a mane as Rubens delighted to paint. He had, among other good qualities, one always particularly valuable in my case, that of standing like a rock to be mounted. When he was brought to the door, after I came home from the Continent, instead of signifying, by

the usual tokens, that he was pleased to see his master, he looked askant at me like a devil; and when I put my foot in the stirrup, he reared bolt upright, and I fell to the ground rather awkwardly. The experiment was repeated twice or thrice, always with the same result. It occurred to me that he might have taken some capricious dislike to my dress; and Tom Purdie, who always falls heir to the white hat and green jacket, and so forth, when Mrs. Scott has made me discard a set of garments, was sent for, to try whether these habiliments would produce him a similar reception from his old friend Daisy: but Daisy allowed Tom to back him with all manner of gentleness. The thing was inexplicable—but he had certainly taken some part of my conduct in high dudgeon and disgust; and after trying him again, at the interval of a week, I was obliged to part with Daisy—and wars and rumors of wars being over, I resolved thenceforth to have done with such dainty blood. I now stick to a good sober cob." Somebody suggested that Daisy might have considered himself as ill-used, by being left at home when *the laird* went on his journey. "Ay," said he, "these creatures have many thoughts of their own, no doubt, that we can never penetrate." Then, laughing, "Troth," said he, "maybe some bird had whispered Daisy that I had been to see the grand reviews at Paris on a little scrag of a Cossack, while my own gallant trooper was left behind bearing Peter and the post-bag to Melrose."

A few letters, written shortly after this return to Abbotsford, will, among other things, show with what zeal he at once resumed his literary industry, if indeed that can be said to have been at all interrupted by a journey, in the course of which a great part of Paul's narrative, and also of the poem of The Field of Waterloo, must have been composed.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., ROKEBY PARK.

Abbotsford, 2d October, 1815.

My dear Morritt,—Few things could have given me more real pain, than to see Mrs. Morritt under such severe suffering, and the misery you sustain in witnessing it. Yet let us trust in the goodness of Providence, which restored the health so deservedly dear to you, from as great a state of depression upon a former occasion. Our visit was indeed a melancholy one, and, I fear, added to your distress, when, God knows, it required no addition.—The contrast of this quiet bird's-nest of a place, with the late scene of confusion

and military splendor which I have witnessed, is something of a stunning nature—and, for the first five or six days, I have been content to fold my hands, and saunter up and down in a sort of indolent and stupefied tranquillity, my only attempt at occupation having gone no farther than pruning a young tree now and then. Yesterday, however, and to-day, I began, from necessity, to prune verses, and have been correcting proofs of my little attempt at a poem on Waterloo. It will be out this week, and you shall have a copy by the Carlisle coach, which pray judge favorably, and remember it is not always the grandest actions which are best adapted for the arts of poetry and painting. I believe I shall give offence to my old friends the Whigs, by not condoling with Buonaparte. Since his sentence of transportation, he has begun to look wonderfully comely in their eyes. I would they had hanged him, that he might have died a perfect Adonis. Every reasonable creature must think the Ministers would have deserved the cord themselves, if they had left him in a condition again to cost us the loss of 10,000 of our best and bravest, besides thirty millions of good money. The very threats and frights which he has given the well-meaning people of this realm (myself included), deserved no less a punishment than banishment, since the "putting in bodily fear" makes so material a part of every criminal indictment. But, no doubt, we shall see Ministers attacked for their want of generosity to a fallen enemy, by the same party who last year, with better grounds, assailed them for having left him in a situation again to disturb the tranquillity of Europe.—My young friend Gala has left me, after a short visit to Abbotsford. He is my nearest (conversible) neighbor, and I promise myself much comfort in him, as he has a turn both for the sciences and for the arts, rather uncommon among our young Scotch lairds. He was delighted with Rokeby and its lord, though he saw both at so melancholy a period, and endured, not only with good-humor but with sympathy, the stupidity of his fellow-traveller, who was not by any means *dans son brillant* for some time after leaving you.

We visited Corby Castle on our return to Scotland, which remains, in point of situation, as beautiful as when its walks were celebrated by David Hume, in the only rhymes he was ever known to be guilty of. Here they are, from a pane of glass in an inn at Carlisle:—

> "Here chicks in eggs for breakfast sprawl,
> Here godless boys God's glories squall,

Here Scotchmen's heads do guard the wall,
But Corby's walks atone for all."

Would it not be a good quiz to advertise *The Poetical Works of David Hume*, with notes, critical, historical, and so forth—with an historical inquiry into the use of eggs for breakfast, a physical discussion on the causes of their being addled; a history of the English Church music, and of the choir of Carlisle in particular; a full account of the affair of 1745, with the trials, last speeches, and so forth, of the poor *plaids* who were strapped up at Carlisle; and, lastly, a full and particular description of Corby, with the genealogy of every family who ever possessed it? I think, even without more than the usual waste of margin, the Poems of David would make a decent twelve-shilling touch. I shall think about it when I have exhausted mine own *century of inventions*.

I do not know whether it is perverseness of state, or old associations, but an excellent and very handsome modern house, which Mr. Howard has lately built at Corby, does not, in my mind, assimilate so well with the scenery as the old irregular monastic hall, with its weather-beaten and antique appearance, which I remember there some years ago.

Out of my Field of Waterloo has sprung an odd wild sort of thing, which I intend to finish separately, and call it The Dance of Death. These matters take up my time so much, that I must bid you adieu for the present. Besides, I am summoned to attend a grand *chasse*, and I see the children are all mounted upon the ponies. By the way, Walter promises to be a gallant horseman. Ever most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

I shall close this chapter with a transcript of some *Notes* on the proof sheets of The Field of Waterloo. John Ballantyne being at Abbotsford on the 3d of October, his brother the printer addressed the packet containing the sheets to him. John appears to have considered James's observations on the margin before Scott saw them; and the record of the style in which the Poet repelled, or yielded to, his critics, will at all events illustrate his habitual good-nature.

John Ballantyne writes on the fly-leaf of the proofs, to his confidential clerk: "Mr. Hodgson, I beg these sheets and all the MS. may be carefully

preserved just as they stand, and put in my father's desk. J. B."

James prefaces his animadversions with this quotation:—

"Cut deep and spare not.—*Penruddock.*"

The *Notes* are these:—

Stanza I.—"Fair Brussels, thou art far behind."

James Ballantyne.—I do not like this line. It is tame, and the phrase "far behind," has, to my feeling, some associated vulgarity.

Scott.—Stet.

Stanza II.—"Let not *the* stranger with disdain
The architecture view."

James.—These two words are cacophonous. Would not *its* do?

Scott.—Th. is a bad sound. Ts. a much worse. Read *their*.

Stanza IV.—"A stranger might reply."

James.—My objection to this is probably fantastical, and I state it only because, from the first moment to the last, it has always made me boggle. I don't like a *stranger*—Query, "The questioned"—The "spectator"—"gazer," etc.

Scott.—*Stranger* is appropriate—it means stranger to the circumstances.

Stanza VI.—*James.*—You had changed "garner-house profound," which I think quite admirable, to "garner under ground," which I think quite otherways. I have presumed not to make the change—must I?

Scott.—I acquiesce, but with doubts; *profound* sounds affected.

Stanza VIII.—"The deadly tug of war at length
Must limits find in human strength,
And *cease* when these are passed.
Vain hope!" etc.

James.—I must needs repeat, that the deadly tug *did* cease in the case supposed. It lasted long—very long; but, when the limits of resistance, of human strength, were past—that is, after they had fought for ten hours, then the deadly tug *did* cease. Therefore the "hope" was not "vain."

Scott.—I answer, it did *not*,—because the observation relates to the strength of those actually engaged, and when *their* strength was exhausted, other squadrons were brought up. Suppose you saw two lawyers scolding at the bar, you might say this must have an end—human lungs cannot hold out—but, if the debate were continued by the senior counsel, your well-grounded expectations would be disappointed—"Cousin, thou wert not wont to be so dull!"—

Ibid.—"Nor ceased the *intermitted* shot."

James.—Mr. Erskine contends that "intermitted" is redundant.
Scott.—"Nor ceased the *storm of shell and shot*."

Stanza X.—"—— Never shall our country say
We gave one inch of ground away,
When battling for her right."
James.—In conflict?
John B.—Warring? I am afraid *battling* must stand.
Scott.—All worse than the text.

Stanza XI.—"Peal'd wildly the imperial name."
James.—I submit with diffidence whether this be not a somewhat tame conclusion to so very animated a stanza? And, at any rate, you will observe, that as it stands, you have no rhyme whatever to "The Cohort eagles *fly*."—You have no rhyme to *fly*. *Flew* and *fly*, also, are perhaps too near, considering that each word closes a line of the same sort. I don't well like "*Thus* in a torrent," either. If it were, "In one broad torrent," etc., it strikes me that it would be more spirited.
Scott.—Granted as to most of these observations—Read, "in one *dark* torrent broad and strong," etc.—The "imperial name" is *true*, therefore must stand.

Stanza XII.—"Nor was one forward footstep *stopped*."
James.—This staggering word was intended, I presume, but I don't like it.
Scott.—Granted. Read *staid*, etc.

Ibid.—"Down were the eagle banners sent,
Down, down the horse and horsemen went."

James.—This is very spirited and very fine; but it is unquestionably liable to the charge of being very nearly a direct repetition of yourself. See *Lord of the Isles*, Canto vi. Stanza 24:—

"*Down! down!* in headlong overthrow,
Horseman and horse, the foremost go," etc.

This passage is at once so striking and so recent, that its close similarity to the present, if not indeed its identity, must strike every reader; and really, to borrow from one's self is hardly much better than to borrow from one's neighbors. And yet again, a few lines lower—

"As hammers on the *anvils* reel,
Against the cuirass *clangs* the steel."

See *Lady of the Lake*, Canto vi. Stanza 18:—

"I heard the broadswords' deadly *clang*,
As if an hundred *anvils* rang."

Here is precisely the same image, in very nearly the same words.

Scott.—I have altered the expression, but made a note, which, I think, will vindicate my retaining the simile.

Stanza XIII.—"As their own Ocean-rocks hold *stance*."

John.—I do not know such an English word as *stance*.

Scott.—Then we'll make it one for the *nance*.

Ibid.—"And *newer* standards fly."

James.—I don't like *newer*.

Scott.—"And *other* standards fly."

Ibid.—"Or can thy memory fail to *quote*,
Heard to thy cost the vengeful note."

James.—Would to God you would alter this *quote*!

John.—Would to God *I* could!—I certainly should.—

Scott.—"Or can thy memory fail to know,
Heard oft before in hour of woe."
Or—
"Or dwells not in thy memory still,
Heard frequent in thine hour of ill."

Stanza XV.—"Wrung forth by pride, *regret*, and shame."
James.—I have ventured to submit to your choice—

"Wrung forth by pride, *and rage*, and shame."

Regret appearing a faint epithet amidst such a combination of bitter feelings.
Scott.—Granted.

Ibid.—"So mingle banner, wain, and gun,
Where in one tide of horror run
The warriors," etc.

James.—In the first place, warriors *running* in a tide is a clashing metaphor; in the second, the warriors *running* at all is a little homely. It is true, no doubt; but really running is little better than scampering. For these causes, one or both, I think the lines should be altered.
Scott.—You are wrong in one respect. A tide is always said to *run*,—but I thought of the tide without attending to the equivoque, which must be altered. Read,—

"Where the tumultuous flight rolls on."

Stanza XVI.—"—— found *gallant* grave."
James.—This is surely a singular epithet to a grave. I think the whole of this stanza eminently fine; and, in particular, the conclusion.
Scott.—"—— found *soldier's* grave." ——

Stanza XXI.—"*Redoubted* Picton's soul of fire."
James.—From long association, this epithet strikes me as conveying a semi-ludicrous idea.

Scott.—It is here appropriate, and your objection seems merely personal to your own association.

Ibid.—"Through his friends' heart to *wound* his own."

James.—Quære—*Pierce*, or rather *stab*—*wound* is faint.
Scott.—"Pierce."

Stanza XXII.—"Forgive, *brave fallen*, the imperfect lay."
James.—Don't like "brave fallen" at all; nor "appropriate praise," three lines after. The latter in particular is prosaic.
Scott.—"Forgive, *brave dead*," —— "*The dear-earned praise.*"

Chapter XXXVI

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Field of Waterloo Published. — Revision of Paul's Letters, Etc. — Quarrel and Reconciliation With Hogg. — Football Match at Carterhaugh. — Songs on the Banner of Buccleuch. — Dinner at Bowhill. — Design for a Piece of Plate to the Sutors of Selkirk. — Letters to the Duke of Buccleuch, Joanna Baillie, and Mr. Morritt.

1815.

The poem of The Field of Waterloo was published before the end of October; the profits of the first edition being the author's contribution to the fund raised for the relief of the widows and children of the soldiers slain in the battle. This piece appears to have disappointed those most disposed to sympathize with the author's views and feelings. The descent is indeed heavy from his Bannockburn to his Waterloo: the presence, or all but visible reality of what his dreams cherished, seems to have overawed his imagination, and tamed it into a weak pomposity of movement. The burst of pure native enthusiasm upon the *Scottish* heroes that fell around the Duke of Wellington's person bears, however, the broadest marks of the "Mighty Minstrel:"—

"Saw gallant Miller's fading eye
Still bent where Albyn's standards fly,
And Cameron, in the shock of steel,
Die like the offspring of Lochiel," etc.;—

and this is far from being the only redeeming passage. There is one, indeed, in which he illustrates what he then thought Buonaparte's poorness of spirit in adversity, which always struck me as preëminently characteristic of Scott's manner of interweaving, both in prose and verse, the moral energies with analogous natural description, and combining thought with imagery,—

"Or is thy soul like mountain tide,
That, swelled by winter storm and shower,

Rolls down in turbulence of power,
A torrent fierce and wide;
Reft of these aids, a rill obscure,
Shrinking unnoticed, mean and poor,
Whose channel shows displayed
The wrecks of its impetuous course,
But not one symptom of the force
By which these wrecks were made!"

The poem was the first upon a subject likely to be sufficiently hackneyed; and, having the advantage of coming out in a small cheap form—(prudently imitated from Murray's innovation with the tales of Byron, which was the death-blow to the system of verse in quarto)—it attained rapidly a measure of circulation above what had been reached either by Rokeby or The Lord of the Isles.

Meanwhile the revision of Paul's Letters was proceeding; and Scott had almost immediately on his return to Abbotsford concluded his bargain for the first edition of a third novel—The Antiquary—to be published also in the approaching winter. Harold the Dauntless, too, was from time to time taken up as the amusement of *horæ subsecivæ*. As for Scott's out-of-doors occupations of that autumn, sufficient light will be thrown on them by the following letter; from which it is seen that he had now completed a rather tedious negotiation with another bonnet-laird, and definitively added the lands of *Kaeside* to the original estate of Abbotsford.

TO MISS JOANNA BAILLIE, HAMPSTEAD.

Abbotsford, November 12, 1815.

I have been long in acknowledging your letter, my dear friend, and yet you have not only been frequent in my thoughts, as must always be the case, but your name has been of late familiar in my mouth as a household word. You must know that the pinasters you had the goodness to send me some time since, which are now fit to be set out of the nursery, have occupied my mind as to the mode of disposing of them. Now, mark the event: there is in the middle of what will soon be a bank of fine young wood, a certain old gravel-pit, which is the present scene of my operations. I have caused it to be covered with better earth, and gently altered with the spade, so as, if

possible, to give it the air of one of those accidental hollows which the surface of a hill frequently presents. Having arranged my ground, I intend to plant it all round with the pinasters, and other varieties of the pine species, and in the interior I will have a rustic seat, surrounded by all kinds of evergreen shrubs (laurels in particular), and all varieties of the holly and cedar, and so forth, and this is to be called and entitled *Joanna's Bower*. We are determined in the choice of our ornaments by necessity, for our ground fronts (in poetic phrase) the rising sun, or, in common language, looks to the east; and being also on the north side of the hill—(don't you shiver at the thought?)—why, to say truth, George Wynnos and I are both of opinion that nothing but evergreens will flourish there; but I trust I shall convert a present deformity into a very pretty little hobby-horsical sort of thing. It will not bear looking at for years, and that is a pity; but it will so far resemble the person from whom it takes name, that it is planted, as she has written, for the benefit as well of posterity as for the passing generation. Time and I, says the Spaniard, against any two; and fully confiding in the proverb, I have just undertaken another grand task. You must know, I have purchased a large lump of wild land, lying adjoining to this little property, which greatly more than doubles my domains. The land is said to be reasonably bought, and I am almost certain I can turn it to advantage by a little judicious expenditure; for this place is already allowed to be worth twice what it cost me; and our people here think so little of planting, and do it so carelessly, that they stare with astonishment at the alteration which well-planted woods make on the face of a country. There is, besides, a very great temptation, from the land running to within a quarter of a mile of a very sweet wild sheet of water, of which (that is, one side of it) I have every chance to become proprietor: this is a poetical circumstance not to be lost sight of, and accordingly I keep it full in my view. Amid these various avocations, past, present, and to come, I have not thought much about Waterloo, only that I am truly glad you like it. I might, no doubt, have added many curious anecdotes, but I think the pamphlet long enough as it stands, and never had any design of writing copious notes.

I do most devoutly hope Lord Byron will succeed in his proposal of bringing out one of your dramas; that he is your sincere admirer is only synonymous with his being a man of genius; and he has, I am convinced, both the power and inclination to serve the public, by availing himself of

the treasures you have laid before them. Yet I long for "some yet untasted spring," and heartily wish you would take Lord B. into your counsels, and adjust, from your yet unpublished materials, some drama for the public. In such a case, I would, in your place, conceal my name till the issue of the adventure. It is a sickening thing to think how many angry and evil passions the mere name of admitted excellence brings into full activity. I wish you would consider this hint, and I am sure the result would be great gratification to the public, and to yourself that sort of satisfaction which arises from receiving proofs of having attained the mark at which you aimed. Of this last, indeed, you cannot doubt, if you consult only the voices of the intelligent and the accomplished; but the object of the dramatist is professedly to delight the public at large, and therefore I think you should make the experiment fairly.

Little Sophia is much obliged by your kind and continued recollection: she is an excellent good child, sufficiently sensible, very affectionate, not without perception of character; but the gods have not made her poetical, and I hope she will never attempt to act a part which nature has not called her to. I am myself a poet, writing to a poetess, and therefore cannot be suspected of a wish to degrade a talent, to which, in whatever degree I may have possessed it, I am indebted for much happiness: but this depends only on the rare coincidence of some talent falling in with a novelty in style and diction and conduct of story, which suited the popular taste; and were my children to be better poets than me, they would not be such in general estimation, simply because the second cannot be the first, and the first (I mean in point of date) is everything, while others are nothing, even with more intrinsic merit. I am therefore particularly anxious to store the heads of my young damsels with something better than the tags of rhymes; and I hope Sophia is old enough (young though she be) to view her little incidents of celebrity, such as they are, in the right point of view. Mrs. Scott and she are at present in Edinburgh; the rest of the children are with me in this place; my eldest boy is already a bold horseman and a fine shot, though only about fourteen years old. I assure you I was prouder of the first blackcock he killed, than I have been of anything whatever since I first killed one myself, and that is twenty years ago. This is all stupid gossip; but, as Master Corporal Nym says, "things must be as they may:" you cannot expect grapes from thorns, or much amusement from a brain

bewildered with thorn hedges at Kaeside, for such is the sonorous title of my new possession, in virtue of which I subscribe myself,

Abbotsford & Kaeside.

There is now to be mentioned a little pageant of December, 1815, which perhaps interested *Abbotsford and Kaeside* not very much less than the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," as James Ballantyne calls it, of the preceding autumn. This was no other than a football match, got up under the auspices of the Duke of Buccleuch, between the men of the Vale of Yarrow and the Burghers of Selkirk, the particulars of which will be sufficiently explained by an extract from Ballantyne's newspaper, written, I can have no doubt, by the Sheriff of the Forest. But the part taken in this solemnity by the Ettrick Shepherd reminds me of an extraordinary epistle which Scott had received from him some months before this time, and of the account given by Hogg himself, in one of his autobiographies, of the manner in which Scott's kindness terminated the alienation it refers to.

The Shepherd, being as usual in pecuniary straits, had projected a work, to be called The Poetic Mirror, in which should appear some piece by each popular poet of the time, the whole to be edited by himself, and published for his benefit; and he addressed, accordingly, to his brother bards a circular petition for their best assistance. Scott—like Byron and most of the other persons thus applied to—declined the proposition. The letter in which he signified his refusal has not been preserved;—indeed it is sufficiently remarkable, that of all the many letters which Hogg must have received from his distinguished contemporaries, he appears to have kept not one; but Scott's decided aversion to joint-stock adventures in authorship must have been well known ere now to Hogg—and, at all events, nobody can suspect that his note of refusal was meant to be an unfriendly communication. The Shepherd, however, took some phrase in high dudgeon, and penned an answer virulently insolent in spirit and in language, accusing him of base jealousy of his own superior natural genius. I am not sure whether it was on this or another occasion of the like sort, that James varied the usual formulas of epistolary composition, by beginning with "Damned Sir," and ending, "Believe me, Sir, yours with disgust, etc.;" but certainly the performance was such that no intercourse took place between the parties for some weeks, or perhaps months, afterwards. The letter in which Hogg at length solicits a renewal of kindliness says nothing, it may be observed, of

the circumstance which, according to his autobiography, confirmed by the recollection of two friends, whom he names in the letter itself (Mr. John Grieve and Mr. William Laidlaw), had really caused him to repent of his suspicions, and their outrageous expression. The fact was, that hearing, shortly after the receipt of the offensive epistle, that Hogg was confined to his lodgings, in an obscure alley of Edinburgh, called Gabriel's Road, by a dangerous illness, Scott called on Mr. Grieve to make inquiries about him, and to offer to take on himself the expenses of the best medical attendance. He had, however, cautioned the worthy hatter that no hint of this offer must reach Hogg; and, in consequence, it might perhaps be the Shepherd's feeling at the time that he should not, in addressing his lifelong benefactor, betray any acquaintance with this recent interference on his behalf. There can be no doubt, however, that he obeyed the genuine dictates of his better nature when he penned this apologetic effusion:—

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., CASTLE STREET.

Gabriel's Road, February 28, 1815.

Mr. Scott,—I think it is great nonsense for two men who are friends at heart, and who ever must be so,—indeed it is not in the nature of things that they can be otherwise,—should be professed enemies.

Mr. Grieve and Mr. Laidlaw, who were very severe on me, and to whom I was obliged to show your letter, have long ago convinced me that I mistook part of it, and that it was not me you held in such contempt, but the opinion of the public. The idea that you might mean that (though I still think the reading will bear either construction) has given me much pain; for I know I answered yours intemperately, and in a mortal rage. I meant to have enclosed yours, and begged of you to return mine, but I cannot find it, and am sure that some one to whom I have been induced to show it, has taken it away. However, as my troubles on that subject were never like to wear to an end, I could no longer resist telling you that I am extremely vexed about it. I desire not a renewal of our former intimacy, for haply, after what I have written, your family would not suffer it; but I wish it to be understood that, when we meet *by chance*, we might shake hands, and speak to one another as old acquaintances, and likewise that we may exchange a letter

occasionally, for I find there are many things which I yearn to communicate to you, and the tears rush to my eyes when I consider that I may not.

If you allow of this, pray let me know, and if you do not, let me know. Indeed, I am anxious to hear from you, for "as the day of trouble is with me, so shall my strength be." To be friends *from the teeth forwards* is common enough; but it strikes me that there is something still more ludicrous in the reverse of the picture, and so to be enemies—and why should I be, *from the teeth forwards*, yours sincerely,

James Hogg?

Scott's reply was, as Hogg says, "a brief note, telling him to think no more of the business, and come to breakfast next morning." The misunderstanding being thus closed, they appear to have counselled and coöperated together in the most cordial fashion, in disciplining their rural allies for the muster of Carterhaugh—the Duke of Buccleuch's brother-in-law, the Earl of Home, having appointed the Shepherd his Lieutenant over the Yarrow Band, while the Sheriff took under his special cognizance the *Sutors*, i.e., *shoemakers*, of Selkirk—for so the burgesses of that town have for ages styled themselves, and under that denomination their warlike prowess in days of yore has been celebrated in many an old ballad, besides the well-known one which begins with

> "'Tis up wi' the Sutors o' Selkirk,
> And 'tis down wi' the Earl of Home!"

In order to understand all the allusions in the newspaper record of this important day, one must be familiar with the notes to the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border; but I shall not burden it with further comment here.

Football Match.

"On Monday, 4th December, there was played, upon the extensive plain of Carterhaugh, near the junction of the Ettrick and Yarrow, the greatest match at the ball which has taken place for many years. It was held by the people of the Dale of Yarrow, against those of the parish of Selkirk; the former being brought to the field by the Right Hon. the Earl of Home, and the Gallant Sutors by their Chief Magistrate, Ebenezer Clarkson, Esq. Both sides were joined by many volunteers from other parishes; and the

appearance of the various parties marching from their different glens to the place of rendezvous, with pipes playing and loud acclamations, carried back the coldest imagination to the old times when the Foresters assembled with the less peaceable purpose of invading the English territory, or defending their own. The romantic character of the scenery aided the illusion, as well as the performance of a feudal ceremony previous to commencing the games.

"His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry came upon the ground about eleven o'clock, attended by his sons, the young Earl of Dalkeith and Lord John Scott; the Countess of Home; the Ladies Anne, Charlotte, and Isabella Scott; Lord and Lady Montagu and family; the Hon. General Sir Edward Stopford, K. B.; Sir John Riddell of Riddell; Sir Alexander Don of Newton; Mr. Elliot Lockhart, member for the county; Mr. Pringle of Whytbank, younger; Mr. Pringle of Torwoodlee; Captain Pringle, Royal Navy; Mr. Boyd of Broadmeadows and family; Mr. Chisholm of Chisholm; Major Pott of Todrig; Mr. Walter Scott, Sheriff of Selkirkshire, and family, —and many other gentlemen and ladies.—The ancient banner of the Buccleuch family, a curious and venerable relique, emblazoned with armorial bearings, and with the word '*Bellendaine*,' the ancient war-cry of the clan of Scott, was then displayed, as on former occasions when the Chief took the field in person, whether for the purpose of war or sport. The banner was delivered by Lady Anne Scott to Master Walter Scott, younger of Abbotsford, who attended suitably mounted and armed, and riding over the field displayed it to the sound of the war-pipes, and amid the acclamations of the assembled spectators, who could not be fewer than 2000 in number. That this singular renewal of an ancient military custom might not want poetical celebrity, verses were distributed among the spectators, composed for the occasion by Mr. Walter Scott and the Ettrick Shepherd.—Mr. James Hogg acted as aide-de-camp to the Earl of Home in the command of the Yarrow men, and Mr. Robert Henderson of Selkirk to Mr. Clarkson, both of whom contributed not a little to the good order of the day.

"The ball was thrown up between the parties by the Duke of Buccleuch, and the first game was gained, after a severe conflict of an hour and a half duration, by the Selkirk men. The second game was still more severely contested, and after a close and stubborn struggle of more than three hours,

with various fortune, and much display of strength and agility on both sides, was at length carried by the Yarrow men. The ball should then have been thrown up a third time, but considerable difficulty occurred in arranging the voluntary auxiliaries from other parishes, so as to make the match equal; and, as the day began to close, it was found impossible to bring the strife to an issue, by playing a decisive game.

"Both parties, therefore, parted with equal honors, but, before they left the ground, the Sheriff threw up his hat, and in Lord Dalkeith's name and his own, challenged the Yarrow men, on the part of the Sutors, to a match to be played upon the first convenient opportunity, with 100 picked men only on each side. The challenge was mutually accepted by Lord Home, on his own part, and for Lord John Scott, and was received with acclamation by the players on both sides. The principal gentlemen present took part with one side or other, except the Duke of Buccleuch, who remains neutral. Great play is expected, and all bets are to be paid by the losers to the poor of the winning parish. We cannot dismiss the subject without giving our highest commendation to the Earl of Home, and to Mr. Clarkson, for the attention which they showed in promoting the spirit and good order of the day. For the players themselves, it was impossible to see a finer set of active and athletic young fellows than appeared on the field. But what we chiefly admired in their conduct was, that though several hundreds in number, exceedingly keen for their respective parties, and engaged in so rough and animated a contest, they maintained the most perfect good-humor, and showed how unnecessary it is to discourage manly and athletic exercises among the common people, under pretext of maintaining subordination and good order. We have only to regret that the great concourse of spectators rendered it difficult to mention the names of the several players who distinguished themselves by feats of strength or agility; but we must not omit to record that the first ball was *hailed* by Robert Hall, mason in *Selkirk*, and the second by George Brodie, from *Greatlaws*, upon *Aillwater*.

"The Selkirk party wore slips of fir as their mark of distinction—the Yarrow men, sprigs of heath.

"Refreshments were distributed to the players by the Duke of Buccleuch's domestics, in a booth erected for the purpose; and no persons were allowed to sell ale or spirits on the field.

"In the evening there was a dance at the Duke's hunting-seat at Bowhill, attended by the nobility and gentry who had witnessed the sport of the day; and the fascination of Gow's violin and band detained them in the dancing-room till the dawn of the winter morning."

The newspaper then gives the songs above alluded to—namely, Scott's Lifting of the Banner:—

> "From the brown crest of Newark its summons extending,
> Our signal is waving in smoke and in flame,
> And each Forester blithe, from his mountain descending,
> Bounds light o'er the heather to join in the game;
> Then up with the Banner! let forest winds fan her!
> She has blazed over Ettrick eight ages and more;
> In sport we'll attend her, in battle defend her,
> With heart and with hand, like our Fathers before," etc.

—and that excellent ditty by Hogg, entitled The Ettrick Garland, to the Ancient Banner of the House of Buccleuch:—

> "And hast thou here, like hermit gray,
> Thy mystic characters unroll'd,
> O'er peaceful revellers to play,
> Thou emblem of the days of old?
> All hail! memorial of the brave,
> The liegeman's pride, the Border's awe!
> May thy gray pennon never wave
> On sterner field than Carterhaugh!" etc.

I have no doubt the Sheriff of the Forest was a prouder man, when he saw his boy ride about Carterhaugh with the pennon of Bellenden, than when Platoff mounted himself for the imperial review of the *Champ de Mars*. It is a pity that I should have occasion to allude, before I quit a scene so characteristic of Scott, to another outbreak of Hogg's jealous humor. His Autobiography informs us, that when the more distinguished part of the company assembled on the conclusion of the sport to dine at Bowhill, he was proceeding to place himself at a particular table—but the Sheriff seized his arm, told him *that* was reserved for the nobility, and seated him at an inferior board—"between himself and the Laird of Harden"—the first

gentleman of the clan Scott. "The fact is," says Hogg, "I am convinced he was sore afraid of my getting to be too great a favorite among the young ladies of Buccleuch!" Who can read this, and not be reminded of Sancho Panza and the Duchess? And, after all, he quite mistook what Scott had said to him; for certainly there was, neither on this, nor on any similar occasion at Bowhill, any *high table for the nobility*, though there was a *side-table for the children*, at which, when the Shepherd of Ettrick was about to seat himself, his friend probably whispered that it was reserved for the "*little* lords and ladies, and their playmates." This blunder may seem undeserving of any explanation; but it is often in small matters that the strongest feelings are most strikingly betrayed—and this story is, in exact proportion to its silliness, indicative of the jealous feeling which mars and distorts so many of Hogg's representations of Scott's conduct and demeanor.

It appears from the account of this football match in the Edinburgh Journal, that Scott took a lead in proposing a renewal of the contest. This, however, never occurred; and that it ought not to do so had probably occurred from the first to the Duke of Buccleuch, who is mentioned as having alone abstained from laying any bets on the final issue.

When Mr. Washington Irving visited Scott two years afterwards at Abbotsford, he told his American friend that "the old feuds and local interests, and rivalries and animosities of the Scotch, still slept in their ashes, and might easily be roused; their hereditary feeling for names was still great; it was not always safe to have even the game of football between villages;—the old clannish spirit was too apt to break out."

The good Duke of Buccleuch's solitary exemption from these heats of Carterhaugh might read a significant lesson to minor politicians of all parties on more important scenes. In pursuance of the same peace-making spirit, he appears to have been desirous of doing something gratifying to the men of the town of Selkirk, who had on this occasion taken the field against his Yarrow tenantry. His Grace consulted Scott about the design of a piece of plate to be presented to their community; and his letter on this weighty subject must not be omitted in the memoirs of a Sheriff of Selkirk:—

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC.,
BOWHILL.

Edinburgh, Thursday.

My Dear Lord,—I have proceeded in my commission about the cup. It will be a very handsome one. But I am still puzzled to dispose of the birse in a becoming manner. It is a most unmanageable decoration. I tried it upright on the top of the cup; it looked like a shaving-brush, and the goblet might be intended to make the lather. Then I thought I had a brilliant idea. The arms of Selkirk are a female seated on a sarcophagus, decorated with the arms of Scotland, which will make a beautiful top to the cup. So I thought of putting the birse into the lady's other hand; but, alas, it looked so precisely like the rod of chastisement uplifted over the poor child, that I laughed at the drawing for half an hour. Next I tried to take off the castigatory appearance, by inserting the bristles in a kind of handle; but then it looked as if the poor woman had been engaged in the capacities of housemaid and child-keeper at once, and, fatigued with her double duty, had sat down on the wine-cooler, with the broom in one hand, and the bairn in the other. At length, after some conference with Charles Sharpe, I have hit on a plan, which, I think, will look very well, if tolerably executed,—namely, to have the lady seated in due form on the top of the lid (which will look handsome, and will be well taken), and to have a thistle wreathed around the sarcophagus and rising above her head, and from the top of the thistle shall proceed the birse. I will bring a drawing with me, and they shall get the cup ready in the mean time. I hope to be at Abbotsford on Monday night, to stay for a week. My cat has eat two or three birds, while regaling on the crumbs that were thrown for them. This was a breach of hospitality; but *oportet vivere*—and *micat inter omnes*—with which stolen pun, and my respectful compliments to Lord Montagu and the ladies, I am, very truly, your Grace's most faithful and obliged servant,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—Under another cover, which I have just received, I send the two drawings of the front and reverse of the lid of the proposed cup. Your Grace will be so good as understand that the thistle—the top of which is garnished with the bristle—is entirely detached, in working, from the figure, and slips into a socket. The following lines are humbly suggested for a motto, being taken from an ancient Scottish canzonetta,—unless the Yarrow committee can find any better:—

"The sutor ga'e the sow a kiss:
Grumph! quo' the sow, it's a' for my birss."

Some weeks before the year 1815 closed, Mr. Morritt sustained the heaviest of domestic afflictions; and several letters on that sad subject had passed between Rokeby and Abbotsford, before the date of the following:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., ROKEBY PARK.

Edinburgh, 22d December, 1815.

My dear Morritt,—While you know what satisfaction it would have given me to have seen you here, I am very sensible of the more weighty reasons which you urge for preferring to stay at Rokeby for some time. I only hope you will remember that Scotland has claims on you, whenever you shall find your own mind so far at ease as to permit you to look abroad for consolation; and if it should happen that you thought of being here about our time of vacation, I have my time then entirely at my own command, and I need not say, that as much of it as could in any manner of way contribute to your amusement, is most heartily at yours. I have myself at present the melancholy task of watching the declining health of my elder brother, Major Scott, whom, I think, you have seen.

My literary occupation is getting through the press the Letters of Paul, of whose lucubrations I trust soon to send you a copy. As the observations of a bystander, perhaps you will find some amusement in them, especially as I had some channels of information not accessible to every one. The recess of our courts, which takes place to-morrow, for three weeks, will give me ample time to complete this job, and also the second volume of Triermain, which is nearly finished,—a strange rude story, founded partly on the ancient northern traditions respecting the Berserkers, whose peculiar habits and fits of martial frenzy make such a figure in the Sagas. I shall then set myself seriously to The Antiquary, of which I have only a very general sketch at present; but when once I get my pen to the paper it will walk fast enough. I am sometimes tempted to leave it alone, and try whether it will not write as well without the assistance of my head as with it. A hopeful prospect for the reader. In the mean while, the snow, which is now falling so fast as to make it dubious when this letter may reach Rokeby, is likely to forward these important avocations, by keeping me a constant resident in

Edinburgh, in lieu of my plan of going to Abbotsford, where I had a number of schemes in hand, in the way of planting and improving. I believe I told you I have made a considerable addition to my little farm, and extended my domains towards a wild lake, which I have a good prospect of acquiring also. It has a sort of legendary fame; for the persuasion of the solitary shepherds who approach its banks is, that it is tenanted by a very large amphibious animal called by them a water-bull, and which several of them pretend to have seen. As his dimensions greatly exceed those of an otter, I am tempted to think with Trinculo, "This is the devil, and no monster." But, after all, is it not strange, that as to almost all the lakes in Scotland, both Lowland and Highland, such a belief should prevail? and that the description popularly given uniformly corresponds with that of the hippopotamus? Is it possible, that at some remote period, that remarkable animal, like some others which have now disappeared, may have been an inhabitant of our large lakes? Certainly the vanishing of the mammoth and other animals from the face of the creation renders such a conjecture less wild than I would otherwise esteem it. It is certain we have lost the beaver, whose bones have been more than once found in our Selkirkshire bogs and marlmosses. The remains of the wild bull are very frequently found; and I have more than one skull with horns of most formidable dimensions.

About a fortnight ago we had a great football match in Selkirkshire, when the Duke of Buccleuch raised his banner (a very curious and ancient pennon) in great form. Your friend Walter was banner-bearer, dressed, like a forester of old, in green, with a green bonnet, and an eagle feather in it; and, as he was well mounted, and rode handsomely over the field, he was much admired by all his clansmen.

I have thrown these trifles together, without much hope that they will afford you amusement; but I know you will wish to know what I am about, and I have but trifles to send to those friends who interest themselves about a trifler. My present employment is watching, from time to time, the progress of a stupid cause, in order to be ready to reduce the sentence into writing, when the Court shall have decided whether Gordon of Kenmore or MacMichan of Meikleforthhead be the superior of the lands of Tarschrechan and Dalbrattie, and entitled to the feudal casualties payable forth thereof, which may amount to twopence sterling, once in half a dozen of years. Marry, sir, they make part of a freehold qualification, and the

decision may wing a voter. I did not send the book you received by the Selkirk coach. I wish I could have had sense enough to send anything which could afford you consolation. I think our friend Lady Louisa was likely to have had this attention; she has, God knows, been herself tried with affliction, and is well acquainted with the sources from which comfort can be drawn. My wife joins in kindest remembrances, as do Sophia and Walter. Ever yours affectionately,

Walter Scott.

This letter is dated the 22d of December. On the 26th, John Ballantyne, being then at Abbotsford, writes to Messrs. Constable: "Paul is *all* in hand;" and an envelope, addressed to James Ballantyne on the 29th, has preserved another little fragment of Scott's playful doggerel:—

> "Dear James—I'm done, thank God, with the long yarns
> Of the most prosy of Apostles—Paul;
> And now advance, sweet Heathen of Monkbarns,
> Step out, old quizz, as fast as I can scrawl."

Chapter XXXVII

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1816.

The year 1815 may be considered as, for Scott's peaceful tenor of life, an eventful one. That which followed has left almost its only traces in the successive appearance of nine volumes, which attest the prodigal genius, and hardly less astonishing industry of the man. Early in January were published Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk, of which I need not now say more than that they were received with lively curiosity, and general, though not vociferous applause. The first edition was an octavo, of 6000 copies; and it was followed, in the course of the next two or three years, by a second and a third, amounting together to 3000 more. The popularity of the novelist was at its height; and this admitted, if not avowed, specimen of Scott's prose must have been perceived, by all who had any share of discrimination, to flow from the same pen.

Mr. Terry produced, in the spring of 1816, a dramatic piece, entitled Guy Mannering, which met with great success on the London boards, and still continues to be a favorite with the theatrical public. What share the novelist himself had in this first specimen of what he used to call "the art of *Terryfying*," I cannot exactly say; but his correspondence shows that the pretty song of the Lullaby was not his only contribution to it; and I infer that he had taken the trouble to modify the plot, and rearrange, for stage purposes, a considerable part of the original dialogue. The casual risk of discovery, through the introduction of the song which had, in the mean

time, been communicated to one of his humble friends, the late Mr. Alexander Campbell, editor of Albyn's Anthology—(commonly known at Abbotsford as, by way of excellence, *The Dunniewassal*,)—and Scott's suggestions on that difficulty will amuse the reader of the following letter:—

TO D. TERRY, ESQ., ALFRED PLACE, BLOOMSBURY, LONDON.

Abbotsford, 18th April, 1816.

My dear Terry,—I give you joy of your promotion to the dignity of an householder, and heartily wish you all the success you so well deserve, to answer the approaching enlargement of your domestic establishment. You will find a house a very devouring monster, and that the purveying for it requires a little exertion, and a great deal of self-denial and arrangement. But when there is domestic peace and contentment, all that would otherwise be disagreeable, as restraining our taste and occupying our time, becomes easy. I trust Mrs. Terry will get her business easily over, and that you will soon "dandle Dickie on your knee."—I have been at the spring circuit, which made me late in receiving your letter, and there I was introduced to a man whom I never saw in my life before, namely, the proprietor of all the Pepper and Mustard family,—in other words, the genuine Dandie Dinmont. Dandie is himself modest, and says, "he b'lives it's only the dougs that is in the buik, and no himsel'." As the surveyor of taxes was going his ominous rounds past Hyndlea, which is the abode of Dandie, his whole pack rushed out upon the man of execution, and Dandie followed them (conscious that their number greatly exceeded his return), exclaiming, "The tae hauf o' them is but whalps, man." In truth, I knew nothing of the man, except his odd humor of having only two names for twenty dogs. But there are lines of general resemblance among all these hill-men, which there is no missing; and Jamie Davidson of Hyndlea certainly looks Dandie Dinmont remarkably well. He is much flattered with the compliment, and goes uniformly by the name among his comrades, but has never read the book. Ailie used to read it to him, but it set him to sleep. All this you will think funny enough. I am afraid I am in a scrape about the song, and that of my own making; for as it never occurred to me that there was anything odd in my writing two or three verses for you, which have no connection with the

novel, I was at no pains to disown them; and Campbell is just that sort of crazy creature, with whom there is no confidence, not from want of honor and disposition to oblige, but from his flighty temper. The music of *Cadil gŭ lo* is already printed in his publication, and nothing can be done with him, for fear of setting his tongue a-going. Erskine and you may consider whether you should barely acknowledge an obligation to an unknown friend, or pass the matter altogether in silence. In my opinion, my *first* idea was preferable to both, because I cannot see what earthly connection there is between the song and the novel, or how acknowledging the one is fathering the other. On the contrary, it seems to me that acknowledgment tends to exclude the idea of farther obligation than to the extent specified. I forgot also that I had given a copy of the lines to Mrs. Macleod of Macleod, from whom I had the air. But I remit the matter entirely to you and Erskine, for there must be many points in it which I cannot be supposed a good judge of. At any rate, don't let it delay your publication, and believe I shall be quite satisfied with what you think proper.

I have got from my friend Glengarry the noblest dog ever seen on the Border since Johnnie Armstrong's time. He is between the wolf and deer greyhound, about six feet long from the tip of the nose to the tail, and high and strong in proportion: he is quite gentle, and a great favorite: tell Will Erskine he will eat off his plate without being at the trouble to put a paw on the table or chair. I showed him to Mathews, who dined one day in Castle Street before I came here, where, except for Mrs. S., I am like unto

> "The spirit who bideth by himself,
> In the land of mist and snow"—

for it is snowing and hailing eternally, and will kill all the lambs to a certainty, unless it changes in a few hours. At any rate, it will cure us of the embarrassments arising from plenty and low markets. Much good luck to your dramatic exertions: when I can be of use, command me. Mrs. Scott joins me in regards to Mrs. Terry, and considers the house as the greatest possible bargain: the situation is all you can wish. Adieu! yours truly,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—On consideration, and comparing difficulties, I think I will settle with Campbell to take my name from the verses, as they stand in his

collection. The verses themselves I cannot take away without imprudent explanations; and as they go to other music, and stand without any name, they will probably not be noticed, so you need give yourself no farther trouble on the score. I should like to see my copy: pray send it to the post-office, under cover to Mr. Freeling, whose unlimited privilege is at my service on all occasions.

Early in May appeared the novel of The Antiquary, which seems to have been begun a little before the close of 1815. It came out at a moment of domestic distress.

Throughout the year 1815, Major John Scott had been drooping. He died on the 8th of May, 1816; and I extract the letter in which this event was announced to Mr. Thomas Scott by his only surviving brother.

TO THOMAS SCOTT, ESQ., PAYMASTER OF THE 70TH REGIMENT, CANADA.

Edinburgh, 15th May, 1816.

My Dear Tom,—This brings you the melancholy news of our brother John's concluding his long and lingering illness by death, upon Thursday last. We had thought it impossible he should survive the winter, but, as the weather became milder, he gathered strength, and went out several times. In the beginning of the week he became worse, and on Wednesday kept his bed. On Thursday, about two o'clock, they sent me an express to Abbotsford—the man reached me at nine. I immediately set out, and travelled all night—but had not the satisfaction to see my brother alive. He had died about four o'clock, without much pain, being completely exhausted. You will naturally feel most anxious about my mother's state of health and spirits. I am happy to say she has borne this severe shock with great firmness and resignation, is perfectly well in her health, and as strong in her mind as ever you knew her. She feels her loss, but is also sensible that protracted existence, with a constitution so irretrievably broken up, could have been no blessing. Indeed I must say, that, in many respects, her situation will be more comfortable on account of this removal, when the first shock is over; for to watch an invalid, and to undergo all the changes of a temper fretted by suffering, suited ill with her age and habits. The funeral, which took place yesterday, was decent and private, becoming our father's eldest son, and the head of a

quiet family. After it, I asked Hay Donaldson and Mr. Macculloch to look over his papers, in case there should be any testamentary provision, but none such was found; nor do I think he had any intention of altering the destination which divides his effects between his surviving brothers.—Your affectionate

W. S.

A few days afterwards, he hands to Mr. Thomas Scott a formal statement of pecuniary affairs; the result of which was, that the Major had left something not much under £6000. Major Scott, from all I have heard, was a sober, sedate bachelor, of dull mind and frugal tastes, who, after his retirement from the army, divided his time between his mother's primitive fireside, and the society of a few whist-playing brother officers, that met for an evening rubber at Fortune's tavern. But, making every allowance for his retired and thrifty habits, I infer that the payments made to each of the three brothers out of their father's estate must have, prior to 1816, amounted to £5000. From the letter conveying this statement (29th May), I extract a few sentences:—

Dear Tom,—... Should the possession of this sum, and the certainty that you must, according to the course of nature, in a short space of years succeed to a similar sum of £3000 belonging to our mother, induce you to turn your thoughts to Scotland, I shall be most happy to forward your views with any influence I may possess; and I have little doubt that, sooner or later, something may be done. But, unfortunately, every avenue is now choked with applicants, whose claims are very strong; for the number of disbanded officers, and public servants dismissed in consequence of Parliament turning restive and refusing the income-tax, is great and increasing. Economy is the order of the day, and I assure you they are shaving properly close. It would, no doubt, be comparatively easy to get you a better situation where you are, but then it is bidding farewell to your country, at least for a long time, and separating your children from all knowledge of those with whom they are naturally connected. I shall anxiously expect to hear from you on your views and wishes. I think, at all events, you ought to get rid of the drudgery of the paymastership—but not without trying to exchange it for something else. I do not know how it is with you—but I do not feel myself quite so *young* as I was when we met last, and I should like

well to see my only brother return to his own country and settle, without thoughts of leaving it, till it is exchanged for one that is dark and distant.... I left all Jack's personal trifles at my mother's disposal. There was nothing of the slightest value, excepting his gold watch, which was my sister's, and a good one. My mother says he had wished my son Walter should have it, as his male representative—which I can only accept on condition *your* little Walter will accept a similar token of regard from his remaining uncle.—Yours affectionately,

W. S.

The letter in which Scott communicated his brother's death to Mr. Morritt gives us his own original opinion of The Antiquary. It has also some remarks on the separation of Lord and Lady Byron—and the "domestic verses" of the noble poet.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., LONDON.

Edinburgh, May 16, 1816.

My dear Morritt,—I have been occupied of late with scenes of domestic distress, my poor brother, Major John Scott, having last week closed a life which wasting disease had long rendered burthensome. His death, under all the circumstances, cannot be termed a subject of deep affliction; and though we were always on fraternal terms of mutual kindness and good-will, yet our habits of life, our taste for society and circles of friends, were so totally different, that there was less frequent intercourse between us than our connection and real liking to each other might have occasioned. Yet it is a heavy consideration to have lost the last but one who was interested in our early domestic life, our habits of boyhood, and our first friends and connections. It makes one look about and see how the scene has changed around him, and how he himself has been changed with it. My only remaining brother is in Canada, and seems to have an intention of remaining there; so that my mother, now upwards of eighty, has now only one child left to her out of thirteen whom she has borne. She is a most excellent woman, possessed, even at her advanced age, of all the force of mind and sense of duty which have carried her through so many domestic griefs, as the successive deaths of eleven children, some of them come to men and women's estate, naturally infers. She is the principal subject of my

attention at present, and is, I am glad to say, perfectly well in body and composed in mind.

Nothing can give me more pleasure than the prospect of seeing you in September, which will suit our motions perfectly well. I trust I shall have an opportunity to introduce you to some of our glens which you have not yet seen. But I hope we shall have some mild weather before that time, for we are now in the seventh month of winter, which almost leads me to suppose that we shall see no summer this season. As for spring, that is past praying for. In the month of November last, people were skating in the neighborhood of Edinburgh; and now, in the middle of May, the snow is lying white on Arthur's Seat, and on the range of the Pentlands. It is really fearful, and the sheep are perishing by scores. *Jam satis terræ nivis*, etc., may well be taken up as the song of eighteen hundred and sixteen.

So Lord Byron's romance seems to be concluded for one while—and it is surely time, after he has announced, or rather they themselves have announced, half-a-dozen blackguard newspaper editors, to have been his confidants on the occasion. Surely it is a strange thirst of public fame that seeks such a road to it. But Lord Byron, with high genius and many points of a noble and generous feeling, has Childe Harolded himself, and outlawed himself, into too great a resemblance with the pictures of his imagination. He has one excuse, however, and it is a sad one. I have been reckoned to make a good hit enough at a pirate, or an outlaw, or a smuggling bandit; but I cannot say I was ever so much enchanted with my work as to think of carrying off a *drift* of my neighbor's sheep, or half a dozen of his milk cows. Only I remember, in the rough times, having a scheme with the Duke of Buccleuch, that when the worst came to the worst, we should repair Hermitage Castle, and live, like Robin Hood and his merry men, at the expense of all round us. But this presupposed a grand *bouleversement* of society. In the mean while, I think my noble friend is something like my old peacock, who chooses to bivouac apart from his lady, and sit below my bedroom window, to keep me awake with his screeching lamentation. Only I own he is not equal in melody to Lord Byron, for *Fare-thee-well—and if for ever*, etc., is a very sweet dirge indeed. After all, *C'est génie mal logé*, and that's all that can be said about it.

I am quite reconciled to your opinions on the income-tax, and am not at all in despair at the prospect of keeping £200 a year in my pocket, since the ministers can fadge without it. But their throwing the helve after the hatchet, and giving up the malt-duty because they had lost the other, was droll enough. After all, our fat friend must learn to live within compass, and fire off no more crackers in the Park, for John Bull is getting dreadfully sore on all sides when money is concerned.

I sent you, some time since, The Antiquary. It is not so interesting as its predecessors—the period did not admit of so much romantic situation. But it has been more fortunate than any of them in the sale, for 6000 went off in the first six days, and it is now at press again; which is very flattering to the unknown author. Another incognito proposes immediately to resume the second volume of Triermain, which is at present in the state of the Bear and Fiddle. Adieu, dear Morritt.

Ever yours,

Walter Scott.

Speaking of his third novel in a letter of the same date to Terry, Scott says: "It wants the romance of Waverley and the adventure of Guy Mannering; and yet there is some salvation about it, for if a man will paint from nature, he will be likely to amuse those who are daily looking at it."

After a little pause of hesitation, The Antiquary attained popularity not inferior to Guy Mannering; and though the author appears for a moment to have shared the doubts which he read in the countenance of James Ballantyne, it certainly was, in the sequel, his chief favorite among all his novels. Nor is it difficult to account for this preference, without laying any stress on the fact, that, during a few short weeks, it was pretty commonly talked of as a falling off from its immediate predecessors—and that some minor critics reëchoed this stupid whisper in print. In that view, there were many of its successors that had much stronger claims on the parental instinct of protection. But the truth is, that although Scott's Introduction of 1830 represents him as pleased with fancying that, in the principal personage, he had embalmed a worthy friend of his boyish days, his own antiquarian propensities, originating perhaps in the kind attentions of George Constable of Wallace-Craigie, and fostered not a little, at about as

ductile a period, by those of old Clerk of Eldin, and John Ramsay of Ochtertyre, had by degrees so developed themselves, that he could hardly, even when The Antiquary was published, have scrupled about recognizing a quaint caricature of the founder of Abbotsford Museum, in the inimitable portraiture of the Laird of Monkbarns. The Descriptive Catalogue of that collection, which he began towards the close of his life, but, alas, never finished, is entitled "Reliquiæ Trottcosianæ—or the Gabions of the late Jonathan Oldbuck, Esq."

But laying this, which might have been little more than a good-humored pleasantry, out of the question, there is assuredly no one of all his works on which more of his own early associations have left their image. Of those early associations, as his full-grown tastes were all the progeny, so his genius, in all its happiest efforts, was the "Recording Angel;" and when George Constable first expounded his "Gabions" to the child that was to immortalize his name, they were either wandering hand in hand over the field where the grass still grew rank upon the grave of *Balmawhapple*, or sauntering on the beach where the *Mucklebackets* of Prestonpans dried their nets, singing,—

> "Weel may the boatie row, and better may she speed,
> O weel may the boatie row that wins the bairns' bread"—

or telling wild stories about cliff-escapes and the funerals of shipwrecked fishermen.

Considered by itself, without reference to these sources of personal interest, this novel seems to me to possess, almost throughout, in common with its two predecessors, a kind of simple unsought charm, which the subsequent works of the series hardly reached, save in occasional snatches: like them it is, in all its humbler and softer scenes, the transcript of actual Scottish life, as observed by the man himself. And I think it must also be allowed that he has nowhere displayed his highest art, that of skilful contrast, in greater perfection. Even the tragic romance of Waverley does not set off its Macwheebles and Callum Begs better than the oddities of Jonathan Oldbuck and his circle are relieved, on the one hand, by the stately gloom of the Glenallans, on the other, by the stern affliction of the poor fisherman, who, when discovered repairing the "auld black bitch o' a boat" in which his boy had been lost, and congratulated by his visitor on being capable of the exertion, makes answer,—"And what would you have me to

do, unless I wanted to see four children starve, because one is drowned? *It's weel wi' you gentles, that can sit in the house wi' handkerchers at your een, when ye lose a friend; but the like o' us maun to our wark again, if our hearts were beating as hard as my hammer.*"

It may be worth noting, that it was in correcting the proof sheets of this novel that Scott first took to equipping his chapters with mottoes of his own fabrication. On one occasion he happened to ask John Ballantyne, who was sitting by him, to hunt for a particular passage in Beaumont and Fletcher. John did as he was bid, but did not succeed in discovering the lines. "Hang it, Johnnie," cried Scott, "I believe I can make a motto sooner than you will find one." He did so accordingly; and from that hour, whenever memory failed to suggest an appropriate epigraph, he had recourse to the inexhaustible mines of "*old play*" or "*old ballad*," to which we owe some of the most exquisite verses that ever flowed from his pen.

Unlike, I believe, most men, whenever Scott neared the end of one composition, his spirits seem to have caught a new spring of buoyancy, and before the last sheet was sent from his desk, he had crowded his brain with the imagination of another fiction. The Antiquary was published, as we have seen, in May, but by the beginning of April he had already opened to the Ballantynes the plan of the first Tales of my Landlord; and—to say nothing of Harold the Dauntless, which he began shortly after The Bridal of Triermain was finished, and which he seems to have kept before him for two years as a congenial plaything, to be taken up whenever the coach brought no proof sheets to jog him as to serious matters—he had also, before this time, undertaken to write the historical department of the Register for 1814. Mr. Southey had, for reasons upon which I do not enter, discontinued his services to that work: and it was now doubly necessary, after trying for one year a less eminent hand, that if the work were not to be dropped altogether, some strenuous exertion should be made to sustain its character. Scott had not yet collected the materials requisite for his historical sketch of a year distinguished for the importance and complexity of its events; but these, he doubted not, would soon reach him, and he felt no hesitation about pledging himself to complete, not only that sketch, but four new volumes of prose romances—and his Harold the Dauntless also, if Ballantyne could make any suitable arrangement on that score—between the April and the Christmas of 1816.

The Antiquary had been published by Constable, but I presume that, in addition to the usual stipulations, he had been again, on that occasion, solicited to relieve John Ballantyne and Co.'s stock to an extent which he did not find quite convenient; and at all events he had of late shown a considerable reluctance to employ James Ballantyne and Co. as printers. One or other of these impediments is alluded to in a note of Scott's, which, though undated, has been pasted into John Ballantyne's private letter-book among the documents of the period in question. It is in these words:—

Dear John,—I have seen the great swab, who is supple as a glove, and will do ALL, which some interpret NOTHING. However, we shall do well enough.

W. S.

Constable had been admitted, almost from the beginning, into the *secret* of the Novels—and for that, among other reasons, it would have been desirable for the Novelist to have him continue the publisher without interruption; but Scott was led to suspect, that if he were called upon to conclude a bargain for a fourth novel before the third had made its appearance, his scruples as to the matter of *printing* might at least protract the treaty; and why Scott should have been urgently desirous of seeing the transaction settled before the expiration of the half-yearly term of Whitsunday is sufficiently explained by the fact, that though so much of the old unfortunate stock of John Ballantyne and Co. still remained on hand—and with it some occasional recurrence of commercial difficulty as to floating bills was to be expected—while James Ballantyne's management of the pecuniary affairs of the printing-house had continued to be highly negligent and irregular—nevertheless, the sanguine author had gone on purchasing one patch of land after another, until his estate at Abbotsford had already grown from 150 to nearly 1000 acres. The property all about his original farm had been in the hands of various small holders (Scotticè *cock-lairds*;) these persons were sharp enough to understand, erelong, that their neighbor could with difficulty resist any temptation that might present itself in the shape of an offer of more acres; and thus he proceeded buying up lot after lot of unimproved ground, at extravagant prices,—his "appetite increasing by what it fed on," while the ejected yeomen set themselves

down elsewhere, to fatten at their leisure upon the profits—most commonly the anticipated profits—of "The Scotch Novels."

He was ever and anon pulled up with a momentary misgiving,—and resolved that the latest acquisition should be the last, until he could get rid entirely of "John Ballantyne and Co." But John Ballantyne was, from the utter lightness of his mind, his incapacity to look a day before him, and his eager impatience to enjoy the passing hour, the very last man in the world who could, under such circumstances, have been a serviceable agent. Moreover, John, too, had his professional ambition: he was naturally proud of his connection, however secondary, with the publication of these works —and this connection, though subordinate, was still very profitable; he must have suspected, that should his name disappear altogether from the list of booksellers, it would be a very difficult matter for him to retain any concern in them; and I cannot, on the whole, but consider it as certain that, the first and more serious embarrassments being overcome, he was far from continuing to hold by his patron's anxiety for the total abolition of their unhappy copartnership. He, at all events, unless when some sudden emergency arose, flattered Scott's own gay imagination, by uniformly representing everything in the most smiling colors; and though Scott, in his replies, seldom failed to introduce some passing hint of caution—such as "*Nullum numen abest si sit prudentia*"—he more and more took home to himself the agreeable cast of his *Rigdum's* anticipations, and wrote to him in a vein as merry as his own;—*e. g.*—"As for our stock,

> "'T will be wearing awa', John,
> Like snaw-wreaths when it's thaw, John," etc., etc., etc.

I am very sorry, in a word, to confess my conviction that John Ballantyne, however volatile and light-headed, acted at this period with cunning selfishness, both by Scott and by Constable. He well knew that it was to Constable alone that his firm had more than once owed its escape from utter ruin and dishonor; and he must also have known, that had a fair straightforward effort been made for that purpose, after the triumphant career of the Waverley series had once commenced, nothing could have been more easy than to bring all the affairs of his "back-stock," etc., to a complete close, by entering into a distinct and candid treaty on that subject, in connection with the future works of the great Novelist, either with Constable or with any other first-rate house in the trade. But John,

foreseeing that, were that unhappy concern quite out of the field, he must himself subside into a mere clerk of the printing company, seems to have parried the blow by the only arts of any consequence in which he ever was an adept. He appears to have systematically disguised from Scott the extent to which the whole Ballantyne concern had been sustained by Constable—especially during his Hebridean tour of 1814, and his Continental one of 1815—and prompted and enforced the idea of trying other booksellers from time to time, instead of adhering to Constable, merely for the selfish purposes,—first, of facilitating the immediate discount of bills;—secondly, of further perplexing Scott's affairs, the entire disentanglement of which would have been, as he fancied, prejudicial to his own personal importance.

It was resolved, accordingly, to offer the risk and half profits of the first edition of another new novel—or rather collection of novels—not to Messrs. Constable, but to Mr. Murray of Albemarle Street, and Mr. Blackwood, who was then Murray's agent in Scotland; but it was at the same time resolved, partly because Scott wished to try another experiment on the public sagacity, but partly also, no question, from the wish to spare Constable's feelings, that the title-page of the Tales of my Landlord should not bear the magical words "By the Author of Waverley." The facility with which both Murray and Blackwood embraced such a proposal, as no untried novelist, being sane, could have dreamt of hazarding, shows that neither of them had any doubt as to the identity of the author. They both considered the withholding of the avowal on the forthcoming title-page as likely to check very much the first success of the book; but they were both eager to prevent Constable's acquiring a sort of prescriptive right to publish for the unrivalled novelist, and willing to disturb his tenure at this additional, and, as they thought it, wholly unnecessary risk.

How sharply the unseen parent watched this first negotiation of his *Jedediah Cleishbotham* will appear from one of his letters:—

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE, HANOVER STREET, EDINBURGH.

Abbotsford, April 29, 1816.

Dear John,—James has made one or two important mistakes in the bargain with Murray and Blackwood. Briefly as follows:—

1stly, Having only authority from me to promise 6000 copies, he proposes they shall have the copyright *forever*. I will see their noses cheese first.

2dly, He proposes I shall have twelve months' bills—I have always got six. However, I would not stand on that.

3dly, He talks of volumes being put into the publisher's hands to consider and decide on. No such thing; a bare perusal at St. John Street only.

Then for omissions—It is NOT stipulated that we supply the paper and print of successive editions. This must be nailed, and not left to understanding.—Secondly, I will have London bills as well as Blackwood's.

If they agree to these conditions, good and well. If they demur, Constable must be instantly tried; giving half to the Longmans, and *we* drawing on *them* for that moiety, or Constable lodging their bill in our hands. You will understand it is a four-volume touch—a work totally different in style and structure from the others; a new cast, in short, of the net which has hitherto made miraculous draughts. I do not limit you to terms, because I think you will make them better than I can do. But he must do more than others, since he will not or cannot print with us. For every point but that, I would rather deal with Constable than any one; he has always shown himself spirited, judicious, and liberal. Blackwood must be brought to the point *instantly*; and *whenever* he demurs, Constable must be treated with; for there is no use in suffering the thing to be blown on. At the same time, you need not conceal from him that there were some proposals elsewhere, but you may add, with truth, I would rather close with him. Yours truly,

W. S.

P. S.—I think Constable should jump at this affair; for I believe the work will be very popular.

Messrs. Murray and Blackwood agreed to all the author's conditions here expressed. They also relieved John Ballantyne and Co. of stock to the value of £500; and at least Mr. Murray must, moreover, have subsequently consented to anticipate the period of his payments. At all events, I find, in a letter of Scott's, dated in the subsequent August, this new echo of the old advice:—

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

Dear John,—I have the pleasure to enclose Murray's acceptances. I earnestly recommend to you to push, realizing as much as you can.

"Consider weel, gude man,
We hae but borrowed gear;
The horse that I ride on,
It is John Murray's mear."

Yours truly,

W. Scott.

I know not how much of the tale of The Black Dwarf had been seen by Blackwood, in St. John Street, before he concluded this bargain for himself and his friend Murray; but when the closing sheets of that novel reached him, he considered them as by no means sustaining the delightful promise of the opening ones. He was a man of strong talents, and, though without anything that could be called learning, of very respectable information—greatly superior to what has, in this age, been common in his profession; acute, earnest, eminently zealous in whatever he put his hand to; upright, honest, sincere, and courageous. But as Constable owed his first introduction to the upper world of literature and of society in general to his Edinburgh Review, so did Blackwood his to the Magazine, which has now made his name familiar to the world—and at the period of which I write, that miscellany was unborn; he was known only as a diligent antiquarian bookseller of the old town of Edinburgh, and the Scotch agent of the great London publisher, Murray. The abilities, in short, which he lived to develop, were as yet unsuspected—unless, perhaps, among a small circle; and the knowledge of the world, which so few men gather from anything but painful collision with various conflicting orders of their fellow-men, was not his. He was to the last plain and blunt; at this time I can easily believe him to have been so to a degree which Scott might look upon as "ungracious"—I take the epithet from one of his letters to James Ballantyne. Mr. Blackwood, therefore, upon reading what seemed to him the lame and impotent conclusion of a well-begun story, did not search about for any glossy periphrase, but at once requested James Ballantyne to inform the unknown author that such was his opinion. This might possibly have been

endured; but Blackwood, feeling, I have no doubt, a genuine enthusiasm for the author's fame, as well as a just tradesman's anxiety as to his own adventure, proceeded to suggest the outline of what would, in his judgment, be a better upwinding of the plot of The Black Dwarf, and concluded with announcing his willingness, in case the proposed alteration were agreed to, that the whole expense of cancelling and reprinting a certain number of sheets should be charged to his own account. He appears to have further indicated that he had taken counsel with some literary person, on whose taste he placed great reliance, and who, if he had not originated, at least approved of the proposed process of recasting. Had Scott never possessed any such system of inter-agency as the Ballantynes supplied, he would, among other and perhaps greater inconveniences, have escaped that of the want of personal familiarity with several persons, with whose confidence,—and why should I not add?—with the innocent gratification of whose little vanities—his own pecuniary interests were often deeply connected. A very little personal contact would have introduced such a character as Blackwood's to the respect, nay, to the affectionate respect, of Scott, who, above all others, was ready to sympathize cordially with honest and able men, in whatever condition of life he discovered them. He did both know and appreciate Blackwood better in after-times; but in 1816, when this communication reached him, the name was little more than a name, and his answer to the most solemn of go-betweens was in these terms, which I sincerely wish I could tell how Signior Aldiborontiphoscophornio translated into any dialect submissible to Blackwood's apprehension:—

Dear James,—

I have received Blackwood's impudent proposal. G— d— his soul! Tell him and his coadjutor that I belong to the Black Hussars of Literature, who neither give nor receive criticism. I'll be cursed but this is the most impudent proposal that ever was made.

W. S.

While these volumes were in progress, Scott found time to make an excursion into Perthshire and Dumbartonshire, for the sake of showing the scenery, made famous in The Lady of the Lake and Waverley, to his wife's old friends, Miss Dumergue and Mrs. Sarah Nicolson, who had never

before been in Scotland. The account which he gives of these ladies' visit at Abbotsford, and this little tour, in a letter to Mr. Morritt, shows the "Black Hussar of Literature" in his gentler and more habitual mood.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., ROKEBY PARK.

Abbotsford, 21st August, 1816.

My dear Morritt,—I have not had a moment's kindly leisure to answer your kind letter, and to tell how delighted I shall be to see you in this least of all possible dwellings, but where we, nevertheless, can contrive a pilgrim's quarters and the warmest welcome for you and any friend of your journey; —if young Stanley, so much the better. Now, as to the important business with the which I have been occupied: You are to know we have had our kind hostesses of Piccadilly upon a two months' visit to us. We owed them so much hospitality, that we were particularly anxious to make Scotland agreeable to the good girls. But, alas, the wind has blown, and the rain has fallen, in a style which beats all that ever I remembered. We accomplished, with some difficulty, a visit to Loch Katrine and Loch Lomond, and, by dint of the hospitality of Cambusmore and the Ross, we defied bad weather, wet roads, and long walks. But the weather settled into regular tempest, when we settled at Abbotsford; and, though the natives, accustomed to bad weather (though not at such a time of year), contrived to brave the extremities of the season, it only served to increase the dismay of our unlucky visitors, who, accustomed only to Paris and London, expected *fiacres* at the Milestane Cross, and a pair of oars at the Deadman's Haugh. Add to this a strong disposition to *commérage*, when there was no possibility of gratifying it, and a total indisposition to scenery or rural amusements, which were all we had to offer—and you will pity both hosts and guests. I have the gratification to think I fully supported the hospitality of my country. I walked them to death, I talked them to death, I showed them landscapes which the driving rain hardly permitted them to see, and told them of feuds about which they cared as little as I do about their next-door news in Piccadilly. Yea, I even played at cards, and as I had Charlotte for a partner, so ran no risk of being scolded, I got on pretty well. Still the weather was so execrable, that, as the old drunken landlord used to say at Arroquhar, "I was perfectly ashamed of it;" and, to this moment, I wonder how my two friends fought it out so patiently as they did. But the young

people and the cottages formed considerable resources. Yesterday they left us, deeply impressed with the conviction, which I can hardly blame, that the sun never shone in Scotland,—which that noble luminary seems disposed to confirm, by making this the first fair day we have seen this month—so that his beams will greet them at Longtown, as if he were determined to put Scotland to utter shame.

In you I expect a guest of a different calibre; and I think (barring downright rain) I can promise you some sport of one kind or other. We have a good deal of game about us; and Walter, to whom I have resigned my gun and license, will be an excellent attendant. He brought in six brace of moor-fowl on the 12th, which had (*si fas est diceri*) its own effect in softening the minds of our guests towards this unhappy climate. In other respects things look melancholy enough here. Corn is, however, rising, and the poor have plenty of work, and wages which, though greatly inferior to what they had when hands were scarce, assort perfectly well with the present state of the markets. Most folks try to live as much on their own produce as they can, by way of fighting off distress; and though speculating farmers and landlords must suffer, I think the temporary ague-fit will, on the whole, be advantageous to the country. It will check that inordinate and unbecoming spirit of expense, or rather extravagance, which was poisoning all classes, and bring us back to the sober virtues of our ancestors. It will also have the effect of teaching the landed interest, that their connection with their farmers should be of a nature more intimate than that of mere payment and receipt of rent, and that the largest offerer for a lease is often the person least entitled to be preferred as a tenant. Above all, it will complete the destruction of those execrable quacks, terming themselves land-doctors, who professed, from a two days' scamper over your estate, to tell you its constitution,—in other words its value,—acre by acre. These men, paid according to the golden hopes they held out, afforded by their reports one principal means of deceiving both landlord and tenant, by setting an ideal and extravagant value upon land, which seemed to entitle the one to expect, and the other to offer, rent far beyond what any expectation formed by either, upon their own acquaintance with the property, could rationally have warranted. More than one landed gentleman has cursed, in my presence, the day he ever consulted one of those empirics, whose prognostications

induced him to reject the offers of substantial men, practically acquainted with the *locale*.

Ever, my dear Morritt, most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

In October, 1816, appeared the Edinburgh Annual Register, containing Scott's historical sketch of the year 1814—a composition which would occupy at least four such volumes as the reader has now in his hand. Though executed with extraordinary rapidity, the sketch is as clear as spirited; but I need say no more of it here, as the author travels mostly over the same ground again in his Life of Napoleon.

Scott's correspondence proves, that during this autumn he had received many English guests besides the good spinsters of Piccadilly and Mr. Morritt. I regret to add, it also proves that he had continued all the while to be annoyed with calls for money from John Ballantyne; yet before the 12th of November called him to Edinburgh, he appears to have nearly finished the first Tales of my Landlord. He had, moreover, concluded a negotiation with Constable and Longman for a series of Letters on the History of Scotland: of which, however, if he ever wrote any part, the MS. has not been discovered. It is probable that he may have worked some detached fragments into his long-subsequent Tales of a Grandfather. The following letter shows likewise that he was now busy with plans of building at Abbotsford, and deep in consultation on that subject with an artist eminent for his skill in Gothic architecture,—Mr. Edward Blore:—

TO DANIEL TERRY, ESQ.

November 12, 1816.

My dear Terry,—I have been shockingly negligent in acknowledging your repeated favors; but it so happened, that I have had very little to *say*, with a great deal to *do*; so that I trusted to your kindness to forgive my apparent want of kindness, and indisputable lack of punctuality. You will readily suppose that I have heard with great satisfaction of the prosperity of your household, particularly of the good health of my little namesake and his mother. Godmothers of yore used to be fairies; and though only a godfather, I think of sending you, one day, a *fairy* gift—a little drama, namely, which,

if the audience be indulgent, may be of use to him. Of course, you will stand godfather to it yourself: it is yet only in embryo—a sort of poetical Hans in Kelder—nor am I sure when I can bring him forth; not for this season, at any rate. You will receive, in the course of a few days, my late *whereabouts* in four volumes: there are two tales—the last of which I really prefer to any fictitious narrative I have yet been able to produce—the first is wish-washy enough. The subject of the second tale lies among the old Scottish Cameronians—nay, I'll tickle ye off a Covenanter as readily as old Jack could do a young Prince; and a rare fellow he is, when brought forth in his true colors. Were it not for the necessity of using Scriptural language, which is essential to the character, but improper for the stage, it would be very dramatic. But of all this you will judge by and by. To give the go-by to the public, I have doubled and leaped into my form, like a hare in snow: that is, I have changed my publisher, and come forth like a maiden knight's white shield (there is a conceit!) without any adhesion to fame gained in former adventures (another!) or, in other words, with a virgin title-page (another!)—I should not be so light-hearted about all this, but that it is very nearly finished and out, which is always a blithe moment for Mr. Author. And now to other matters. The books came safe, and were unpacked two days since, on our coming to town—most ingeniously were they stowed in the legs of the very handsome stand for Lord Byron's vase, with which our friend George Bullock has equipped me. I was made very happy to receive him at Abbotsford, though only for a start; and no less so to see Mr. Blore, from whom I received your last letter. He is a very fine young man, modest, simple, and unaffected in his manners, as well as a most capital artist. I have had the assistance of both these gentlemen in arranging an addition to the cottage at Abbotsford, intended to connect the present farmhouse with the line of low buildings to the right of it. Mr. Bullock will show you the plan, which I think is very ingenious. He has promised to give it his consideration with respect to the interior; and Mr. Blore has drawn me a very handsome elevation, both to the road and to the river. I expect to get some decorations from the old Tolbooth of Edinburgh, particularly the cope-stones of the doorway, or lintels, as we call them, and a *niche* or two —one very handsome indeed! Better get a niche *from* the Tolbooth than a niche *in* it, to which such building operations are apt to bring the projectors. This addition will give me: first, a handsome boudoir, in which I intend to place Mr. Bullock's Shakespeare, with his superb cabinet, which serves as a

pedestal. This opens into the little drawing-room, to which it serves as a chapel of ease; and on the other side, to a handsome dining-parlor of 27 feet by 18, with three windows to the north, and one to the south,—the last to be Gothic, and filled with stained glass. Besides these commodities, there is a small conservatory or greenhouse; and a study for myself, which we design to fit up with ornaments from Melrose Abbey. Bullock made several casts with his own hands—masks, and so forth, delightful for cornices, etc.

Do not let Mrs. Terry think of the windows till little Wat is duly cared after. I am informed by Mr. Blore that he is a fine thriving fellow, very like papa. About my armorial bearings: I will send you a correct drawing as I can get hold of Blore; namely—of the scutcheons of my grandsires on each side, and my own. I could detail them in the jargon of heraldry, but it is better to speak to your eyes by translating them into colored drawings, as the sublime science of armory has fallen into some neglect of late years, with all its mascles, buckles, crescents, and boars of the first, second, third, and fourth.

I was very sorry I had no opportunity of showing attention to your friend Mr. Abbot, not being in town at the time. I grieve to say that neither the genius of Kean nor the charms of Miss O'Neill could bring me from the hillside and the sweet society of Tom Purdie. All our family are very well—Walter as tall nearly as I am, fishing salmon and shooting moor-fowl and blackcock, in good style; the girls growing up, and, as yet, not losing their simplicity of character; little Charles excellent at play, and not deficient at learning, when the young dog will take pains. Abbotsford is looking pretty at last, and the planting is making some show. I have now several hundred acres thereof, running out as far as beyond the lake. We observe with great pleasure the steady rise which you make in public opinion, and expect, one day, to hail you stage-manager. Believe me, my dear Terry, always very much yours,

W. Scott.

P. S.—The Counsellor and both the Ballantynes are well and hearty.

On the first of December, the first series of the Tales of my Landlord appeared, and notwithstanding the silence of the title-page, and the change of publishers, and the attempt which had certainly been made to vary the

style both of delineation and of language, all doubts whether they were or were not from the same hand with Waverley had worn themselves out before the lapse of a week.—The enthusiasm of their reception among the highest literary circles of London may be gathered from the following letter:—

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., EDINBURGH.

Albemarle Street, 14th December, 1816.

Dear Sir,—Although I dare not address you as the author of certain "Tales" (which, however, must be written either by Walter Scott or the Devil), yet nothing can restrain me from thinking it is to your influence with the author that I am indebted for the essential honor of being one of their publishers, and I must intrude upon you to offer my most hearty thanks—not divided, but doubled—alike for my worldly gain therein, and for the great acquisition of professional reputation which their publication has already procured me. I believe I might, under any oath that could be proposed, swear that I never experienced such unmixed pleasure as the reading of this exquisite work has afforded me; and if you could see me, as the author's literary chamberlain, receiving the unanimous and vehement praises of every one who has read it, and the curses of those whose needs my scanty supply could not satisfy, you might judge of the sincerity with which I now entreat you to assure him of the most complete success. Lord Holland said, when I asked his opinion—"Opinion! We did not one of us go to bed last night—nothing slept but my gout." Frere, Hallam, Boswell, Lord Glenbervie, William Lamb, all agree that it surpasses all the other novels. Gifford's estimate is increased at every reperusal. Heber says there are only two men in the world—Walter Scott and Lord Byron. Between you, you have given existence to a third—Ever your faithful servant,

John Murray.

To this cordial effusion Scott returned the following answer. It was necessary, since he had fairly resolved against compromising his incognito, that he should be prepared not only to repel the impertinent curiosity of strangers, but to evade the proffered congratulations of overflowing kindness. He contrived, however, to do so, on this and all similar occasions, in a style of equivoque which could never be seriously misunderstood:—

TO JOHN MURRAY, ESQ., ALBEMARLE STREET,
LONDON.

Edinburgh, 18th December, 1816.

My dear Sir,—I give you heartily joy of the success of the Tales, although I do not claim that paternal interest in them which my friends do me the credit to assign me. I assure you I have never read a volume of them until they were printed, and can only join with the rest of the world in applauding the true and striking portraits which they present of old Scottish manners. I do not expect implicit reliance to be placed on my disavowal, because I know very well that he who is disposed not to own a work must necessarily deny it, and that otherwise his secret would be at the mercy of all who choose to ask the question, since silence in such a case must always pass for consent, or rather assent. But I have a mode of convincing you that I am perfectly serious in my denial—pretty similar to that by which Solomon distinguished the fictitious from the real mother—and that is, by reviewing the work, which I take to be an operation equal to that of quartering the child. But this is only on condition I can have Mr. Erskine's assistance, who admires the work greatly more than I do, though I think the painting of the second Tale both true and powerful. I knew Old Mortality very well; his name was Paterson, but few knew him otherwise than by his nickname. The first Tale is not very original in its concoction, and lame and impotent in its conclusion. My love to Gifford. I have been over head and ears in work this summer, or I would have sent the Gypsies; indeed I was partly stopped by finding it impossible to procure a few words of their language.

Constable wrote to me about two months since, desirous of having a new edition of Paul; but not hearing from you, I conclude you are still on hand. Longman's people had then only sixty copies.

Kind compliments to Heber, whom I expected at Abbotsford this summer; also to Mr. Croker and all your four o'clock visitors. I am just going to Abbotsford to make a small addition to my premises there. I have now about 700 acres, thanks to the booksellers and the discerning public. Yours truly,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—I have much to ask about Lord Byron if I had time. The third canto of the Childe is inimitable. Of the last poems, there are one or two which indicate rather an irregular play of imagination. What a pity that a man of such exquisite genius will not be contented to be happy on the ordinary terms! I declare my heart bleeds when I think of him, self-banished from the country to which he is an honor.

Mr. Murray, gladly embracing this offer of an article for his journal on the Tales of my Landlord, begged Scott to take a wider scope, and dropping all respect for the idea of a divided parentage, to place together any materials he might have for the illustration of the Waverley Novels in general; he suggested in particular, that, instead of drawing up a long-promised disquisition on the Gypsies in a separate shape, whatever he had to say concerning that picturesque generation might be introduced by way of comment on the character of Meg Merrilies. What Scott's original conception had been I know not; he certainly gave his reviewal all the breadth which Murray could have wished, and, *inter alia*, diversified it with a few anecdotes of the Scottish Gypsies. But the late excellent biographer of John Knox, Dr. Thomas M'Crie, had, in the mean time, considered the representation of the Covenanters, in the story of Old Mortality, as so unfair as to demand at his hands a very serious rebuke. The Doctor forthwith published, in a magazine called the Edinburgh Christian Instructor, a set of papers, in which the historical foundations of that tale were attacked with indignant warmth; and though Scott, when he first heard of these invectives, expressed his resolution never even to read them, he found the impression they were producing so strong, that he soon changed his purpose, and finally devoted a very large part of his article for the Quarterly Review to an elaborate defence of his own picture of the Covenanters.

Before the first Tales of my Landlord were six weeks old, two editions of 2000 copies disappeared, and a third of 2000 was put to press; but notwithstanding this rapid success, which was still further continued, and the friendly relations which always subsisted between the author and Mr. Murray, circumstances erelong occurred which carried the publication of the work into the hands of Messrs. Constable.

The author's answer to Dr. M'Crie, and his Introduction of 1830, have exhausted the historical materials on which he constructed his Old Mortality; and the origin of The Black Dwarf—as to the conclusion of

which story he appears on reflection to have completely adopted the opinion of honest Blackwood—has already been sufficiently illustrated by an anecdote of his early wanderings in Tweeddale. The latter tale, however imperfect, and unworthy as a work of art to be placed high in the catalogue of his productions, derives a singular interest from its delineation of the dark feelings so often connected with physical deformity; feelings which appear to have diffused their shadow over the whole genius of Byron—and which, but for this single picture, we should hardly have conceived ever to have passed through Scott's happier mind. All the bitter blasphemy of spirit which, from infancy to the tomb, swelled up in Byron against the unkindness of nature; which sometimes perverted even his filial love into a sentiment of diabolical malignity; all this black and desolate train of reflections must have been encountered and deliberately subdued by the manly parent of The Black Dwarf. Old Mortality, on the other hand, is remarkable as the *novelist's* first attempt to repeople the past by the power of imagination working on materials furnished by books. In Waverley he revived the fervid dreams of his boyhood, and drew, not from printed records, but from the artless oral narratives of his *Invernahyles*. In Guy Mannering and The Antiquary he embodied characters and manners familiar to his own wandering youth. But whenever his letters mention Old Mortality in its progress, they represent him as strong in the confidence that the industry with which he had pored over a library of forgotten tracts would enable him to identify himself with the time in which they had birth, as completely as if he had listened with his own ears to the dismal sermons of Peden, ridden with Claverhouse and Dalzell in the rout of Bothwell, and been an advocate at the bar of the Privy Council, when Lauderdale catechised and tortured the assassins of Archbishop Sharp. To reproduce a departed age with such minute and lifelike accuracy as this tale exhibits, demanded a far more energetic sympathy of imagination than had been called for in any effort of his serious verse. It is indeed most curiously instructive for any student of art to compare the Roundheads of Rokeby with the Bluebonnets of Old Mortality. For the rest—the story is framed with a deeper skill than any of the preceding novels: the canvas is a broader one; the characters are contrasted and projected with a power and felicity which neither he nor any other master ever surpassed; and, notwithstanding all that has been urged against him as a disparager of the Covenanters, it is to me very doubtful whether the inspiration of romantic chivalry ever

prompted him to nobler emotions than he has lavished on the re-animation of their stern and solemn enthusiasm. This work has always appeared to me the Marmion of his novels.

I have disclaimed the power of farther illustrating its historical groundworks, but I am enabled by Mr. Train's kindness to give some interesting additions to Scott's own account of this novel as a composition. The generous Supervisor visited him in Edinburgh in May, 1816, a few days after the publication of The Antiquary, carrying with him several relics which he wished to present to his collection; among others a purse that had belonged to Rob Roy, and also a fresh heap of traditionary gleanings, which he had gathered among the tale-tellers of his district. One of these last was in the shape of a letter to Mr. Train from a Mr. Broadfoot, "schoolmaster at the clachan of Penningham, and author of the *celebrated song* of the Hills of Galloway"—with which I confess myself unacquainted. Broadfoot had facetiously signed his communication *Clashbottom*,—"a professional appellation derived," says Mr. Train, "from the use of the birch, and by which he was usually addressed among his companions,—who assembled, not at the Wallace Inn of Gandercleuch, but at the sign of the Shoulder of Mutton in Newton-Stewart." Scott received these gifts with benignity, and invited the friendly donor to breakfast next morning. He found him at work in his library, and surveyed with enthusiastic curiosity the furniture of the room, especially its only picture, a portrait of Graham of Claverhouse. Train expressed the surprise with which every one, who had known Dundee only in the pages of the Presbyterian Annalists, must see for the first time that beautiful and melancholy visage, worthy of the most pathetic dreams of romance. Scott replied, "that no character had been so foully traduced as the Viscount of Dundee; that, thanks to Wodrow, Cruickshanks, and such chroniclers, he, who was every inch a soldier and a gentleman, still passed among the Scottish vulgar for a ruffian desperado, who rode a goblin horse, was proof against shot, and in league with the Devil." "Might he not," said Mr. Train, "be made, in good hands, the hero of a national romance as interesting as any about either Wallace or Prince Charlie?" "He might," said Scott, "but your western zealots would require to be faithfully portrayed in order to bring him out with the right effect." "And what," resumed Train, "if the story were to be delivered as if from the mouth of *Old Mortality*? Would *he* not do as well as *the Minstrel* did in the Lay?" "Old Mortality!" said Scott—"who was he?" Mr. Train then told what he could remember of old

Paterson, and seeing how much his story interested the hearer, offered to inquire farther about that enthusiast on his return to Galloway. "Do so by all means," said Scott; "I assure you I shall look with anxiety for your communication." He said nothing at this time of his own meeting with Old Mortality in the churchyard of Dunnottar—and I think there can be no doubt that that meeting was thus recalled to his recollection; or that to this intercourse with Mr. Train we owe the whole machinery of the Tales of my Landlord, as well as the adoption of Claverhouse's period for the scene of one of its first fictions. I think it highly probable that we owe a further obligation to the worthy Supervisor's presentation of Rob Roy's *spleuchan*.

The original design for the First Series of Jedediah Cleishbotham was, as Scott told me, to include four separate tales illustrative of four districts of the country, in the like number of volumes; but, his imagination once kindled upon any theme, he could not but pour himself out freely—so that notion was soon abandoned.

Chapter XXXVIII

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1817.

Within less than a month, The Black Dwarf and Old Mortality were followed by "Harold the Dauntless, by the author of The Bridal of Triermain." This poem had been, it appears, begun several years back; nay, part of it had been actually printed before the appearance of Childe Harold, though that circumstance had escaped the author's remembrance when he penned, in 1830, his Introduction to The Lord of the Isles; for he there says, "I am still astonished at my having committed the gross error of selecting the very name which Lord Byron had made so famous." The volume was published by Messrs. Constable, and had, in those booksellers' phrase, "considerable success." It has never, however, been placed on a level with Triermain; and though it contains many vigorous pictures, and splendid verses, and here and there some happy humor, the confusion and harsh transitions of the fable, and the dim rudeness of character and manners, seem sufficient to account for this inferiority in public favor. It is not surprising that the author should have redoubled his aversion to the notion of any more serious performances in verse. He had seized on an instrument of wider compass, and which, handled with whatever rapidity, seemed to reveal at every touch treasures that had hitherto slept unconsciously within him. He had thrown off his fetters, and might well go forth rejoicing in the native elasticity of his strength.

It is at least a curious coincidence in literary history, that, as Cervantes, driven from the stage of Madrid by the success of Lope de Vega, threw himself into prose romance, and produced, at the moment when the world considered him as silenced forever, the Don Quixote which has outlived Lope's two thousand triumphant dramas—so Scott, abandoning verse to Byron, should have rebounded from his fall by the only prose romances, which seem to be classed with the masterpiece of Spanish genius, by the general judgment of Europe.

I shall insert two letters, in which he announces the publication of Harold the Dauntless. In the first of them he also mentions the light and humorous little piece entitled The Sultan of Serendib, or the Search after Happiness, originally published in a weekly paper, after the fashion of the old Essayists, which about this time issued from John Ballantyne's premises, under the appropriate name of "The Sale-Room." The paper had slender success; and though Scott wrote several things for it, none of them, except this metrical essay, attracted any notice. The Sale-Room was, in fact, a dull and hopeless concern; and I should scarcely have thought it worth mentioning, but for the confirmation it lends to my suspicion that Mr. John Ballantyne was very unwilling, after all his warnings, to retire completely from the field of publishing.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., ROKEBY PARK.

Edinburgh, January 30, 1817.

My dear Morritt,—I hope to send you in a couple of days Harold the Dauntless, which has not turned out so good as I thought it would have done. I begin to get too old and stupid, I think, for poetry, and will certainly never again adventure on a grand scale. For amusement, and to help a little publication that is going on here, I have spun a doggerel tale called The Search after Happiness, of which I shall send you a copy by post, if it is of a frankable size; if not, I can put it up with the Dauntless. Among other misfortunes of Harold is his name, but the thing was partly printed before Childe Harold was in question.

My great and good news at present is, that the bog (that perpetual hobby-horse) has produced a commodity of most excellent marle, and promises to be of the very last consequence to my wild ground in the neighborhood; for

nothing can equal the effect of marle as a top-dressing. Methinks (in my mind's eye, Horatio) I see all the blue-bank, the hinny-lee, and the other provinces of my poor kingdom, waving with deep rye-grass and clover, like the meadows at Rokeby. In honest truth, it will do me yeoman's service.

My next good tidings are, that Jedediah carries the world before him. Six thousand have been disposed of, and three thousand more are pressing onward, which will be worth £2500 to the worthy pedagogue of Gandercleuch. Some of the Scotch Whigs, of the right old fanatical leaven, have waxed wroth with Jedediah,—

> "But shall we go mourn for that, my dear?
> The cold moon shines by night,
> And when we wander here and there,
> We then do go most right."

After all, these honest gentlemen are like Queen Elizabeth in their ideas of portrait-painting. They require the pictures of their predecessors to be likenesses, and at the same time demand that they shall be painted without shade, being probably of opinion, with the virgin majesty of England, that there is no such thing in nature.

I presume you will be going almost immediately to London—at least all our Scotch members are requested to be at their posts, the meaning of which I cannot pretend to guess. The finances are the only ticklish matter, but there is, after all, plenty of money in the country, now that our fever-fit is a little over. In Britain, when there is the least damp upon the spirits of the public, they are exactly like people in a crowd, who take the alarm, and shoulder each other to and fro till some dozen or two of the weakest are borne down and trodden to death; whereas, if they would but have patience and remain quiet, there would be a safe and speedy end to their embarrassment. How we want Billie Pitt now to get up and give the tone to our feelings and opinions!

As I take up this letter to finish the same, I hear the Prince Regent has been attacked and fired at. Since he was not hurt (for I should be sincerely sorry for my fat friend), I see nothing but good luck to result from this assault. It will make him a good manageable boy, and, I think, secure you a quiet

session of Parliament.—Adieu, my dear Morritt, God bless you. Let me know if the gimcracks come safe—I mean the book, etc.

Ever yours,

Walter Scott.

TO THE LADY LOUISA STUART, GLOUCESTER PLACE, LONDON.

Edinburgh, January 31, 1817.

My dear Lady Louisa,—This accompanies Harold the Dauntless. I thought once I should have made it something clever, but it turned vapid upon my imagination; and I finished it at last with hurry and impatience. Nobody knows, that has not tried the feverish trade of poetry, how much it depends upon mood and whim. I don't wonder, that, in dismissing all the other deities of Paganism, the Muse should have been retained by common consent; for, in sober reality, writing good verses seems to depend upon something separate from the volition of the author. I sometimes think my fingers set up for themselves, independent of my head; for twenty times I have begun a thing on a certain plan, and never in my life adhered to it (in a work of imagination, that is) for half an hour together. I would hardly write this sort of egotistical trash to any one but yourself, yet it is very true for all that. What my kind correspondent had anticipated on account of Jedediah's effusions has actually taken place; and the author of a very good Life of Knox has, I understand, made a most energetic attack, upon the score that the old Covenanters are not treated with decorum. I have not read it, and certainly never shall. I really think there is nothing in the book that is not very fair and legitimate subject of raillery; and I own I have my suspicions of that very susceptible devotion which so readily takes offence: such men should not read books of amusement; but do they suppose, because they are virtuous, and choose to be thought outrageously so, "there shall be no cakes and ale"?—"Ay, by our lady, and ginger shall be hot in the mouth too." As for the consequences to the author, they can only affect his fortune or his temper—the former, such as it is, has been long fixed beyond shot of these sort of fowlers; and for my temper, I considered always, that by subjecting myself to the irritability which much greater authors have felt on occasions of literary dispute, I should be laying in a plentiful stock of unhappiness for

the rest of my life. I therefore make it a rule never to read the attacks made upon me. I remember being capable of something like this sort of self-denial at a very early period of life, for I could not be six years old. I had been put into my bed in the nursery, and two servant girls sat down by the embers of the fire, to have their own quiet chat, and the one began to tell a most dismal ghost story, of which I remember the commencement distinctly at this moment; but perceiving which way the tale was tending, and though necessarily curious, being at the same time conscious that, if I listened on, I should be frightened out of my wits for the rest of the night, I had the force to cover up my head in the bed-clothes, so that I could not hear another word that was said. The only inconvenience attending a similar prudential line of conduct in the present case is, that it may seem like a deficiency of spirit; but I am not much afraid of that being laid to my charge—my fault in early life (I hope long since corrected) having lain rather the other way. And so I say, with mine honest Prior,—

> "Sleep, Philo, untouch'd, on my peaceable shelf,
> Nor take it amiss that so little I heed thee;
> I've no malice at thee, and some love for myself—
> Then why should I answer, since first I must read thee?"

So you are getting finely on in London. I own I am very glad of it. I am glad the banditti act like banditti, because it will make men of property look round them in time. This country is very like the toys which folks buy for children, and which, tumble them about in any way the urchins will, are always brought to their feet again, by the lead deposited in their extremities. The mass of property has the same effect on our Constitution, and is a sort of ballast which will always *right* the vessel, to use a sailor's phrase, and bring it to its due equipoise.

Ministers have acted most sillily in breaking up the burgher volunteers in large towns. On the contrary, the service should have been made coercive. Such men have a moral effect upon the minds of the populace, besides their actual force, and are so much interested in keeping good order, that you may always rely on them, especially as a corps in which there is necessarily a common spirit of union and confidence. But all this is nonsense again, quoth my Uncle Toby to himself. Adieu, my dear Lady Louisa; my sincere good wishes always attend you.

Not to disturb the narrative of his literary proceedings, I have deferred until now the mention of an attempt which Scott made during the winter of 1816-1817, to exchange his seat at the Clerk's table for one on the Bench of the Scotch Court of Exchequer. It had often occurred to me, in the most prosperous years of his life, that such a situation would have suited him better in every respect than that which he held, and that his never attaining a promotion, which the Scottish public would have considered so naturally due to his character and services, reflected little honor on his political allies. But at the period when I was entitled to hint this to him, he appeared to have made up his mind that the rank of Clerk of Session was more compatible than that of a Supreme Judge with the habits of a literary man, who was perpetually publishing, and whose writings were generally of the imaginative order. I had also witnessed the zeal with which he seconded the views of more than one of his own friends, when their ambition was directed to the Exchequer Bench. I remained, in short, ignorant that he ever had seriously thought of it for himself, until the ruin of his worldly fortunes in 1826; nor had I any information that his wish to obtain it had ever been distinctly stated, until certain letters, one of which I shall introduce, were placed in my hands after his death, by the present Duke of Buccleuch. The late Duke's answers to these letters are also before me; but of them it is sufficient to say, that while they show the warmest anxiety to serve Scott, they refer to private matters, which rendered it inconsistent with his Grace's feelings to interfere at the time in question with the distribution of Crown patronage. I incline to think, on the whole, that the death of this nobleman, which soon after left the influence of his house in abeyance, must have, far more than any other circumstance, determined Scott to renounce all notions of altering his professional position.

TO THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC., ETC.

Edinburgh, 11th December, 1816.

My dear Lord Duke,—Your Grace has been so much my constant and kind friend and patron through the course of my life, that I trust I need no apology for thrusting upon your consideration some ulterior views, which have been suggested to me by my friends, and which I will either endeavor

to prosecute, time and place serving, or lay aside all thoughts of, as they appear to your Grace feasible, and likely to be forwarded by your patronage. It has been suggested to me, in a word, that there would be no impropriety in my being put in nomination as a candidate for the situation of a Baron of Exchequer, when a vacancy shall take place. The difference of the emolument between that situation and those which I now hold, is just £400 a year, so that, in that point of view, it is not a very great object. But there is a difference in the rank, and also in the leisure afforded by a Baron's situation; and a man may, without condemnation, endeavor, at my period of life, to obtain as much honor and ease as he can handsomely come by. My pretensions to such an honor (next to your Grace's countenancing my wishes) would rest very much on the circumstance that my nomination would vacate two good offices (Clerk of Session and Sheriff of Selkirkshire) to the amount of £1000 and £300 a year; and, besides, would extinguish a pension of £300 which I have for life, over and above my salary as Clerk of Session, as having been in office at the time when the Judicature Act deprived us of a part of our vested fees and emoluments. The extinction of this pension would be just so much saved to the public. I am pretty confident also that I should be personally acceptable to our friend the Chief Baron. But whether all or any of these circumstances will weigh much in my favor, must solely and entirely rest with your Grace, without whose countenance it would be folly in me to give the matter a second thought. *With* your patronage, both my situation and habits of society may place my hopes as far as any who are likely to apply; and your interest would be strengthened by the opportunity of placing some good friend in Selkirkshire, besides converting the Minstrel of the Clan into a Baron,—a transmutation worthy of so powerful and kind a chief. But if your Grace thinks I ought to drop thoughts of this preferment, I am bound to say, that I think myself as well provided for by my friends and the public as I have the least title to expect, and that I am perfectly contented and grateful for what I have received. Ever your Grace's faithful and truly obliged servant,

Walter Scott.

The following letter, to the same noble friend, contains a slight allusion to this affair of the Barony; but I insert it for a better reason. The Duke had, it seems, been much annoyed by some depredations on his game in the district of Ettrick Water; and more so by the ill use which some boys from Selkirk

made of his liberality in allowing the people of that town free access to his beautiful walks on the banks of the Yarrow, adjoining Newark and Bowhill. The Duke's forester, by name Thomas Hudson, had recommended rigorous measures with reference to both these classes of offenders, and the Sheriff was of course called into council:—

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC., ETC., ETC.

Abbotsford, January 11, 1817.

My dear Lord Duke,—I have been thinking anxiously about the disagreeable affair of Tom Hudson, and the impudent ingratitude of the Selkirk rising generation, and I will take the usual liberty your friendship permits me, of saying what occurs to me on each subject. Respecting the shooting, the crime is highly punishable, and we will omit no inquiries to discover the individuals guilty. Charles Erskine, who is a good police-officer, will be sufficiently active. I know my friend and kinsman, Mr. Scott of Harden, feels very anxious to oblige your Grace, and I have little doubt that if you will have the goodness to mention to him this unpleasant circumstance, he would be anxious to put his game under such regulations as should be agreeable to you. But I believe the pride and pleasure he would feel in obliging your Grace, as heading one of the most ancient and most respectable branches of your name (if I may be pardoned for saying so much in our favor), would be certainly much more gratified by a compliance with your personal request, than if it came through any other channel. Your Grace knows there are many instances in life in which the most effectual way of conferring a favor is condescending to accept one. I have known Harden long and most intimately—a more respectable man, either for feeling, or talent, or knowledge of human life, is rarely to be met with. But he is rather indecisive—requiring some instant stimulus in order to make him resolve to do, not only what he knows to be right, but what he really wishes to do, and means to do one time or other. He is exactly Prior's Earl of Oxford:—

> "Let that be done which Mat doth say."
> "Yea," quoth the Earl, "*but not to-day*."

And so exit Harden, and enter Selkirk.

I know hardly anything more exasperating than the conduct of the little blackguards, and it will be easy to discover and make an example of the biggest and most insolent. In the mean while, my dear Lord, pardon my requesting you will take no general or sweeping resolution as to the Selkirk folks. Your Grace lives near them—your residence, both from your direct beneficence, and the indirect advantages which they derive from that residence, is of the utmost consequence; and they must be made sensible that all these advantages are endangered by the very violent and brutal conduct of their children. But I think your Grace will be inclined to follow this up only for the purpose of correction, not for that of requital. They are so much beneath you, and so much in your power, that this would be unworthy of you—especially as all the inhabitants of the little country town must necessarily be included in the punishment. Were your Grace really angry with them, and acting accordingly, you might ultimately feel the regret of my old schoolmaster, who, when he had knocked me down, apologized by saying he did not know his own strength. After all, those who look for anything better than ingratitude from the uneducated and unreflecting mass of a corrupted population, must always be deceived; and the better the heart is that has been expanded towards them, their wants and their wishes, the deeper is the natural feeling of disappointment. But it is our duty to fight on, doing what good we can (and surely the disposition and the means were never more happily united than in your Grace), and trusting to God Almighty, whose grace ripens the seeds we commit to the earth, that our benefactions shall bear fruit. And now, my Lord, asking your pardon for this discharge of my conscience, and assuring your Grace I have no wish to exchange my worsted gown, or the remote *Pisgah* exchange of a silk one, for the cloak of a Presbyterian parson, even with the certainty of succeeding to the first of your numerous Kirk-presentations, I take the liberty to add my own opinion. The elder boys must be looked out and punished, and the parents severely reprimanded, and the whole respectable part of the town made sensible of the loss they must necessarily sustain by the discontinuance of your patronage. And at, or about the same time, I should think it proper if your Grace were to distinguish by any little notice such Selkirk people working with you as have their families under good order.

I am taking leave of Abbotsford *multum gemens*, and have been just giving directions for planting upon *Turn-again*. When shall we eat a cold luncheon there, and look at the view, and root up the monster in his abyss? I assure you none of your numerous vassals can show a finer succession of *distant* prospects. For the home-view—ahem!—We must wait till the trees grow.

Ever your Grace's truly faithful

W. Scott

While the abortive negotiation as to the exchequer was still pending, Scott was visited, for the first time since his childish years, with a painful illness, which proved the harbinger of a series of attacks, all nearly of the same kind, continued at short intervals during more than two years. Various letters, already introduced, have indicated how widely his habits of life when in Edinburgh differed from those of Abbotsford. They at all times did so to a great extent; but he had pushed his liberties with a most robust constitution to a perilous extreme while the affairs of the Ballantynes were laboring, and he was now to pay the penalty.

This first serious alarm occurred towards the close of a merry dinner-party in Castle Street (on the 5th of March), when Scott suddenly sustained such exquisite torture from cramp in the stomach, that his masculine powers of endurance gave way, and he retired from the room with a scream of agony which electrified his guests. This scene was often repeated, as we shall see presently. His friends in Edinburgh continued all that spring in great anxiety on his account. Scarcely, however, had the first symptoms yielded to severe medical treatment, than he is found to have beguiled the intervals of his suffering by planning a dramatic piece on a story supplied to him by one of Train's communications, which he desired to present to Terry, on behalf of the actor's first-born son who had been christened by the name of Walter Scott. Such was the origin of the Fortunes of Devorgoil—a piece which, though completed soon afterwards, and submitted by Terry to many manipulations with a view to the stage, was never received by any manager, and was first published, towards the close of the author's life, under the title, slightly altered for an obvious reason, of The Doom of Devorgoil. The sketch of the story which he gives in the following letter will probably be considered by many besides myself as well worth the drama. It appears that

the actor had mentioned to Scott his intention of *Terryfying* The Black Dwarf.

TO DANIEL TERRY, ESQ., LONDON.

Edinburgh, 12th March, 1817.

Dear Terry,—I am now able to write to you on your own affairs, though still as weak as water from the operations of the medical faculty, who, I think, treated me as a recusant to their authority, and having me once at advantage, were determined I should not have strength to rebel again in a hurry. After all, I believe it was touch and go; and considering how much I have to do for my own family and others, my elegy might have been that of the Auld Man's Mare,—

> "The peats and turf are all to lead,
> What ail'd the beast to die?"

You don't mention the nature of your undertaking in your last, and in your former you spoke both of the Black Dwarf and of Triermain. I have some doubts whether the town will endure a second time the following up a well-known tale with a dramatic representation—and there is no *vis comica* to redeem the Black Dwarf, as in the case of Dominie Sampson. I have thought of two subjects for you, if, like the Archbishop's homilies, they do not smell of the apoplexy. The first is a noble and very dramatic tradition preserved in Galloway, which runs briefly thus: The Barons of Plenton (the family name, I think, was —— by Jupiter, forgot!) boasted of great antiquity, and formerly of extensive power and wealth, to which the ruins of their huge castle, situated on an inland loch, still bear witness. In the middle of the seventeenth century, it is said, these ruins were still inhabited by the lineal descendant of this powerful family. But the ruinous halls and towers of his ancestors were all that had descended to him, and he cultivated the garden of the castle, and sold its fruits for a subsistence. He married in a line suitable rather to his present situation than the dignity of his descent, and was quite sunk into the rank of peasantry, excepting that he was still called—more in mockery, or at least in familiarity, than in respect—the Baron of Plenton. A causeway connected the castle with the mainland; it was cut in the middle, and the moat only passable by a drawbridge which yet subsisted, and which the poor old couple contrived to raise every night

by their joint efforts, the country being very unsettled at the time. It must be observed that the old man and his wife occupied only one apartment in the extensive ruins, a small one adjoining to the drawbridge; the rest was waste and dilapidated.

As they were about to retire one night to rest, they were deterred by a sudden storm which, rising in the wildest manner possible, threatened to bury them under the ruins of the castle. While they listened in terror to the complicated sounds of thunder, wind, and rain, they were astonished to hear the clang of hoofs on the causeway, and the voices of people clamoring for admittance. This was a request not rashly to be granted. The couple looked out, and dimly discerned through the storm that the causeway was crowded with riders. "How many of you are there?" demanded John.—"Not more than the hall will hold," was the answer; "but open the gate, lower the bridge, and do not keep the *ladies* in the rain."—John's heart was melted for the *ladies*, and, against his wife's advice, he undid the bolts, sunk the drawbridge, and bade them enter in the name of God. Having done so, he instantly retired into his *sanctum sanctorum* to await the event, for there was something in the voices and language of his guests that sounded mysterious and awful. They rushed into the castle, and appeared to know their way through all its recesses. Grooms were heard hurrying their horses to the stables—sentinels were heard mounting guard—a thousand lights gleamed from place to place through the ruins, till at length they seemed all concentrated in the baronial hall, whose range of broad windows threw a resplendent illumination on the moss-grown court below.

After a short time, a domestic, clad in a rich but very antique dress, appeared before the old couple, and commanded them to attend his lord and lady in the great hall. They went with tottering steps, and to their great terror found themselves in the midst of a most brilliant and joyous company; but the fearful part of it was, that most of the guests resembled the ancestors of John's family, and were known to him by their resemblance to pictures which mouldered in the castle, or by traditionary description. At the head, the founder of the race, dressed like some mighty baron, or rather some Galwegian prince, sat with his lady. There was a difference of opinion between these ghostly personages concerning our honest John. The chief was inclined to receive him graciously; the lady considered him, from his mean marriage, as utterly unworthy of their name and board. The upshot is,

that the chief discovers to his descendant the means of finding a huge treasure concealed in the castle; the lady assures him that the discovery shall never avail him.—In the morning no trace can be discovered of the singular personages who had occupied the hall. But John sought for and discovered the vault where the spoils of the Southrons were concealed, rolled away the covering stone, and feasted his eyes on a range of massy chests of iron, filled doubtless with treasure. As he deliberated on the best means of bringing them up, and descending into the vault, he observed it began slowly to fill with water. Bailing and pumping were resorted to, and when he had exhausted his own and his wife's strength, they summoned the assistance of the neighborhood. But the vengeance of the visionary lady was perfect; the waters of the lake had forced their way into the vault, and John, after a year or two spent in draining and so forth, died broken-hearted, the last Baron of Plenton.

Such is the tale, of which the incidents seem new, and the interest capable of being rendered striking; the story admits of the highest degree of decoration, both by poetry, music, and scenery, and I propose (in behalf of my godson) to take some pains in dramatizing it. As thus;—you shall play John, as you can speak a little Scotch; I will make him what the Baron of Bradwardine would have been in his circumstances, and he shall be alternately ridiculous from his family pride and prejudices, contrasted with his poverty, and respectable from his just and independent tone of feeling and character. I think Scotland is entitled to have something on the stage to balance Macklin's two worthies. You understand the dialect will be only tinged with the national dialect—not that the baron is to speak broad Scotch, while all the others talk English. His wife and he shall have one child, a daughter, suitored unto by the conceited young parson or schoolmaster of the village, whose addresses are countenanced by her mother,—and by Halbert the hunter, a youth of unknown descent. Now this youth shall be the rightful heir and representative of the English owners of the treasure, of which they had been robbed by the baron's ancestors, for which unjust act, their spirits still walked the earth. These, with a substantial character or two, and the ghostly personages, shall mingle as they may—and the discovery of the youth's birth shall break the spell of the treasure-chamber. I will make the ghosts talk as never ghosts talked in the body or out of it; and the music may be as unearthly as you can get it. The

rush of the shadows into the castle shall be seen through the window of the baron's apartment in the flat scene. The ghosts' banquet, and many other circumstances, may give great exercise to the scene-painter and dresser. If you like this plan, you had better suspend any other for the present. In my opinion it has the infinite merit of being perfectly new in plot and structure, and I will set about the sketch as soon as my strength is restored in some measure by air and exercise. I am sure I can finish it in a fortnight then. Ever yours truly,

W. Scott.

About the time when this letter was written, a newspaper paragraph having excited the apprehension of two—or I should say three—of his dearest friends, that his life was in actual danger, Scott wrote to them as follows:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., PORTLAND PLACE, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 20th March, 1817.

My dear Morritt,—I hasten to acquaint you that I am in the land of life, and thriving, though I have had a slight shake, and still feel the consequences of medical treatment. I had been plagued all through this winter with cramps in my stomach, which I endured as a man of mould might, and endeavored to combat them by drinking scalding water, and so forth. As they grew rather unpleasantly frequent, I had reluctant recourse to Baillie. But before his answer arrived on the 5th, I had a most violent attack, which broke up a small party at my house, and sent me to bed roaring like a bull-calf. All sorts of remedies were applied, as in the case of Gil Blas's pretended colic, but such was the pain of the real disorder, that it outdevilled the Doctor hollow. Even heated salt, which was applied in such a state that it burned my shirt to rags, I hardly felt when clapped to my stomach. At length the symptoms became inflammatory, and dangerously so, the seat being the diaphragm. They only gave way to very profuse bleeding and blistering, which under higher assistance saved my life. My recovery was slow and tedious from the state of exhaustion. I could neither stir for weakness and giddiness, nor read for dazzling in my eyes, nor listen for a whizzing sound in my ears, nor even think for lack of the power of arranging my ideas. So I

had a comfortless time of it for about a week. Even yet I by no means feel, as the copy-book hath it,

"The lion bold, which the lamb doth hold—"

on the contrary, I am as weak as water. They tell me (of course) I must renounce every creature comfort, as my friend Jedediah calls it. As for dinner and so forth, I care little about it—but toast and water, and three glasses of wine, sound like hard laws to me. However, to parody the lamentation of Hassan, the camel-driver,

"The lily health outvies the grape's bright ray,
And life is dearer than the usquebæ—"

so I shall be amenable to discipline. But in my own secret mind I suspect the state of my bowels more than anything else. I take enough of exercise and enough of rest; but unluckily they are like a Lapland year, divided as one night and one day. In the vacation I never sit down; in the session-time I seldom rise up. But all this must be better arranged in future; and I trust I shall live to weary out all your kindness.

I am obliged to break off hastily. I trust I shall be able to get over the Fell in the end of summer, which will rejoice me much, for the sound of the woods of Rokeby is lovely in mine ear. Ever yours,

Walter Scott.

TO MRS. MACLEAN CLEPHANE, OF TORLOISK, MULL.

Edinburgh, 23d March, 1817.

My dear Mrs. and Miss Clephane,—Here comes to let you know you had nearly seen the last sight of me, unless I had come to visit you on my red beam like one of Fingal's heroes, which, Ossianic as you are, I trow you would readily dispense with. The cause was a cramp in my stomach, which, after various painful visits, as if it had been sent by Prospero, and had mistaken me for Caliban, at length chose to conclude by setting fire to its lodging, like the Frenchmen as they retreated through Russia, and placed me in as proper a state of inflammation as if I had had the whole Spafields committee in my unfortunate stomach. Then bleeding and blistering was the

word; and they bled and blistered till they left me neither skin nor blood. However, they beat off the foul fiend, and I am bound to praise the bridge which carried me over. I am still very totterish, and very giddy, kept to panada, or rather to porridge, for I spurned at all foreign slops, and adhered to our ancient oatmeal manufacture. But I have no apprehension of any return of the serious part of the malady, and I am now recovering my strength, though looking somewhat cadaverous upon the occasion.

I much approve of your going to Italy by sea; indeed it is the only way you ought to think of it. I am only sorry you are going to leave us for a while; but indeed the isle of Mull might be Florence to me in respect of separation, and cannot be quite Florence to you, since Lady Compton is not there. I lately heard her mentioned in a company where my interest in her was not known, as one of the very few English ladies now in Italy whom their acquirements, conduct, and mode of managing time, induce that part of foreign society, whose approbation is valuable, to consider with high respect and esteem. This I think is very likely; for, whatever folks say of foreigners, those of good education and high rank among them, must have a supreme contempt for the frivolous, dissatisfied, empty, gad-about manners of many of our modern belles. And we may say among ourselves, that there are few upon whom high accomplishments and information sit more gracefully.

John Kemble is here to take leave, acting over all his great characters, and with all the spirit of his best years. He played Coriolanus last night (the first time I have ventured out) fully as well as I ever saw him; and you know what a complete model he is of the Roman. He has made a great reformation in his habits; given up wine, which he used to swallow by pailfuls,—and renewed his youth like the eagles. He seems to me always to play best those characters in which there is a predominating tinge of some overmastering passion, or acquired habit of acting and speaking, coloring the whole man. The patrician pride of Coriolanus, the stoicism of Brutus and Cato, the rapid and hurried vehemence of Hotspur, mark the class of characters I mean. But he fails where a ready and pliable yielding to the events and passions of life makes what may be termed a more natural personage. Accordingly I think his Macbeth, Lear, and especially his Richard, inferior in spirit and truth. In Hamlet, the natural fixed melancholy of the prince places him within Kemble's range;—yet many delicate and

sudden turns of passion slip through his fingers. He is a lordly vessel, goodly and magnificent when going large before the wind, but wanting the facility to go "*ready about*," so that he is sometimes among the breakers before he can wear ship. Yet we lose in him a most excellent critic, an accomplished scholar, and one who graced our forlorn drama with what little it has left of good sense and gentlemanlike feeling. And so exit he. He made me write some lines to speak when he withdraws, and he has been here criticising and correcting till he got them quite to his mind, which has rather tired me.

Most truly yours while

Walter Scott

On the 29th of March, 1817, John Philip Kemble, after going through the round of his chief parts, to the delight of the Edinburgh audience, took his final leave of them as Macbeth, and in the costume of that character delivered a farewell address, penned for him by Scott. No one who witnessed that scene, and heard the lines as then recited, can ever expect to be again interested to the same extent by anything occurring within the walls of a theatre; nor was I ever present at any public dinner in all its circumstances more impressive than was that which occurred a few days afterwards, when Kemble's Scotch friends and admirers assembled around him—Francis Jeffrey being chairman, Walter Scott and John Wilson the croupiers.

Shortly before this time, Mr. William Laidlaw had met with misfortunes, which rendered it necessary for him to give up the lease of a farm, on which he had been for some years settled, in Mid-Lothian. He was now anxiously looking about him for some new establishment, and it occurred to Scott that it might be mutually advantageous, as well as agreeable, if his excellent friend would consent to come and occupy a house on his property, and endeavor, under his guidance, to make such literary exertions as might raise his income to an amount adequate for his comfort. The prospect of obtaining such a neighbor was, no doubt, the more welcome to "Abbotsford and Kaeside," from its opening at this period of fluctuating health; and Laidlaw, who had for twenty years loved and revered him, considered the proposal with far greater delight than the most lucrative appointment on any noble domain in the island could have afforded him.

Though possessed of a lively and searching sagacity as to things in general, he had always been as to his own worldly interests simple as a child. His tastes and habits were all modest; and when he looked forward to spending the remainder of what had not hitherto been a successful life, under the shadow of the genius that he had worshipped almost from boyhood, his gentle heart was all happiness. He surveyed with glistening eyes the humble cottage in which his friend proposed to lodge him, his wife, and his little ones, and said to himself that he should write no more sad songs on *Forest Flittings*.

Scott's notes to him at this time afford a truly charming picture of thoughtful and respectful delicacy on both sides. Mr. Laidlaw, for example, appears to have hinted that he feared his friend, in making the proposal as to the house at Kaeside, might have perhaps in some degree overlooked the feelings of "Laird Moss," who, having sold his land several months before, had as yet continued to occupy his old homestead. Scott answers:—

TO MR. W. LAIDLAW.

Edinburgh, April 5, 1817.

My dear Sir,—Nothing can give me more pleasure than the prospect of your making yourself comfortable at Kaeside till some good thing casts up. I have not put Mr. Moss to any inconvenience, for I only requested an answer, giving him leave to sit if he had a mind—and of free will he leaves my premises void and redd at Whitsunday. I suspect the house is not in good order, but we shall get it brushed up a little. Without affectation I consider myself the obliged party in this matter—or at any rate it is a mutual benefit, and you shall have grass for a cow, and so forth—whatever you want. I am sure when you are so near I shall find some literary labor for you that will make ends meet. Yours, in haste,

W. Scott.

He had before this time made considerable progress in another historical sketch (that of the year 1815) for the Edinburgh Annual Register; and the first literary labor which he provided for Laidlaw appears to have been arranging for the same volume a set of newspaper articles, usually printed under the head of *Chronicle*, to which were appended some little extracts of new books of travels, and the like miscellanies. The Edinburgh Monthly

Magazine, subsequently known by the name of its projector, Blackwood, commenced in April of this year; and one of its editors, Mr. Thomas Pringle, being a Teviotdale man and an old acquaintance of Laidlaw's, offered to the latter the care of its *Chronicle department* also,—not perhaps without calculating that, in case Laidlaw's connection with the new journal should become at all a strict one, Scott would be induced to give it occasionally the benefit of his own literary assistance. He accordingly did not write—being unwell at the time—but *dictated* to Pringle a collection of anecdotes concerning Scottish gypsies, which attracted a good deal of notice; and, I believe, he also assisted Laidlaw in drawing up one or more articles on the subject of Scottish superstitions. But the bookseller and Pringle soon quarrelled, and the Magazine assuming, on the retirement of the latter, a high Tory character, Laidlaw's Whig feelings induced him to renounce its alliance; while Scott, having no kindness for Blackwood personally, and disapproving (though he chuckled over it) the reckless extravagance of juvenile satire which, by and by, distinguished his journal, appears to have easily acquiesced in the propriety of Laidlaw's determination. I insert meantime a few notes, which will show with what care and kindness he watched over Laidlaw's operations for the Annual Register.

TO MR. LAIDLAW, AT KAESIDE.

Edinburgh, June 16, 1817.

Dear Sir,—I enclose you "rare guerdon," better than remuneration,—namely, a cheque for £25, for the Chronicle part of the Register. The incidents selected should have some reference to amusement as well as information, and may be occasionally abridged in the narration; but, after all, paste and scissors form your principal materials. You must look out for two or three good original articles; and, if you would read and take pains to abridge one or two curious books of travels, I would send out the volumes. Could I once get the head of the concern fairly round before the wind again, I am sure I could make it £100 a year to you. In the present instance it will be at least £50.

Yours truly,

W. S.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, July 3, 1817.

My dear Sir,—I send you Adam's and Riley's Travels. You will observe I don't want a review of the books, or a detail of these persons' adventures, but merely a short article expressing the light, direct or doubtful, which they have thrown on the interior of Africa. "Recent Discoveries in Africa" will be a proper title. I hope to find you materially amended, or rather quite stout, when I come out on Saturday. I am quite well this morning. Yours, in haste,

W. S.

P. S.—I add Mariner's Tonga Islands, and Campbell's Voyage. Pray take great care of them, as I am a coxcomb about my books, and hate specks or spots. Take care of yourself, and want for nothing that Abbotsford can furnish.

These notes have carried us down to the middle of the year. But I must now turn to some others, which show that before Whitsuntide, when Laidlaw settled at Kaeside, negotiations were on foot respecting another novel.

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE, HANOVER STREET, EDINBURGH.

Abbotsford, Monday. [April, 1817.]

Dear John,—I have a good subject for a work of fiction *in petto*. What do you think Constable would give for a smell of it? You ran away without taking leave the other morning, or I wished to have spoken to you about it. I don't mean a continuation of Jedediah, because there might be some delicacy in putting that by the original publishers. You may write if anything occurs to you on this subject. It will not interrupt my History. By the way, I have a great lot of the Register ready for delivery, and no man asks for it. I shall want to pay up some cash at Whitsunday, which will make me draw on my brains. Yours truly,

W. Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Abbotsford, Saturday, May 3, 1817.

Dear John,—I shall be much obliged to you to come here with Constable on Monday, as he proposes a visit, and it will save time. By the way, you must attend that the usual quantity of stock is included in the arrangement—that is £600 for 6000 copies. My sum is £1700, payable in May—a round advance, by'r Lady, but I think I am entitled to it, considering what I have twined off hitherto on such occasions.

I make a point on your coming with Constable, health allowing. Yours truly,

W. S.

The result of this meeting is indicated in a note, scribbled by John Ballantyne at the bottom of the foregoing letter, before it was seen by his brother the printer:—

Half-past 3 o'clock, Tuesday.

Dear James,—I am at this moment returned from Abbotsford, with entire and full success. Wish me joy. I shall gain above £600—Constable taking my share of stock also. This title is *Rob Roy—by the Author of Waverley!!!* Keep this letter for me.

J. B.

On the same page there is written, in fresher ink, which marks, no doubt, the time when John pasted it into his collection of private papers now before me,—

N. B.—I did gain above £1200.—J. B.

The title of this novel was suggested by Constable, and he told me years afterwards the difficulty he had to get it adopted by the author. "What!" said he, "Mr. Accoucheur, must you be setting up for Mr. Sponsor too?—but let's hear it." Constable said the name of the real hero would be the best possible name for the book. "Nay," answered Scott, "never let me have to write up to a name. You well know I have generally adopted a title that told nothing."—The bookseller, however, persevered; and after the trio had dined, these scruples gave way.

On rising from table, according to Constable, they sallied out to the green before the door of the cottage, and all in the highest spirits enjoyed the fine May evening. John Ballantyne, hopping up and down in his glee, exclaimed, "Is Rob's gun here, Mr. Scott; would you object to my trying the auld barrel with a *few de joy*?"—"Nay, Mr. Puff," said Scott, "it would burst, and blow you to the devil before your time."—"Johnny, my man," said Constable, "what the mischief puts drawing at sight into *your* head?" Scott laughed heartily at this innuendo; and then observing that the little man felt somewhat sore, called attention to the notes of a bird in the adjoining shrubbery. "And by the bye," said he, as they continued listening, "'tis a long time, Johnny, since we have had the Cobbler of Kelso." Mr. Puff forthwith jumped up on a mass of stone, and seating himself in the proper attitude of one working with his awl, began a favorite interlude, mimicking a certain son of Crispin, at whose stall Scott and he had often lingered when they were schoolboys, and a blackbird, the only companion of his cell, that used to sing to him, while he talked and whistled to it all day long. With this performance Scott was always delighted: nothing could be richer than the contrast of the bird's wild sweet notes, some of which he imitated with wonderful skill, and the accompaniment of the Cobbler's hoarse cracked voice, uttering all manner of endearing epithets, which Johnny multiplied and varied in a style worthy of the Old Women in Rabelais at the birth of Pantagruel. I often wondered that Mathews, who borrowed so many good things from John Ballantyne, allowed this Cobbler, which was certainly the masterpiece, to escape him.

Scott himself had probably exceeded that evening the three glasses of wine sanctioned by his Sangrados. "I never," said Constable, "had found him so disposed to be communicative about what he meant to do. Though he had had a return of his illness but the day before, he continued for an hour or more to walk backwards and forwards on the green, talking and laughing—he told us he was sure he should make a hit in a Glasgow weaver, whom he would *ravel up with Rob*; and fairly outshone the Cobbler, in an extempore dialogue between the bailie and the cateran—something not unlike what the book gives us as passing in the Glasgow tolbooth."

Mr. Puff might well exult in the "full and entire success" of this trip to Abbotsford. His friend had made it a *sine qua non* with Constable that he should have a third share in the bookseller's moiety of the bargain—and

though Johnny had no more trouble about the publishing or selling of Rob Roy than his own Cobbler of Kelso, this stipulation had secured him a *bonus* of £1200, before two years passed. Moreover, one must admire his adroitness in persuading Constable, during their journey back to Edinburgh, to relieve him of that fraction of his own old stock, with which his unhazardous share in the new transaction was burdened. Scott's kindness continued, as long as John Ballantyne lived, to provide for him a constant succession of similar advantages at the same easy rate; and Constable, from deference to Scott's wishes, and from his own liking for the humorous auctioneer, appears to have submitted with hardly a momentary grudge to this heavy tax on his most important ventures.

The same week Scott received Southey's celebrated letter to Mr. William Smith, M. P. for Norwich. The poet of Keswick had also forwarded to him somewhat earlier his Pilgrimage to Waterloo, which piece contains a touching allusion to the affliction the author had recently sustained in the death of a fine boy. Scott's letter on this occasion was as follows:—

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., KESWICK.

Selkirk, May 9, 1817.

My dear Southey,—I have been a strangely negligent correspondent for some months past, more especially as I have had you rarely out of my thoughts, for I think you will hardly doubt of my sincere sympathy in events which have happened since I have written. I shed sincere tears over the Pilgrimage to Waterloo. But in the crucible of human life, the purest gold is tried by the strongest heat, and I can only hope for the continuance of your present family blessings to one so well formed to enjoy the pure happiness they afford. My health has, of late, been very indifferent. I was very nearly succumbing under a violent inflammatory attack, and still feel the effects of the necessary treatment. I believe they took one third of the blood of my system, and blistered in proportion: so that both my flesh and my blood have been in a woefully reduced state. I got out here some weeks since, where, by dint of the insensible exercise which one takes in the country, I feel myself gathering strength daily, but am still obliged to observe a severe regimen. It was not to croak about myself, however, that I took up the pen, but to wish you joy of your triumphant answer to that coarse-minded William Smith. He deserved all he has got, and, to say the

truth, you do not spare him, and have no cause. His attack seems to have proceeded from the vulgar insolence of a low mind desirous of attacking genius at disadvantage. It is the ancient and eternal strife of which the witch speaks in Thalaba. Such a man as he, feels he has no alliance with such as you, and his evil instincts lead him to treat as hostile whatever he cannot comprehend. I met Smith once during his stay in Edinburgh, and had, what I seldom have with any one in society, a high quarrel with him. His mode of travelling had been from one gentleman's seat to another, abusing the well-known hospitality of the Highland lairds, by taking possession of their houses, even during their absence, domineering in them when they were present, and not only eating the dinner of to-day, but requiring that the dinner of to-morrow should also be made ready and carried forward with him, to save the expense of inns. All this was no business of mine, but when, in the middle of a company consisting of those to whom he had owed this hospitality, he abused the country, of which he knew little—the language, of which he knew nothing—and the people, who have their faults, but are a much more harmless, moral, and at the same time high-spirited population, than, I venture to say, he ever lived amongst—I thought it was really too bad, and so e'en took up the debate, and gave it him over the knuckles as smartly as I could. Your pamphlet, therefore, fed fat my ancient grudge against him as well as the modern one, for you cannot doubt that my blood boiled at reading the report of his speech. Enough of this gentleman, who, I think, will not walk out of the round in a hurry again, to slander the conduct of individuals.

I am at present writing at our head-court of freeholders—a set of quiet, unpretending, but sound-judging country gentlemen, and whose opinions may be very well taken as a fair specimen of those men of sense and honor, who are not likely to be dazzled by literary talent, which lies out of their beat, and who, therefore, cannot be of partial counsel in the cause; and I never heard an opinion more generally, and even warmly expressed, than that your triumphant vindication brands Smith as a slanderer in all time coming. I think you may not be displeased to know this, because what men of keen feelings and literary pursuits must have felt, cannot be unknown to you, and you may not have the same access to know the impression made upon the general class of society.

I have to thank you for the continuation of the History of Brazil—one of your gigantic labors; the fruit of a mind so active, yet so patient of labor. I am not yet far advanced in the second volume, reserving it usually for my hour's amusement in the evening, as children keep their dainties for *bonne bouche*: but as far as I have come, it possesses all the interest of the commencement, though a more faithless and worthless set than both Dutch and Portuguese I have never read of; and it requires your knowledge of the springs of human action, and your lively description of "hair-breadth 'scapes," to make one care whether the hog bites the dog, or the dog bites the hog. Both nations were in rapid declension from their short-lived age of heroism, and in the act of experiencing all those retrograde movements which are the natural consequence of selfishness on the one hand, and bigotry on the other.

I am glad to see you are turning your mind to the state of the poor. Should you enter into details on the subject of the best mode of assisting them, I would be happy to tell you the few observations I have made—not on a very small scale neither, considering my fortune, for I have kept about thirty of the laborers in my neighborhood in constant employment this winter. This I do not call charity, because they executed some extensive plantations and other works, which I could never have got done so cheaply, and which I always intended one day to do. But neither was it altogether selfish on my part, because I was putting myself to inconvenience in incurring the expense of several years at once, and certainly would not have done so, but to serve mine honest neighbors, who were likely to want work but for such exertion. From my observation, I am inclined greatly to doubt the salutary effect of the scheme generally adopted in Edinburgh and elsewhere for relieving the poor. At Edinburgh, they are employed on public works at so much a day—tenpence, I believe, or one shilling, with an advance to those who have families. This rate is fixed below that of ordinary wages, in order that no person may be employed but those who really cannot find work elsewhere. But it is attended with this bad effect, that the people regard it partly as charity, which is humiliating—and partly as an imposition, in taking their labor below its usual salable value; to which many add a third view of the subject—namely, that this sort of half-pay is not given them for the purpose of working, but to prevent their rising in rebellion. None of these misconceptions are favorable to hard labor, and the consequence is,

that I never have seen such a set of idle *fainéants* as those employed on this system in the public works, and I am sure that, notwithstanding the very laudable intention of those who subscribed to form the fund, and the yet more praiseworthy, because more difficult, exertions of those who superintend it, the issue of the scheme will occasion full as much mischief as good to the people engaged in it. Private gentlemen, acting on something like a similar system, may make it answer better, because they have not the lazy dross of a metropolis to contend with—because they have fewer hands to manage—and, above all, because an individual always manages his own concerns better than those of the country can be managed. Yet all who have employed those who were distressed for want of work at under wages, have had, less or more, similar complaints to make. I think I have avoided this in my own case, by inviting the country people to do piece-work by the contract. Two things only are necessary—one is, that the nature of the work should be such as will admit of its being ascertained, when finished, to have been substantially executed. All sort of spade-work and hoe-work, with many other kinds of country labor, fall under this description, and the employer can hardly be cheated in the execution if he keeps a reasonable lookout. The other point is, to take care that the undertakers, in their anxiety for employment, do not take the job too cheap. A little acquaintance with country labor will enable one to regulate this; but it is an essential point, for if you do not keep them to their bargain, it is making a jest of the thing, and forfeiting the very advantage you have in view—that, namely, of inducing the laborer to bring his heart and spirit to his work. But this he will do where he has a fair bargain, which is to prove a good or bad one according to his own exertions. In this case you make the poor man his own friend, for the profits of his good conduct are all his own. It is astonishing how partial the people are to this species of contract, and how diligently they labor, acquiring or maintaining all the while those habits which render them honorable and useful members of society. I mention this to you, because the rich, much to their honor, do not, in general, require to be so much stimulated to benevolence, as to be directed in the most useful way to exert it.

I have still a word to say about the poor of our own parish of Parnassus. I have been applied to by a very worthy friend, Mr. Scott of Sinton, in behalf of an unfortunate Mr. Gilmour, who, it seems, has expended a little fortune

in printing, upon his own account, poems which, from the sample I saw, seem exactly to answer the description of Dean Swift's country house:—

> "Too bad for a blessing, too good for a curse,
> I wish from my soul they were better or worse."

But you are the dean of our corporation, and, I am informed, take some interest in this poor gentleman. If you can point out any way in which I can serve him, I am sure my inclination is not wanting, but it looks like a very hopeless case. I beg my kindest respects to Mrs. Southey, and am always sincerely and affectionately yours,

Walter Scott.

About this time Hogg took possession of Altrive Lake, and some of his friends in Edinburgh set on foot a subscription edition of his Queen's Wake (at a guinea each copy), in the hope of thus raising a sum adequate to the stocking of the little farm. The following letter alludes to this affair; and also to the death of Frances, Lady Douglas, sister to Duke Henry of Buccleuch, whose early kindness to Scott has been more than once mentioned.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD MONTAGU.

Abbotsford, June 8, 1817.

My dear Lord,—I am honored with your letter, and will not fail to take care that the Shepherd profits by your kind intentions, and those of Lady Montagu. This is a scheme which I did not devise, for I fear it will end in disappointment, but for which I have done, and will do, all I possibly can. There is an old saying of the seamen's, "Every man is not born to be a boatswain," and I think I have heard of men born under a sixpenny planet, and doomed never to be worth a groat. I fear something of this vile sixpenny influence had gleamed in at the cottage window when poor Hogg first came squeaking into the world. All that he made by his original book he ventured on a flock of sheep to drive into the Highlands to a farm he had taken there, but of which he could not get possession, so that all the stock was ruined and sold to disadvantage. Then he tried another farm, which proved too dear, so that he fairly broke upon it. Then put forth divers publications, which had little sale—and brought him accordingly few

pence, though some praise. Then came this Queen's Wake, by which he might and ought to have made from £100 to £200—for there were, I think, three editions—when lo! his bookseller turned bankrupt, and paid him never a penny. The Duke has now, with his wonted generosity, given him a cosie bield, and the object of the present attack upon the public is to get if possible as much cash together as will stock it. But no one has loose guineas now to give poor poets, and I greatly doubt the scheme succeeding, unless it is more strongly patronized than can almost be expected. In bookselling matters, an author must either be the conjurer, who commands the devil, or the witch who serves him—and few are they whose situation is sufficiently independent to enable them to assume the higher character—and this is injurious to the indigent author in every respect, for not only is he obliged to turn his pen to every various kind of composition, and so to injure himself with the public by writing hastily, and on subjects unfitted for his genius; but, moreover, those honest gentlemen, the booksellers, from a natural association, consider the books as of least value, which they find they can get at least expense of copy-money, and therefore are proportionally careless in pushing the sale of the work. Whereas a good round sum out of their purse, like a moderate rise of rent on a farm, raises the work thus acquired in their own eyes, and serves as a spur to make them clear away every channel, by which they can discharge their quires upon the public. So much for bookselling, the most ticklish and unsafe and hazardous of all professions, scarcely with the exception of horse-jockeyship.

You cannot doubt the sincere interest I take in Lady Montagu's health. I was very glad to learn from the Duke, that the late melancholy event had produced no permanent effect on her constitution, as I know how much her heart must have suffered. I saw our regretted friend for the last time at the Theatre, and made many schemes to be at Bothwell this next July. But thus the world glides from us, and those we most love and honor are withdrawn from the stage before us. I know not why it was that among the few for whom I had so much respectful regard, I never had associated the idea of early deprivation with Lady Douglas. Her excellent sense, deep information, and the wit which she wielded with so much good-humor, were allied apparently to a healthy constitution, which might have permitted us to enjoy, and be instructed by her society for many years. *Dis aliter visum*, and the recollection dwelling on all the delight which she afforded to

society, and the good which she did in private life, is what now remains to us of her wit, wisdom, and benevolence. The Duke keeps his usual health, with always just so much of the gout, however, as would make me wish that he had more—a kind wish, for which I do not observe that he is sufficiently grateful. I hope to spend a few days at Drumlanrig Castle, when that ancient mansion shall have so far limited its courtesy as to stand covered in the presence of the wind and rain, which I believe is not yet the case. I am no friend to ceremony, and like a house as well when it does not carry its roof *en chapeau bras*. I heartily wish your Lordship joy of the new mansion at Ditton, and hope my good stars will permit me to pay my respects there one day. The discovery of the niches certainly bodes good luck to the house of Montagu, and as there are three of them, I presume it is to come threefold. From the care with which they were concealed, I presume they had been closed in the days of Cromwell, or a little before, and that the artist employed (like the General, who told his soldiers to fight bravely against the Pope, since they were Venetians before they were Christians) had more professional than religious zeal, and did not even, according to the practice of the time, think it necessary to sweep away Popery with the besom of destruction. I am here on a stolen visit of two days, and find my mansion gradually enlarging. Thanks to Mr. Atkinson (who found out a practical use for our romantic theory), it promises to make a comfortable station for offering your Lordship and Lady Montagu a pilgrim's meal, when you next visit Melrose Abbey, and that without any risk of your valet (who I recollect is a substantial person) sticking between the wall of the parlor and the backs of the chairs placed round the table. This literally befell Sir Harry Macdougal's fat butler, who looked like a ship of the line in the loch at Bowhill, altogether unlike his master, who could glide wherever a weasel might make his way. Mr. Atkinson has indeed been more attentive than I can express, when I consider how valuable his time must be. We are attempting no castellated conundrums to rival those Lord Napier used to have executed in sugar, when he was Commissioner, and no cottage neither, but an irregular somewhat—like an old English hall, in which your squire of £500 a year used to drink his ale in days of yore.

I am making considerable plantations (that is, considering), being greatly encouraged by the progress of those I formerly laid out. Read the veracious

Gulliver's account of the Windsor Forest of Lilliput, and you will have some idea of the solemn gloom of my Druid shades. Your Lordship's truly faithful

Walter Scott.

This is the 8th of June, and not an ash-tree in leaf yet. The country cruelly backward, and whole fields destroyed by the grub. I dread this next season.

Chapter XXXIX

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1817.

During the summer term of 1817, Scott seems to have labored chiefly on his History of 1815 for the Register, which was published in August; but he also found time to draw up the Introduction for a richly embellished quarto, entitled Border Antiquities, which came out a month later. This valuable essay, containing large additions to the information previously embodied in the Minstrelsy, has been included in the late collection of his Miscellaneous Prose, and has thus obtained a circulation not to be expected for it in the original costly form.

Upon the rising of the Court in July, he made an excursion to the Lennox, chiefly that he might visit a cave at the head of Loch Lomond, said to have been a favorite retreat of his hero, Rob Roy. He was accompanied to the seat of his friend, Mr. Macdonald Buchanan, by Captain Adam Ferguson —the *long Linton* of the days of his apprenticeship; and thence to Glasgow, where, under the auspices of a kind and intelligent acquaintance, Mr. John Smith, bookseller, he refreshed his recollection of the noble cathedral, and other localities of the birthplace of Bailie Jarvie. Mr. Smith took care also to show the tourists the most remarkable novelties in the great manufacturing establishments of his flourishing city; and he remembers particularly the delight which Scott expressed on seeing the process of *singeing* muslin— that is, of divesting the finished web of all superficial knots and irregularities, by passing it, with the rapidity of lightning, over a bar of red-hot iron. "The man that imagined this," said Scott, "was *the Shakespeare of the Wabsters*,—

'Things out of hope are compass'd oft with vent'ring.'"

The following note indicates the next stages of his progress:—

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH,
DRUMLANRIG CASTLE.

Sanquhar, 2 o'clock, July 30, 1817.

From Ross, where the clouds on Benlomond are sleeping—
From Greenock, where Clyde to the Ocean is sweeping—
From Largs, where the Scotch gave the Northmen a drilling—
From Ardrossan, whose harbor cost many a shilling—
From Old Cumnock, where beds are as hard as a plank, sir—
From a chop and green pease, and a chicken in Sanquhar,
This eve, please the Fates, at Drumlanrig we anchor.

W. S.

The Poet and Captain Ferguson remained a week at Drumlanrig, and thence repaired together to Abbotsford. By this time, the foundations of that part of the existing house, which extends from the hall westwards to the original courtyard, had been laid; and Scott now found a new source of constant occupation in watching the proceedings of his masons. He had, moreover, no lack of employment further a-field,—for he was now negotiating with another neighboring landowner for the purchase of an addition, of more consequence than any he had hitherto made, to his estate. In the course of the autumn he concluded this matter, and became, for the price of £10,000, proprietor of the lands of *Toftfield*, on which there had recently been erected a substantial mansion-house, fitted, in all points, for the accommodation of a genteel family. This circumstance offered a temptation which much quickened Scott's zeal for completing his arrangement. The venerable Professor Ferguson had died a year before; Captain Adam Ferguson was at home on half-pay; and Scott now saw the means of securing for himself, henceforth, the immediate neighborhood of the companion of his youth, and his amiable sisters. Ferguson, who had written, from the lines of Torres Vedras, his hopes of finding, when the war should be over, some sheltering cottage upon the Tweed, within a walk of Abbotsford, was delighted to see his dreams realized; and the family took up their residence next spring at

the new house of Toftfield, on which Scott then bestowed, at the ladies' request, the name of Huntly Burn: this more harmonious designation being taken from the mountain brook which passes through its grounds and garden,—the same famous in tradition as the scene of Thomas the Rhymer's interviews with the Queen of Fairy. The upper part of the *Rhymer's Glen*, through which this brook finds its way from the Cauldshiels Loch to Toftfield, had been included in a previous purchase. He was now master of all these haunts of "True Thomas," and of the whole ground of the battle of Melrose, from *Skirmish-field* to *Turn-again*. His enjoyment of the new territories was, however, interrupted by various returns of his cramp, and the depression of spirit which always attended, in his case, the use of opium, the only medicine that seemed to have power over the disease.

It was while struggling with such languor, on one lovely evening of this autumn, that he composed the following beautiful verses. They mark the very spot of their birth,—namely, the then naked height overhanging the northern side of the Cauldshiels Loch, from which Melrose Abbey to the eastward, and the hills of Ettrick and Yarrow to the west, are now visible over a wide range of rich woodland,—all the work of the poet's hand:—

"The sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill,
In Ettrick's vale, is sinking sweet;
The westland wind is hush and still—
The lake lies sleeping at my feet.
Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears those bright hues that once it bore;
Though evening, with her richest dye,
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

"With listless look along the plain
I see Tweed's silver current glide,
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruin'd pride.
The quiet lake, the balmy air,
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree,—
Are they still such as once they were,
Or is the dreary change in me?

"Alas! the warp'd and broken board,
How can it bear the painter's dye!
The harp of strain'd and tuneless chord,
How to the minstrel's skill reply!
To aching eyes each landscape lowers,
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill;
And Araby's or Eden's bowers
Were barren as this moorland hill."

He again alludes to his illness in a letter to Mr. Morritt:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., ROKEBY.

Abbotsford, August 11, 1817.

My dear Morritt,—I am arrived from a little tour in the west of Scotland, and had hoped, in compliance with your kind wish, to have indulged myself with a skip over the Border as far as Rokeby, about the end of this month. But my fate denies me this pleasure; for, in consequence of one or two blunders, during my absence, in executing my new premises, I perceive the necessity of remaining at the helm while they are going on. Our masons, though excellent workmen, are too little accustomed to the gimcracks of their art, to be trusted with the execution of a *bravura* plan, without constant inspection. Besides, the said laborers lay me under the necessity of laboring a little myself; and I find I can no longer with impunity undertake to make one week's hard work supply the omissions of a fortnight's idleness. Like you, I have abridged my creature-comforts,—as Old Mortality would call them,—renouncing beer and ale on all ordinary occasions; also pastry, fruit, etc., and all that tends to acidity. These are awkward warnings; but *sat est vixisse*. To have lived respected and regarded by some of the best men in our age is enough for an individual like me; the rest must be as God wills, and when He wills.

The poor-laws, into which you have ventured for the love of the country, form a sad quagmire. They are like John Bunyan's Slough of Despond, into which, as he observes, millions of cart-loads of good resolutions have been thrown, without perceptibly mending the way. From what you say, and from what I have heard from others, there is a very natural desire to trust to one or two empirical remedies, such as general systems of education, and so

forth. But a man with a broken constitution might as well put faith in Spilsbury or Godbold. It is not the knowledge, but the use which is made of it, that is productive of real benefit. To say that the Scottish peasant is less likely than the Englishman to become an incumbrance on his parish, is saying, in other words, that this country is less populous,—that there are fewer villages and towns,—that the agricultural classes, from the landed proprietor down to the cottager, are individually more knit and cemented together;—above all, that the Scotch peasant has harder habits of life, and can endure from his infancy a worse fare and lodging than your parish almshouses offer.—There is a terrible evil in England to which we are strangers,—the number, to wit, of tippling-houses, where the laborer, as a matter of course, spends the overplus of his earnings. In Scotland there are few; and the Justices are commendably inexorable in rejecting all application for licenses where there appears no public necessity for granting them. A man, therefore, cannot easily spend much money in liquor, since he must walk three or four miles to the place of suction and back again, which infers a sort of *malice prepense* of which few are capable; and the habitual opportunity of indulgence not being at hand, the habits of intemperance, and of waste connected with it, are not acquired. If financiers would admit a general limitation of the ale-houses over England to one fourth of the number, I am convinced you would find the money spent in that manner would remain with the peasant, as a source of self-support and independence.

All this applies chiefly to the country;—in towns, and in the manufacturing districts, the evil could hardly be diminished by such regulations. There would, perhaps, be no means so effectual as that (which will never be listened to) of taxing the manufacturers according to the number of hands which they employ on an average, and applying the produce in maintaining the manufacturing poor. If it should be alleged that this would injure the manufacturers, I would boldly reply,—"And why not injure, or rather limit, speculations, the excessive stretch of which has been productive of so much damage to the principles of the country, and to the population, whom it has, in so many respects, degraded and demoralized?" For a great many years, manufactures, taken in a general point of view, have not partaken of the character of a regular profession, in which all who engaged with honest industry and a sufficient capital might reasonably expect returns

proportional to their advances and labor—but have, on the contrary, rather resembled a lottery, in which the great majority of the adventurers are sure to be losers, although some may draw considerable advantage. Men continued for a great many years to exert themselves, and to pay extravagant wages, not in hopes that there could be a reasonable prospect of an orderly and regular demand for the goods they wrought up, but in order that they might be the first to take advantage of some casual opening which might consume their cargo, let others shift as they could. Hence extravagant wages on some occasions; for these adventurers who thus played at hit or miss, stood on no scruples while the chance of success remained open. Hence, also, the stoppage of work, and the discharge of the workmen, when the speculators failed of their object. All this while the country was the sufferer;—for whoever gained, the result, being upon the whole a loss, fell on the nation, together with the task of maintaining a poor, rendered effeminate and vicious by over-wages and over-living, and necessarily cast loose upon society. I cannot but think that the necessity of making some fund beforehand, for the provision of those whom they debauch, and render only fit for the almshouse, in prosecution of their own adventures, though it operated as a check on the increase of manufactures, would be a measure just in itself, and beneficial to the community. But it would never be listened to;—the weaver's beam, and the sons of Zeruiah, would be too many for the proposers.

This is the eleventh of August: Walter, happier than he will ever be again, perhaps, is preparing for the moors. He has a better dog than Trout, and rather less active. Mrs. Scott and all our family send kind love.

Yours ever,

W. S.

Two or three days after this letter was written, Scott first saw Washington Irving, who has recorded his visit in a delightful Essay, which, however, having been penned nearly twenty years afterwards, betrays a good many slips of memory as to names and dates. Mr. Irving says he arrived at Abbotsford on the 27th of August, 1816; but he describes the walls of the new house as already overtopping the old cottage; and this is far from being the only circumstance he mentions which proves that he should have

written 1817. The picture which my amiable friend has drawn of his reception shows to all who remember the Scott and the Abbotsford of those days, how consistent accuracy as to essentials may be with forgetfulness of trifles.

Scott had received The History of New York by Knickerbocker, shortly after its appearance in 1812, from an accomplished American traveller, Mr. Brevoort; and the admirable humor of this early work had led him to anticipate the brilliant career which its author has since run. Mr. Thomas Campbell, being no stranger to Scott's high estimation of Irving's genius, gave him a letter of introduction, which, halting his chaise on the high-road above Abbotsford, he modestly sent down to the house, "with a card, on which he had written, that he was on his way to the ruins of Melrose, and wished to know whether it would be agreeable to Mr. Scott to receive a visit from him in the course of the morning." Scott's family well remember the delight with which he received this announcement:—he was at breakfast, and sallied forth instantly, dogs and children after him as usual, to greet the guest, and conduct him in person from the highway to the door.

"The noise of my chaise," says Irving, "had disturbed the quiet of the establishment. Out sallied the warder of the castle, a black greyhound, and leaping on one of the blocks of stone, began a furious barking. This alarm brought out the whole garrison of dogs, all open-mouthed and vociferous. In a little while, the lord of the castle himself made his appearance. I knew him at once, by the likenesses that had been published of him. He came limping up the gravel walk, aiding himself by a stout walking staff, but moving rapidly and with vigor. By his side jogged along a large iron-gray staghound, of most grave demeanor, who took no part in the clamor of the canine rabble, but seemed to consider himself bound, for the dignity of the house, to give me a courteous reception.

"Before Scott reached the gate, he called out in a hearty tone, welcoming me to Abbotsford, and asking news of Campbell. Arrived at the door of the chaise, he grasped me warmly by the hand: 'Come, drive down, drive down to the house,' said he; 'ye're just in time for breakfast, and afterwards ye shall see all the wonders of the Abbey.'

"I would have excused myself on the plea of having already made my breakfast. 'Hut, man,' cried he, 'a ride in the morning in the keen air of the

Scotch hills is warrant enough for a second breakfast.'

"I was accordingly whirled to the portal of the cottage, and in a few moments found myself seated at the breakfast-table. There was no one present but the family, which consisted of Mrs. Scott; her eldest daughter, Sophia, then a fine girl about seventeen; Miss Anne Scott, two or three years younger; Walter, a well-grown stripling; and Charles, a lively boy, eleven or twelve years of age.

"I soon felt myself quite at home, and my heart in a glow, with the cordial welcome I experienced. I had thought to make a mere morning visit, but found I was not to be let off so lightly. 'You must not think our neighborhood is to be read in a morning like a newspaper,' said Scott; 'it takes several days of study for an observant traveller, that has a relish for auld-world trumpery. After breakfast you shall make your visit to Melrose Abbey; I shall not be able to accompany you, as I have some household affairs to attend to; but I will put you in charge of my son Charles, who is very learned in all things touching the old ruin and the neighborhood it stands in; and he and my friend Johnnie Bower will tell you the whole truth about it, with a great deal more that you are not called upon to believe, unless you be a true and nothing-doubting antiquary. When you come back, I'll take you out on a ramble about the neighborhood. To-morrow we will take a look at the Yarrow, and the next day we will drive over to Dryburgh Abbey, which is a fine old ruin, well worth your seeing.'—In a word, before Scott had got through with his plan, I found myself committed for a visit of several days, and it seemed as if a little realm of romance was suddenly open before me."

After breakfast, while Scott, no doubt, wrote a chapter of Rob Roy, Mr. Irving, under young Charles's guidance, saw Melrose Abbey, and Johnnie Bower the elder, whose son long since inherited his office as showman of the ruins, and all his enthusiasm about them and their poet. The senior on this occasion was loud in his praises of the affability of Scott. "He'll come here sometimes," said he, "with great folks in his company, and the first I'll know of it is hearing his voice calling out Johnnie!—Johnnie Bower!—and when I go out I'm sure to be greeted with a joke or a pleasant word. He'll stand and crack, an' laugh wi' me just like an auld wife,—and *to think that of a man that has such an awfu' knowledge o' history!*"

On his return from the Abbey, Irving found Scott ready for a ramble. I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of extracting some parts of his description of it.

"As we sallied forth, every dog in the establishment turned out to attend us. There was the old staghound, Maida, that I have already mentioned, a noble animal, and Hamlet, the black greyhound, a wild thoughtless youngster, not yet arrived at the years of discretion; and Finette, a beautiful setter, with soft, silken hair, long pendent ears, and a mild eye, the parlor favorite. When in front of the house, we were joined by a superannuated greyhound, who came from the kitchen wagging his tail; and was cheered by Scott as an old friend and comrade. In our walks, he would frequently pause in conversation, to notice his dogs, and speak to them as if rational companions; and, indeed, there appears to be a vast deal of rationality in these faithful attendants on man, derived from their close intimacy with him. Maida deported himself with a gravity becoming his age and size, and seemed to consider himself called upon to preserve a great degree of dignity and decorum in our society. As he jogged along a little distance ahead of us, the young dogs would gambol about him, leap on his neck, worry at his ears, and endeavor to tease him into a gambol. The old dog would keep on for a long time with imperturbable solemnity, now and then seeming to rebuke the wantonness of his young companions. At length he would make a sudden turn, seize one of them, and tumble him in the dust, then giving a glance at us, as much as to say, 'You see, gentlemen, I can't help giving way to this nonsense,' would resume his gravity, and jog on as before. Scott amused himself with these peculiarities. 'I make no doubt,' said he, 'when Maida is alone with these young dogs, he throws gravity aside, and plays the boy as much as any of them; but he is ashamed to do so in our company, and seems to say—Ha' done with your nonsense, youngsters: what will the laird and that other gentleman think of me if I give way to such foolery?'

"Scott amused himself with the peculiarities of another of his dogs, a little shamefaced terrier, with large glassy eyes, one of the most sensitive little bodies to insult and indignity in the world. 'If ever he whipped him,' he said, 'the little fellow would sneak off and hide himself from the light of day in a lumber garret, from whence there was no drawing him forth but by the sound of the chopping-knife, as if chopping up his victuals, when he would

steal forth with humiliated and downcast look, but would skulk away again if any one regarded him.'

"While we were discussing the humors and peculiarities of our canine companions, some object provoked their spleen, and produced a sharp and petulant barking from the smaller fry; but it was some time before Maida was sufficiently roused to ramp forward two or three bounds, and join the chorus with a deep-mouthed *bow wow*. It was but a transient outbreak, and he returned instantly, wagging his tail, and looking up dubiously in his master's face, uncertain whether he would receive censure or applause. 'Ay, ay, old boy!' cried Scott, 'you have done wonders; you have shaken the Eildon hills with your roaring: you may now lay by your artillery for the rest of the day. Maida,' continued he, 'is like the great gun at Constantinople; it takes so long to get it ready, that the smaller guns can fire off a dozen times first: but when it does go off, it plays the very devil.'

"These simple anecdotes may serve to show the delightful play of Scott's humors and feelings in private life. His domestic animals were his friends. Everything about him seemed to rejoice in the light of his countenance.

"Our ramble took us on the hills commanding an extensive prospect. 'Now,' said Scott, 'I have brought you, like the pilgrim in the Pilgrim's Progress, to the top of the Delectable Mountains, that I may show you all the goodly regions hereabouts. Yonder is Lammermuir, and Smailholm; and there you have Galashiels, and Torwoodlee, and Gala Water; and in that direction you see Teviotdale and the Braes of Yarrow, and Ettrick stream winding along like a silver thread, to throw itself into the Tweed.' He went on thus to call over names celebrated in Scottish song, and most of which had recently received a romantic interest from his own pen. In fact, I saw a great part of the Border country spread out before me, and could trace the scenes of those poems and romances which had in a manner bewitched the world.

"I gazed about me for a time with mute surprise, I may almost say with disappointment. I beheld a mere succession of gray waving hills, line beyond line, as far as my eye could reach, monotonous in their aspect, and so destitute of trees, that one could almost see a stout fly walking along their profile; and the far-famed Tweed appeared a naked stream, flowing between bare hills, without a tree or thicket on its banks; and yet such had

been the magic web of poetry and romance thrown over the whole, that it had a greater charm for me than the richest scenery I had beheld in England. I could not help giving utterance to my thoughts. Scott hummed for a moment to himself, and looked grave; he had no idea of having his Muse complimented at the expense of his native hills. 'It may be pertinacity,' said he at length; 'but to my eye, these gray hills, and all this wild Border country, have beauties peculiar to themselves. I like the very nakedness of the land; it has something bold, and stern, and solitary about it. When I have been for some time in the rich scenery about Edinburgh, which is like ornamented garden land, I begin to wish myself back again among my own honest gray hills; and if I did not see the heather, at least once a year, *I think I should die!*' The last words were said with an honest warmth, accompanied by a thump on the ground with his staff, by way of emphasis, that showed his heart was in his speech. He vindicated the Tweed, too, as a beautiful stream in itself; and observed that he did not dislike it for being bare of trees, probably from having been much of an angler in his time; and an angler does not like to have a stream overhung by trees, which embarrass him in the exercise of his rod and line.

"I took occasion to plead, in like manner, the associations of early life for my disappointment in respect to the surrounding scenery. I had been so accustomed to see hills crowned with forests, and streams breaking their way through a wilderness of trees, that all my ideas of romantic landscape were apt to be well wooded. 'Ay, and that's the great charm of your country,' cried Scott. 'You love the forest as I do the heather; but I would not have you think I do not feel the glory of a great woodland prospect. There is nothing I should like more than to be in the midst of one of your grand wild original forests, with the idea of hundreds of miles of untrodden forest around me. I once saw at Leith an immense stick of timber, just landed from America. It must have been an enormous tree when it stood in its native soil, at its full height, and with all its branches. I gazed at it with admiration; it seemed like one of the gigantic obelisks which are now and then brought from Egypt to shame the pigmy monuments of Europe; and, in fact, these vast aboriginal trees, that have sheltered the Indians before the intrusion of the white men, are the monuments and antiquities of your country.'

"The conversation here turned upon Campbell's poem of Gertrude of Wyoming, as illustrative of the poetic materials furnished by American scenery. Scott cited several passages of it with great delight. 'What a pity it is,' said he, 'that Campbell does not write more, and oftener, and give full sweep to his genius! He has wings that would bear him to the skies; and he does, now and then, spread them grandly, but folds them up again, and resumes his perch, as if he was afraid to launch away. What a grand idea is that,' said he, 'about prophetic boding, or, in common parlance, second sight —

"Coming events cast their shadows before!"—

The fact is,' added he, 'Campbell is, in a manner, a bugbear to himself. The brightness of his early success is a detriment to all his further efforts. *He is afraid of the shadow that his own fame casts before him.*'

"We had not walked much farther, before we saw the two Miss Scotts advancing along the hillside to meet us. The morning's studies being over, they had set off to take a ramble on the hills, and gather heather blossoms with which to decorate their hair for dinner. As they came bounding lightly like young fawns, and their dresses fluttering in the pure summer breeze, I was reminded of Scott's own description of his children, in his introduction to one of the cantos of Marmion:—

'My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,
As best befits the mountain child,' etc.

As they approached, the dogs all sprang forward, and gambolled around them. They joined us with countenances full of health and glee. Sophia, the eldest, was the most lively and joyous, having much of her father's varied spirit in conversation, and seeming to catch excitement from his words and looks; Anne was of a quieter mood, rather silent, owing, in some measure, no doubt, to her being some years younger."

Having often, many years afterwards, heard Irving speak warmly of William Laidlaw, I must not omit the following passage:—

"One of my pleasantest rambles with Scott about the neighborhood of Abbotsford was taken in company with Mr. William Laidlaw, the steward of his estate. This was a gentleman for whom Scott entertained a particular

value. He had been born to a competency, had been well educated, his mind was richly stored with varied information, and he was a man of sterling moral worth. Having been reduced by misfortune, Scott had got him to take charge of his estate. He lived at a small farm, on the hillside above Abbotsford, and was treated by Scott as a cherished and confidential friend, rather than a dependant.

"That day at dinner we had Mr. Laidlaw and his wife, and a female friend who accompanied them. The latter was a very intelligent respectable person, about the middle age, and was treated with particular attention and courtesy by Scott. Our dinner was a most agreeable one, for the guests were evidently cherished visitors to the house, and felt that they were appreciated. When they were gone, Scott spoke of them in the most cordial manner. 'I wished to show you,' said he, 'some of our really excellent, plain Scotch people: not fine gentlemen and ladies, for such you can meet everywhere, and they are everywhere the same. The character of a nation is not to be learnt from its fine folks.' He then went on with a particular eulogium on the lady who had accompanied the Laidlaws. She was the daughter, he said, of a poor country clergyman, who had died in debt, and left her an orphan and destitute. Having had a good plain education, she immediately set up a child's school, and had soon a numerous flock under her care, by which she earned a decent maintenance. That, however, was not her main object. Her first care was to pay off her father's debts, that no ill word or ill will might rest upon his memory. This, by dint of Scotch economy, backed by filial reverence and pride, she accomplished, though in the effort she subjected herself to every privation. Not content with this, she in certain instances refused to take pay for the tuition of the children of some of her neighbors, who had befriended her father in his need, and had since fallen into poverty. 'In a word,' added Scott, 'she's a fine old Scotch girl, and I delight in her more than in many a fine lady I have known, and I have known many of the finest.'

"The evening passed away delightfully in a quaint-looking apartment, half study, half drawing-room. Scott read several passages from the old Romance of Arthur, with a fine deep sonorous voice, and a gravity of tone that seemed to suit the antiquated black-letter volume. It was a rich treat to hear such a work read by such a person, and in such a place; and his appearance, as he sat reading, in a large armchair, with his favorite hound

Maida at his feet, and surrounded by books and reliques and Border trophies, would have formed an admirable and most characteristic picture. When I retired for the night, I found it almost impossible to sleep: the idea of being under the roof of Scott; of being on the Borders on the Tweed; in the very centre of that region which had, for some time past, been the favorite scene of romantic fiction; and, above all, the recollections of the ramble I had taken, the company in which I had taken it, and the conversation which had passed, all fermented in my mind, and nearly drove sleep from my pillow.

"On the following morning the sun darted his beams from over the hills through the low lattice of my window. I rose at an early hour, and looked out between the branches of eglantine which overhung the casement. To my surprise, Scott was already up, and forth, seated on a fragment of stone, and chatting with the workmen employed in the new building. I had supposed, after the time he had wasted upon me yesterday, he would be closely occupied this morning: but he appeared like a man of leisure, who had nothing to do but bask in the sunshine, and amuse himself. I soon dressed myself and joined him. He talked about his proposed plans of Abbotsford: happy would it have been for him could he have contented himself with his delightful little vine-covered cottage, and the simple, yet hearty and hospitable, style in which he lived at the time of my visit."

Among other visitors who succeeded the distinguished American that autumn, were Lady Byron, the wife of the poet, and the great artist, Mr., now Sir David Wilkie, who then executed for Captain Ferguson that pleasing little picture, in which Scott and his family are represented as a group of peasants, while the gallant soldier himself figures by them in the character of a gamekeeper, or perhaps poacher. Mr. Irving has given, in the little work from which I have quoted so liberally, an amusing account of the delicate scruples of Wilkie about soliciting Scott to devote a morning to the requisite sitting, until, after lingering for several days, he at length became satisfied that, by whatever magic his host might contrive to keep Ballantyne's presses in full play, he had always abundance of leisure for matters less important than Ferguson's destined heirloom. I shall now, however, return to his correspondence; and begin with a letter to Joanna Baillie on Lady Byron's visit.

TO MISS JOANNA BAILLIE, HAMPSTEAD.

Abbotsford, September 26, 1817.

My dear Miss Baillie,—A series of little trinketty sort of business, and occupation, and idleness, have succeeded to each other so closely, that I have been scarce able, for some three weeks past, to call my time my own for half an hour together; but enough of apologies—they are vile things, and I know you will impute my negligence to anything rather than forgetting or undervaluing your friendship. You know, by this time, that we have had a visit from Lady Byron, delightful both on its own account, and because it was accompanied with good news and a letter from you. I regret we could not keep her longer than a day with us, which was spent on the banks of the Yarrow, and I hope and believe she was pleased with us, because I am sure she will be so with everything that is intended to please her: meantime her visit gave me a most lawyer-like fit of the bile. I have lived too long to be surprised at any instance of human caprice, but still it vexes me. Now, one would suppose Lady Byron, young, beautiful, with birth, and rank, and fortune, and taste, and high accomplishments, and admirable good sense, qualified to have made happy one whose talents are so high as Lord Byron's, and whose marked propensity it is to like those who are qualified to admire and understand his talents; and yet it has proved otherwise. I can safely say my heart ached for her all the time we were together; there was so much patience and decent resignation to a situation which must have pressed on her thoughts, that she was to me one of the most interesting creatures I had seen for a score of years. I am sure I should not have felt such strong kindness towards her had she been at the height of her fortune, and in the full enjoyment of all the brilliant prospects to which she seemed destined.—You will wish to hear of my complaint. I think, thank God, that it is leaving me—not suddenly, however, for I have had some repetitions, but they have become fainter and fainter, and I have not been disturbed by one for these three weeks. I trust, by care and attention, my stomach will return to its usual tone, and I am as careful as I can. I have taken hard exercise with good effect, and am often six hours on foot without stopping or sitting down, to which my plantations and enclosures contribute not a little. I have, however, given up the gun this season, finding myself unable to walk up to the dogs; but Walter has taken it in hand, and promises to be a first-rate shot; he brought us in about seven or eight brace of birds the

evening Lady Byron came to us, which papa was of course a little proud of. The blackcocks are getting very plenty on our moor-ground at Abbotsford, but I associate them so much with your beautiful poem, that I have not the pleasure I used to have in knocking them down. I wish I knew how to send you a brace. I get on with my labors here; my house is about to be roofed in, and a comical concern it is.

Yours truly,

W. S.

The next letter refers to the Duke of Buccleuch's preparations for a cattle-show at Bowhill, which was followed by an entertainment on a large scale to his Grace's Selkirkshire neighbors and tenantry, and next day by a fox-hunt, after Dandie Dinmont's fashion, among the rocks of the Yarrow. The Sheriff attended *with his tail on*; and Wilkie, too, went with him. It was there that Sir David first saw Hogg, and the Shepherd's greeting was graceful. He eyed the great painter for a moment in silence, and then stretching out his hand, said: "Thank God for it. I did not know that you were so young a man!"

TO THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC., ETC., ETC.,
DRUMLANRIG CASTLE.

My dear Lord Duke,—I am just honored with your Grace's of the 27th. The posts, which are as cross as pie-crust, have occasioned some delay. Depend on our attending at Bowhill on the 20th, and staying over the show. I have written to Adam Ferguson, who will come with a whoop and a hollo. So will the Ballantynes—flageolet and all—for the festival, and they shall be housed at Abbotsford. I have an inimitably good songster in the person of Terence Magrath, who teaches my girls. He beats almost all whom I have ever heard attempt Moore's songs, and I can easily cajole him also out to Abbotsford for a day or two. In jest or earnest, I never heard a better singer in a room, though his voice is not quite full enough for a concert; and for an after-supper song, he almost equals Irish Johnstone.

Trade of every kind is recovering, and not a loom idle in Glasgow. The most faithful respects of this family attend the Ladies and all at Drumlanrig. I ever am your Grace's truly obliged and grateful

Walter Scott.

Given from my Castle of Grawacky, this second day of the month called October, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventeen Years.

There is a date nearly as long as the letter.

I hope we shall attack the foxes at Bowhill. I will hazard Maida.

We have some allusions to this Bowhill party in another letter; the first of several which I shall now insert according to their dates, leaving them, with a few marginal notes, to tell out the story of 1817:—

TO DANIEL TERRY, ESQ., LONDON.

Abbotsford, October 24, 1817.

Dear Terry,—Bullock has not gone to Skye, and I am very glad he has not, for to me who knew the Hebrides well, the attempt seemed very perilous at this season. I have considerably enlarged my domains since I wrote to you, by the purchase of a beautiful farm adjacent. The farmhouse, which is new and excellent, I have let to Adam Ferguson and his sisters. We will be within a pleasant walk of each other, and hope to end our lives, as they began, in each other's society. There is a beautiful brook, with remnants of natural wood, which would make Toftfield rival Abbotsford, but for the majestic Tweed. I am in treaty for a field or two more; one of which contains the only specimen of a Peel-house, or defensive residence of a small proprietor, which remains in this neighborhood. It is an orchard, in the hamlet of Darnick, to which it gives a most picturesque effect. Blore admires it very much. We are all well here, but crowded with company. I have been junketing this week past at Bowhill. Mr. Magrath has been with us these two or three days, and has seen his ward, Hamlet, behave most *princelike* on Newark Hill and elsewhere. He promises to be a real treasure. Notwithstanding, Mr. Magrath went to Bowhill with me one day, where his vocal talents gave great pleasure, and I hope will procure him the notice and protection of the Buccleuch family. The Duke says my building engrosses, as a common centre, the thoughts of Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Bullock, and wishes he could make them equally anxious in his own behalf. You may believe this flatters me not a little.

P. S.—I agree with you that the tower will look rather rich for the rest of the building; yet you may be assured, that with diagonal chimneys and notched gables, it will have a very fine effect, and is in Scotch architecture by no means incompatible. My house has been like a *cried fair*, and extreme the inconvenience of having no corner sacred to my own use, and free from intrusion.

Ever truly yours,

W. S.

TO THE SAME.

Abbotsford, 29th October, 1817.

My dear Terry,—I enclose a full sketch of the lower story, with accurate measurements of rooms, casements, doorways, chimneys, etc., that Mr. Atkinson's good will may not want means to work upon. I will speak to the subjects of your letters separately, that I may omit none of them. *1st*, I cannot possibly surrender the window to the west in the library, although I subscribe to all you urge about it. Still it is essential in point of light to my old eyes, and the single northern aspect would not serve me. Above all, it looks into the yard, and enables me to summon Tom Purdie without the intervention of a third party. Indeed, as I can have but a few books about me, it is of the less consequence. *2dly*, I resign the idea of *coving* the library to your better judgment, and I think the Stirling Heads will be admirably disposed in the glass of the armory window. I have changed my mind as to having doors on the book-presses, which is, after all, a great bore. No person will be admitted into my sanctum, and I can have the door locked during my absence. *3dly*, I expect Mr. Bullock here every day, and should be glad to have the drawings for the dining-room wainscot, as he could explain them to the artists who are to work them. This (always if quite convenient) would be the more desirable, as I must leave this place in a fortnight at farthest,—the more 's the pity,—and, consequently, the risk of blunders will be considerably increased. I should like if the panelling of the wainscot could admit of a press on each side of the sideboard. I don't mean a formal press with a high door, but some crypt, or, to speak vulgarly, *cupboard*, to put away bottles of wine, etc. You know I am my own butler, and such accommodation is very convenient. We begin roofing to-morrow.

Wilkie admires the whole as a composition, and that is high authority. I agree that the fountain shall be out of doors in front of the greenhouse; there may be an enclosure for it with some ornamented mason work, as in old gardens, and it will occupy an angle, which I should be puzzled what to do with, for turf and gravel would be rather meagre, and flowers not easily kept. I have the old fountain belonging to the Cross of Edinburgh, which flowed with wine at the coronation of our kings and on other occasions of public rejoicing. I send a sketch of this venerable relic, connected as it is with a thousand associations. It is handsome in its forms and proportions—a freestone basin about three feet in diameter, and five inches and a half in depth, very handsomely hollowed. A piece has been broken off one edge, but as we have the fragment, it can easily be restored with cement. There are four openings for pipes in the circumference—each had been covered with a Gothic masque, now broken off and defaced, but which may be easily restored. Through these the wine had fallen into a larger and lower reservoir. I intend this for the centre of my fountain. I do not believe I should save £100 by retaining Mrs. Redford, by the time she was raised, altered, and beautified, for, like the Highlandman's gun, she wants stock, lock, and barrel, to put her into repair. In the mean time, "the cabin is convenient." Yours ever,

W. S.

TO MR. WILLIAM LAIDLAW, KAESIDE.

Edinburgh, November 15, 1817.

Dear Willie,—I have no intention to let the Whitehaugh without your express approbation, and I wish you to act as my adviser and representative in these matters. I would hardly have ventured to purchase so much land without the certainty of your counsel and coöperation.... On the other side you will find a small order on the banker at Galashiels, to be renewed half yearly; not by way of recompensing your friendship "with a load of barren money," but merely to ease my conscience in some degree for the time which I must necessarily withdraw from the labor which is to maintain your family. Believe me, dear Willie, yours truly,

W. Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, 19th November, 1817.

Dear Willie,—I hope you will not quarrel with my last. Believe me that, to a sound-judging, and philosophical mind, this same account of Dr. and Cr., which fills up so much time in the world, is comparatively of very small value. When you get rich, unless I thrive in the same proportion, I will request your assistance for less, for little, or for nothing, as the case may require; but while I wear my seven-leagued boots to stride in triumph over moss and muir, it would be very silly in either of us to let a cheque twice a year of £25 make a difference between us. But all this we will talk over when we meet. I meditate one day a *coup-de-maître*, which will make my friend's advice and exertion essential—indeed worthy of much better remuneration. When you come, I hope you will bring us information of all my rural proceedings. Though so lately come to town, I still remember, at my waking hours, that I can neither see Tom Purdie nor Adam Paterson, and rise with the more unwillingness. I was unwell on Monday and Tuesday, but am quite recovered.

Yours truly,

W. S.

TO THOMAS SCOTT, ESQ., PAYMASTER, 70TH REGIMENT, KINGSTON, CANADA.

Edinburgh, 13th December, 1817.

My dear Tom,—I should be happy to attend to your commission about a dominie for your boy, but I think there will be much risk in yoking yourself with one for three or four years. You know what sort of black cattle these are, and how difficult it is to discern their real character, though one may give a guess at their attainments. When they get good provender in their guts, they are apt to turn out very different animals from what they were in their original low condition, and get frisky and troublesome. I have made several inquiries, however, and request to know what salary you would think reasonable, and also what acquisitions he ought to possess. There is no combating the feelings which you express for the society of your son, otherwise I really think that a Scottish education would be highly desirable;

and should you at any time revert to this plan, you may rely on my bestowing the same attention upon him as upon my own boys.

I agree entirely with you on the necessity of your remaining in the regiment while it is stationary, and retiring on half-pay when it marches; but I cannot so easily acquiesce in your plan of settling in Canada. On the latter event taking place, on the contrary, I think it would be highly advisable that you should return to your native country. In the course of nature you must soon be possessed of considerable property, now life-rented by our mother, and I should think that even your present income would secure you comfort and independence here. Should you remain in Canada, you must consider your family as settlers in that state, and as I cannot believe that it will remain very long separated from America, I should almost think this equal to depriving them of the advantages of British subjects—at least of those which they might derive from their respectable connections in this country. With respect to your son, in particular, I have little doubt that I could be of considerable service to him in almost any line of life he might chance to adopt here, but could of course have less influence on his fortunes were he to remain on the Niagara. I certainly feel anxious on this subject, because the settlement of your residence in America would be saying, in other words, that we two, the last remains of a family once so numerous, are never more to meet upon this side of time. My own health is very much broken up by the periodical recurrence of violent cramps in the stomach, which neither seem disposed to yield to medicine nor to abstinence. The complaint, the doctors say, is not dangerous in itself, but I cannot look forward to its continued recurrence, without being certain that it is to break my health, and anticipate old age in cutting me short. Be it so, my dear Tom —*Sat est vixisse*—and I am too much of a philosopher to be anxious about protracted life, which, with all its infirmities and deprivations, I have never considered as a blessing. In the years which may be before me, it would be a lively satisfaction to me to have the pleasure of seeing you in this country, with the prospect of a comfortable settlement. I have but an imperfect account to render of my doings here. I have amused myself with making an addition to my cottage in the country. One little apartment is to be fitted up as an armory for my old relics and curiosities. On the wicket I intend to mount your *deer's foot*—as an appropriate knocker. I hope the young ladies liked their watches, and that all your books, stationery, etc., came safe to

hand. I am told you have several kinds of the oak peculiar to America. If you can send me a few good acorns, with the names of the kinds they belong to, I will have them reared with great care and attention. The heaviest and smoothest acorns should be selected, as one would wish them, sent from such a distance, to succeed, which rarely happens unless they are particularly well ripened. I shall be as much obliged to you as Sancho was to the Duchess, or, to speak more correctly, the Duchess to Sancho, for a similar favor. Our mother keeps her health surprisingly well now, nor do I think there is any difference, unless that her deafness is rather increased. My eldest boy is upwards of six feet high; therefore born, as Sergeant Kite says, to be a great man. I should not like such a rapid growth, but that he carries strength along with it; my youngest boy is a very sharp little fellow —and the girls give us great satisfaction. Ever affectionately yours,

Walter Scott.

The following note is without date. It accompanied, no doubt, the last proof sheet of Rob Roy, and was therefore in all probability written about ten days before the 31st of December, 1817—on which day the novel was published.

TO MR. JAMES BALLANTYNE, ST. JOHN STREET.

Dear James,—

With great joy
I send you Roy.
'T was a tough job,
But we're done with Rob.

I forget if I mentioned Terry in my list of Friends. Pray send me two or three copies as soon as you can. It were pity to make the Grinder pay carriage.

Yours ever,

W. S.

The novel had indeed been "a tough job"—for lightly and airily as it reads, the author had struggled almost throughout with the pains of cramp or the

lassitude of opium. Calling on him one day to dun him for copy, James Ballantyne found him with a clean pen and a blank sheet before him, and uttered some rather solemn exclamation of surprise. "Ay, ay, Jemmy," said he, "'tis easy for you to bid me get on, but how the deuce can I make Rob Roy's wife speak, with such a *curmurring* in my guts?"

Chapter XL

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Rob Roy Published. — Negotiation Concerning the Second Series of Tales of My Landlord. — Commission to Search for the Scottish Regalia. — Letters to the Duke of Buccleuch, Mr. Croker, Mr. Morritt, Mr. Murray, Mr. Maturin, Etc. — Correspondence on Rural Affairs With Mr. Laidlaw, and on the Buildings at Abbotsford With Mr. Terry. — Death of Mrs. Murray Keith and Mr. George Bullock.

1818.

Rob Roy and his wife, Bailie Nicol Jarvie and his housekeeper, Die Vernon and Rashleigh Osbaldistone—these boldly drawn and happily contrasted personages—were welcomed as warmly as the most fortunate of their predecessors. Constable's resolution to begin with an edition of 10,000 proved to have been as sagacious as brave; for within a fortnight a second impression of 3000 was called for; and the subsequent sale of this novel has considerably exceeded 40,000 more.

Scott, however, had not waited for this new burst of applause. As soon as he came within view of the completion of Rob Roy, he desired John Ballantyne to propose to Constable and Co. a second series of the Tales of my Landlord, to be comprised, like the first, in four volumes, and ready for publication by "the King's birthday;" that is, the 4th of June, 1818. "I have hungered and thirsted," he wrote, "to see the end of those shabby borrowings among friends; they have all been wiped out except the good Duke's £4000—and I will not suffer either new offers of land or anything else to come in the way of that clearance. I expect that you will be able to arrange this resurrection of Jedediah, so that £5000 shall be at my order."

Mr. Rigdum used to glory in recounting that he acquitted himself on this occasion with a species of dexterity not contemplated in his commission. He well knew how sorely Constable had been wounded by seeing the first Tales of Jedediah published by Murray and Blackwood—and that the utmost success of Rob Roy would only double his anxiety to keep them out of the field, when the hint should be dropt that a second MS. from

Gandercleuch might shortly be looked for. John therefore took a convenient opportunity to mention the new scheme as if casually—so as to give Constable the impression that the author's purpose was to divide the second series also between his old rival in Albemarle Street, of whom his jealousy was always sensitive, and his neighbor Blackwood, whom, if there had been no other grudge, the recent conduct and rapidly increasing sale of his Magazine would have been sufficient to make Constable hate with a perfect hatred. To see not only his old "Scots Magazine" eclipsed, but the authority of the Edinburgh Review itself bearded on its own soil by this juvenile upstart, was to him gall and wormwood; and, moreover, he himself had come in for his share in some of those grotesque *jeux d'esprit* by which, at this period, Blackwood's young Tory wags delighted to assail their elders and betters of the Whig persuasion. To prevent the proprietor of this new journal from acquiring anything like a hold on the author of Waverley, and thus competing with himself not only in periodical literature, but in the highest of the time, was an object for which, as John Ballantyne shrewdly guessed, Constable would have made at that moment almost any sacrifice. When, therefore, the haughty but trembling bookseller—"The Lord High Constable" (as he had been dubbed by these jesters)—signified his earnest hope that the second Tales of my Landlord were destined to come out under the same auspices with Rob Roy, the plenipotentiary answered with an air of deep regret, that he feared it would be impossible for the author to dispose of the work—unless to publishers who should agree to take with it *the whole* of the remaining stock of "John Ballantyne and Co.;" and Constable, pertinaciously as he had stood out against many more modest propositions of this nature, was so worked upon by his jealous feelings, that his resolution at once gave way. He agreed on the instant to do all that John seemed to shrink from asking—and at one sweep cleared the Augean stable in Hanover Street of unsalable rubbish to the amount of £5270! I am assured by his surviving partner, that when he had finally redisposed of the stock, he found himself a loser by fully two thirds of this sum.

Burthened with this heavy condition, the agreement for the sale of 10,000 copies of the embryo series was signed before the end of November, 1817; and on the 7th January, 1818, Scott wrote as follows to his noble friend:—

TO THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC., ETC.

My dear Lord Duke,—I have the great pleasure of enclosing the discharged bond which your Grace stood engaged in for me, and on my account. The accommodation was of the greatest consequence to me, as it enabled me to retain possession of some valuable literary property, which I must otherwise have suffered to be sold at a time when the booksellers had no money to buy it. My dear Lord, to wish that all your numerous and extensive acts of kindness may be attended with similar advantages to the persons whom you oblige, is wishing you what to your mind will be the best recompense; and to wish that they may be felt by all as gratefully as by me, though you may be careless to hear about that part of the story, is only wishing what is creditable to human nature. I have this moment your more than kind letter, and congratulate your Grace that, in one sense of the word, you can be what you never will be in any other, *ambidexter*. But I am sorry you took so much trouble, and I fear *pains* besides, to display your new talent.

Ever your Grace's truly faithful,

Walter Scott.

The closing sentence of this letter refers to a fit of the gout which had disabled the Duke's right hand, but not cooled his zeal on a subject which, throughout January, 1818, occupied, I firmly believe, much more of his correspondent's thoughts by day and dreams by night, than any one, or perhaps than all others, besides. The time now approached when a Commission to examine the Crown-room in the Castle of Edinburgh, which had sprung from one of Scott's conversations with the Prince Regent in 1815, was at length to be acted upon. The minstrel of the "Rough Clan" had taken care that the name of his chief should stand at the head of the document; but the Duke's now precarious health ultimately prevented him from being present at the discovery of the long buried and almost forgotten Regalia of Scotland. The two following letters on this subject are of the same date—Edinburgh, 14th January, 1818.

TO THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH, ETC., ETC., BOWHILL.

My dear Lord,—You will hear from the Advocate that the Commission for opening the Regalia is arrived, and that the Commissioners held their first meeting yesterday. They have named next Wednesday (in case your Grace

can attend) for opening the mysterious chest. So this question will be put to rest forever.

I remember among the rebel company which debauched my youth, there was a drunken old Tory, who used to sing a ballad made about these same Regalia at the time of the Union, in which they were all destined to the basest uses; the crown, for example,

> "To make a can for Brandy Nan
> To puke in when she's tipsy."

The rest of the song is in a tone of equally pure humor; the chorus ran:—

> "Farewell, thou ancient kingdom—
> Farewell, thou ancient kingdom.
> Who sold thyself for English pelf—
> Was ever such a thing done?"

I hope your Grace feels yourself sufficiently interested in the recovery of these ancient symbols of national independence, so long worn by your forefathers, and which were never profaned by the touch of a monarch of a foreign dynasty. Here is fine planting weather. I trust it is as good in the Forest and on Tweedside.

Ever your Grace's truly faithful

Walter Scott.

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., ROKEBY.

Dear Morritt,—Our fat friend has remembered a petition which I put up to him, and has granted a Commission to the Officers of State and others (my unworthy self included)—which trusty and well-beloved persons are to institute a search after the Regalia of Scotland. There has an odd mystery hung about the fate of these royal symbols of national independence. The spirit of the Scotch at the Union clung fondly to these emblems; and to soothe their jealousy it was specially provided by an article of the Union, that the Regalia should never be removed, under any pretext, from the kingdom of Scotland. Accordingly they were deposited, with much ceremony, as an authentic instrument bears, in a strong chest, secured by

many locks, and the chest itself placed in a strong room, which again was carefully bolted up and secured, leaving to national pride the satisfaction of pointing to the barred window, with the consciousness that there lay the Regalia of Scotland. But this gratification was strangely qualified by a surmise, which somehow became generally averred, stating, that the Regalia had been sent to London; and you may remember that we saw at the Jewel Office a crown, *said to be* the ancient Crown of Scotland. If this transfer (by the way, highly illegal) was ever made, it must have been under some secret warrant; for no authority can be traced for such a proceeding in the records of the Secretary of State's Office. Fifteen or twenty years ago, the Crown-room, as it is called, was opened by certain Commissioners, under authority of a sign-manual. They saw the fatal chest, strewed with the dust of an hundred years, about six inches thick: a coating of like thickness lay on the floor; and I have heard the late President Blair say, that the uniform and level appearance of the dust warranted them to believe that the chest, if opened at all after 1707, must have been violated within a short time of that date, since, had it been opened at a later period, the dust accumulated on the lid, and displaced at opening it, must have been lying around the chest. But the Commissioners did not think their warrant entitled them to force this chest, for which no keys could be found; especially as their warrant only entitled them to search for *records*—not for crowns and sceptres.

The mystery, therefore, remained unpenetrated; and public curiosity was left to console itself with the nursery rhyme:—

> "On Tintock tap there is a mist,
> And in the mist there is a kist."

Our fat friend's curiosity, however, goes to the point at once, authorizing and enjoining an express search for the Regalia. Our friend of Buccleuch is at the head of the Commission, and will, I think, be as keen as I or any one, to see the issue.

I trust you have read Rob by this time. I think he smells of the cramp. Above all, I had too much flax on my distaff; and as it did not consist with my patience or my plan to make a fourth volume, I was obliged at last to draw a rough, coarse, and hasty thread. But the book is well liked here, and

has reeled off in great style. I have two stories on the anvil, far superior to Rob Roy in point of interest. Ever yours,

Walter Scott.

The Commissioners, who finally assembled on the 4th of February, were, according to the record, "the Right Hon. Charles Hope, Lord President of the Court of Session; the Right Hon. David Boyle, Lord Justice-Clerk; the Right Hon. William Adam, Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court; Major-General John Hope (Commanding the Forces in Scotland); the Solicitor-General (James Wedderburn, Esq.); the Lord Provost of Edinburgh (Kincaid Mackenzie, Esq.); William Clerk, Esq., Principal Clerk of the Jury Court; Henry Jardine, Esq., Deputy Remembrancer in the Exchequer; Thomas Thomson, Esq., Deputy Clerk-Register of Scotland; and Walter Scott, Esq., one of the Principal Clerks of Session."

Of the proceedings of this day, the reader has a full and particular account in an Essay which Scott penned shortly afterwards, and which is included in his Prose Miscellanies (vol. vii.). But I must not omit the contemporaneous letters in which he announced the success of the quest to his friend the Secretary of the Admiralty, and through him to the Regent:—

TO J. W. CROKER, ESQ., M. P., ETC., ETC., ADMIRALTY, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 4th February, 1818.

My dear Croker,—I have the pleasure to assure you the Regalia of Scotland were this day found in perfect preservation. The Sword of State and Sceptre showed marks of hard usage at some former period; but in all respects agree with the description in Thomson's work. I will send you a complete account of the opening to-morrow, as the official account will take some time to draw up. In the mean time, I hope you will remain as obstinate in your unbelief as St. Thomas, because then you will come down to satisfy yourself. I know nobody entitled to earlier information, save ONE, to whom you can perhaps find the means of communicating the result of our researches. The post is just going off.

Ever yours truly,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, 5th February, 1818.

My dear Croker,—I promised I would add something to my report of yesterday, and yet I find I have but little to say. The extreme solemnity of opening sealed doors of oak and iron, and finally breaking open a chest which had been shut since 7th March, 1707, about a hundred and eleven years, gave a sort of interest to our researches, which I can hardly express to you, and it would be very difficult to describe the intense eagerness with which we watched the rising of the lid of the chest, and the progress of the workmen in breaking it open, which was neither an easy nor a speedy task. It sounded very hollow when they worked on it with their tools, and I began to lean to your faction of the Little Faiths. However, I never could assign any probable or feasible reason for withdrawing these memorials of ancient independence; and my doubts rather arose from the conviction that many absurd things are done in public as well as in private life, merely out of a hasty impression of passion or resentment. For it was evident the removal of the Regalia might have greatly irritated people's minds here, and offered a fair pretext of breaking the Union, which for thirty years was the predominant wish of the Scottish nation.

The discovery of the Regalia has interested people's minds much more strongly than I expected, and is certainly calculated to make a pleasant and favorable impression upon them in respect to the kingly part of the constitution. It would be of the utmost consequence that they should be occasionally shown to them, under proper regulations, and for a small fee. The Sword of State is a most beautiful piece of workmanship, a present from Pope Julius II. to James IV. The scabbard is richly decorated with filigree work of silver, double gilded, representing oak leaves and acorns, executed in a taste worthy that classical age in which the arts revived. A draughtsman has been employed to make sketches of these articles, in order to be laid before his Royal Highness. The fate of these Regalia, which his Royal Highness's goodness has thus restored to light and honor, has on one or two occasions been singular enough. They were, in 1652, lodged in the Castle of Dunnottar, the seat of the Earl Marischal, by whom, according to his ancient privilege, they were kept. The castle was defended by George Ogilvie of Barra, who, apprehensive of the progress which the English

made in reducing the strong places in Scotland, became anxious for the safety of these valuable memorials. The ingenuity of his lady had them conveyed out of the castle in a bag on a woman's back, among some *hards*, as they are called, of lint. They were carried to the Kirk of Kinneff, and entrusted to the care of the clergyman, named Grainger, and his wife, and buried under the pulpit. The Castle of Dunnottar, though very strong and faithfully defended, was at length under necessity of surrendering, being the last strong place in Britain on which the royal flag floated in those calamitous times. Ogilvie and his lady were threatened with the utmost extremities by the Republican General Morgan, unless they should produce the Regalia. The governor stuck to it that he knew nothing of them, as in fact they had been carried away without his knowledge. The lady maintained she had given them to John Keith, second son of the Earl Marischal, by whom, she said, they had been carried to France. They suffered a long imprisonment, and much ill usage. On the Restoration, the old Countess Marischal, founding upon the story Mrs. Ogilvie had told to screen her husband, obtained for her own son, John Keith, the earldom of Kintore, and the post of Knight Marischal, with £400 a year, as if he had been in truth the preserver of the Regalia. It soon proved that this reward had been too hastily given, for Ogilvie of Barra produced the Regalia, the honest clergyman refusing to deliver them to any one but those from whom he received them. Ogilvie was made a Knight Baronet, however, and got a new charter of the lands, acknowledging the good service. Thus it happened oddly enough, that Keith, who was abroad during the transaction, and had nothing to do with it, got the earldom, pension, etc., Ogilvie only inferior honors, and the poor clergyman nothing whatever, or, as we say, *the hare's foot to lick*. As for Ogilvie's lady, she died before the Restoration, her health being ruined by the hardships she endured from the Cromwellian satellites. She was a Douglas, with all the high spirit of that proud family. On her deathbed, and not till then, she told her husband where the honors were concealed, charging him to suffer death rather than betray them. Popular tradition says, not very probably, that Grainger and his wife were *booted* (that is, tortured with the engine called the boots). I think that the Knight Marischal's office rested in the Kintore family until 1715, when it was resumed on account of the bearded Earl's accession to the Insurrection of that year. He escaped well, for they might have taken his estate and his earldom. I must save post, however, and conclude abruptly. Yours ever,

On the 5th, after the foregoing letter had been written at the Clerk's table, Scott and several of his brother Commissioners revisited the Castle, accompanied by some of the ladies of their families. His daughter tells me that her father's conversation had worked her feelings up to such a pitch, that when the lid was again removed, she nearly fainted, and drew back from the circle. As she was retiring, she was startled by his voice exclaiming, in a tone of the deepest emotion, "something between anger and despair," as she expresses it,—"By G—, No!" One of the Commissioners, not quite entering into the solemnity with which Scott regarded this business, had, it seems, made a sort of motion as if he meant to put the crown on the head of one of the young ladies near him, but the voice and aspect of the Poet were more than sufficient to make the worthy gentleman understand his error; and, respecting the enthusiasm with which he had not been taught to sympathize, he laid down the ancient diadem with an air of painful embarrassment. Scott whispered, "Pray, forgive me;" and turning round at the moment, observed his daughter deadly pale, and leaning by the door. He immediately drew her out of the room, and when the air had somewhat recovered her, walked with her across the Mound to Castle Street. "He never spoke all the way home," she says, "but every now and then I felt his arm tremble; and from that time I fancied he began to treat me more like a woman than a child. I thought he liked me better, too, than he had ever done before."

These little incidents may give some notion of the profound seriousness with which his imagination had invested this matter. I am obliged to add, that in the society of Edinburgh at the time, even in the highest Tory circles, it did not seem to awaken much even of curiosity—to say nothing of any deeper feeling. There was, however, a great excitement among the common people of the town, and a still greater among the peasantry, not only in the neighborhood, but all over Scotland; and the Crown-room, becoming thenceforth one of the established *lions* of a city much resorted to, moreover, by stranger tourists, was likely, on the most moderate scale of admission-fee, to supply a revenue sufficient for remunerating responsible and respectable guardianship. This post would, as Scott thought, be a very suitable one for his friend, Captain Adam Ferguson; and he exerted all his zeal for that purpose. The Captain was appointed: his nomination, however,

did not take place for some months after; and the postscript of a letter to the Duke of Buccleuch, dated May 14, 1818, plainly indicates the interest on which Scott mainly relied for its completion: "If you happen," he writes, "to see Lord Melville, pray give him a jog about Ferguson's affair; but between ourselves, I depend chiefly on the kind offices of Willie Adam, who is an auld sneck-drawer." The Lord Chief-Commissioner, at all times ready to lend Scott his influence with the Royal Family, had, on the present occasion, the additional motive of warm and hereditary personal regard for Ferguson.

I have placed together such letters as referred principally to the episode of the Regalia; but shall now give, in the order of time, a few which will sufficiently illustrate the usual course of his existence, while The Heart of Mid-Lothian was in progress. It appears that he resumed, in the beginning of this year, his drama of Devorgoil. His letters to Terry are of course full of that subject, but they contain, at the same time, many curious indications of his views and feelings as to theatrical affairs in general—and mixed up with these a most characteristic record of the earnestness with which he now watched the interior fitting up, as he had in the season before the outward architecture, of the new edifice at Abbotsford. Meanwhile it will be seen that he found leisure hours for various contributions to periodical works,—among others, an article on Kirkton's Church History, and another on (of all subjects in the world) *military bridges*, for the Quarterly Review; a spirited version of the old German ballad on the Battle of Sempach, and a generous criticism on Mrs. Shelley's romance of Frankenstein, for Blackwood's Magazine. This being the first winter and spring of Laidlaw's establishment at Kaeside, communications as to the affairs of the farm were exchanged weekly whenever Scott was in Edinburgh, and they afford delightful evidence of that paternal solicitude for the well-being of his rural dependents, which all along kept pace with Scott's zeal as to the economical improvement, and the picturesque adornment of his territories.

TO D. TERRY, ESQ., LONDON.

Edinburgh, 23d January, 1818.

My dear Terry,—You have by this time the continuation of the drama, down to the commencement of the third act, as I have your letter on the subject of the first. You will understand that I only mean them as sketches; for the first

and second acts are too short, and both want much to combine them with the third. I can easily add music to Miss Devorgoil's part. As to Braham, he is a beast of an actor, though an angel of a singer, and truly I do not see what he could personify. Let me know, however, your thoughts and wishes, and all shall be moulded to the best of my power to meet them: the point is to make it *take* if we can; the rest is all leather and prunella. A great many things must occur to you technically better, in the way of alteration and improvement, and you know well that, though too indolent to amend things on my own conviction, I am always ready to make them meet my friends' wishes if possible. We shall both wish it better than I can make it, but there is no reason why we should not do for it all that we can. I advise you to take some sapient friend into your counsels, and let me know the result, returning the MS. at the same time.

I am now anxious to complete Abbotsford. I think I told you I mean to do nothing whatever to the present house, but to take it away altogether at some future time, so that I finish the upper story without any communication with Mrs. Redford's *ci-devant* mansion, and shall place the opening in the lower story, wherever it will be most suitable for the new house, without regard to defacing the temporary drawing-room. I am quite feverish about the armory. I have two pretty complete suits of armor—one Indian one, and a cuirassier's, with boots, casque, etc.; many helmets, corselets, and steel caps, swords and poniards without end, and about a dozen of guns, ancient and modern. I have besides two or three battle-axes and maces, pikes and targets, a Highlander's accoutrement complete, a great variety of branches of horns, pikes, bows and arrows, and the clubs and creases of Indian tribes. Mr. Bullock promised to give some hint about the fashion of disposing all these matters; and now our spring is approaching, and I want but my plans to get on. I have reason to be proud of the finishing of my castle, for even of the tower, for which I trembled, not a stone has been shaken by the late terrific gale, which blew a roof clear off in the neighborhood. It was lying in the road like a saddle, as Tom Purdie expressed it. Neither has a slate been lifted, though about two yards of slating were stripped from the stables in the haugh, which you know were comparatively less exposed.

I am glad to hear of Mrs. Terry's improved health and good prospects. As for young Master Mumblecrust, I have no doubt he will be a credit to us all.

Yours ever truly,

W. Scott.

As the letters to Mr. Laidlaw did not travel by post, but in the basket which had come laden with farm-produce for the use of the family in Edinburgh, they have rarely any date but the day of the week. This is, however, of no consequence.

TO MR. LAIDLAW, KAESIDE.

Wednesday. [January, 1818.]

Dear Willie,—Should the weather be rough, and you nevertheless obliged to come to town, do not think of riding, but take the Blucher. Remember, your health is of consequence to your family. Pray talk generally with the notables of Darnick—I mean Rutherford, and so forth—concerning the best ordering of the road to the marle; and also of the foot-road. It appears to me some route might be found more convenient than the present, but that which is most agreeable to those interested shall also be most agreeable for me. As a patriotic member of the community of Darnick, I consider their rights equally important as my own.

I told you I should like to convert the present steading at Beechland into a little hamlet of laborers, which we will name Abbotstown. The art of making people happy is to leave them much to their own guidance, but some little regulation is necessary. In the first place, I should like to have active and decent people there; then it is to be considered on what footing they should be. I conceive the best possible is, that they should pay for their cottages, and cow-grass, and potato ground, and be paid for their labor at the ordinary rate. I would give them some advantages sufficient to balance the following conditions, which, after all, are conditions in my favor: *1st*, That they shall keep their cottages and little gardens, and doors, tolerably neat; and *2d*, That the men shall on no account shoot, or the boys break timber or take birds' nests, or go among the planting. I do not know any other restrictions, and these are easy. I should think we might settle a few families very happily here, which is an object I have much at heart, for I have no notion of the proprietor who is only ambitious to be lord of the

"beast and the brute," and chases the human face from his vicinity. By the bye, could we not manage to have a piper among the colonists?

We are delighted to hear that your little folks like the dells. Pray, in your walks try to ascertain the locality of St. John's Well, which cures the botts, and which John Moss claims for Kaeside; also the true history of the Carline's Hole. Ever most truly yours,

W. Scott.

I hope Mrs. Laidlaw does not want for anything that she can get from the garden or elsewhere.

TO DANIEL TERRY, ESQ.

8th February, 1818.

My dear Terry,—Yours arrived, unluckily, just half an hour after my packet was in the post-office, so this will cost you 9*d.*, for which I grieve. To answer your principal question first,—the drama is

> "Yours, Terry, yours in every thought."

I should never have dreamed of making such an attempt in my own proper person; and if I had such a vision, I should have been anxious to have made it something of a legitimate drama, such as a literary man, uncalled upon by any circumstance to connect himself with the stage, might have been expected to produce. Now this is just what any gentleman in your situation might run off, to give a little novelty to the entertainment of the year, and as such will meet a mitigated degree of criticism, and have a better chance of that *productive* success, which is my principal object in my godson's behalf. If any time should come when you might wish to disclose the secret, it will be in your power, and our correspondence will always serve to show that it was only at my earnest request, annexed as the condition of bringing the play forward, that you gave it your name—a circumstance which, with all the attending particulars, will prove plainly that there was no assumption on your part.

A beautiful drama might be made on the concealment of the Scotch Regalia during the troubles. But it would interfere with the democratic spirit of the

times, and would probably

——— "By party rage,
Or right or wrong, be hooted from the stage."

I will never forgive you if you let any false idea of my authorial feelings prevent your acting in this affair as if you were the real parent, not the godfather of the piece. Our facetious friend J. B. knows nought of such a matter being *en train*, and never will know. I am delighted to hear my windows are finished. Yours very truly,

Walter Scott.

TO MR. LAIDLAW, KAESIDE.

Wednesday. [February, 1818.]

Dear Willie,—I am not desirous to buy more land at present, unless I were to deal with Mr. Rutherford or Heiton, and I would rather deal with them next year than this, when I would have all my payments made for what I am now buying. Three or four such years as the last would enable me with prudence and propriety to ask Nicol himself to flit and remove.

I like the idea of the birch-hedge much, and if intermixed with holly and thorns, I think it might make an impenetrable thicket, having all the advantages of a hedge without the formality. I fancy you will also need a great number of (black) Italian poplars—which are among the most useful and best growers, as well as most beautiful of plants which love a wet soil.

I am glad the saws are going. We may begin by and by with wrights, but I cannot but think that a handy laborer might be taught to work at them. I shall insist on Tom learning the process perfectly himself.

As to the darkness of the garrets, they are intended for the accommodation of travelling geniuses, poets, painters, and so forth, and a little obscurity will refresh their shattered brains. I dare say Lauchie will *shave* his knoll, if it is required—it may to the barber's with the Laird's hebdomadal beard—and Packwood would have thought it the easier job of the two.

I saw Blackwood yesterday, and Hogg the day before, and I understand from them you think of resigning the Chronicle department of the

Magazine. Blackwood told me that if you did not like that part of the duty, he would consider himself accountable for the same sum he had specified to you for any other articles you might communicate from time to time. He proposes that Hogg should do the Chronicle: He will not do it so well as you, for he wants judgment and caution, and likes to have the appearance of eccentricity where eccentricity is least graceful; that, however, is Blackwood's affair. If you really do not like the Chronicle, there can be no harm in your giving it up. What strikes me is, that there is a something certain in having such a department to conduct, whereas you may sometimes find yourself at a loss when you have to cast about for a subject every month. Blackwood *is* rather in a bad pickle just now—sent to Coventry by the trade, as the booksellers call themselves, and all about the parody of the two beasts. Surely these gentlemen think themselves rather formed of porcelain clay than of common potter's ware. Dealing in satire against all others, their own dignity suffers so cruelly from an ill-imagined joke! If B. had good books to sell, he might set them all at defiance. His Magazine does well, and beats Constable's: but we will talk of this when we meet.

As for Whiggery in general, I can only say, that as no man can be said to be utterly overset until his rump has been higher than his head, so I cannot read in history of any free state which has been brought to slavery until the rascal and uninstructed populace had had their short hour of anarchical government, which naturally leads to the stern repose of military despotism. Property, morals, education, are the proper qualifications for those who should hold political rights, and extending them very widely greatly lessens the chance of these qualifications being found in electors. Look at the sort of persons chosen at elections where the franchise is very general, and you will find either fools who are content to flatter the passions of the mob for a little transient popularity, or knaves who pander to their follies, that they may make their necks a footstool for their own promotion. With these convictions, I am very jealous of Whiggery, under all modifications; and I must say, my acquaintance with the total want of principle in some of its warmest professors does not tend to recommend it. Somewhat too much of this. My compliments to the goodwife. Yours truly,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Wednesday. [February, 1818.]

Dear Willie,—I have no idea Usher will take the sheepland again, nor would I press it on him. As my circumstances stand, immediate revenue is much less my object than the real improvement of this property, which amuses me besides; our wants are amply supplied by my £1600 a year official income: nor have we a wish or a motive to extend our expenses beyond that of the decencies and hospitality of our station in life; so that my other resources remain for buying land in future, or improving what we have. No doubt Abbotsford, in maintaining our establishment during the summer, may be reckoned £150 or £200 saved on what we must otherwise buy; and if we could arrange to have mutton and beef occasionally from the farm in winter, it would be a still greater saving. All this you will consider: for Tom, thoroughly honest and very clever in his way, has no kind of generalizing, and would often like to save sixpence in his own department at the expense of my paying five shillings in another. This is his fault, and when you join to it a Scotch slovenliness which leads him to see things half-finished without pain or anxiety, I do not know any other he has—but such as they are, these must be guarded against. For our housemaid (for housekeeper we must not call her), I should like much a hawk of a nest so good as that you mention: but would not such a place be rather beneath her views? Her duty would be to look to scrupulous cleanliness within doors, and employ her leisure in spinning, or plain-work, as wanted. When we came out for a blink, she would be expected to cook a little in a plain way, and play maid of all work; when we were stationary, she would assist the housemaid and superintend the laundry. Probably your aunt's granddaughter will have pretensions to something better than this; but as we are to be out on the 12th March, we will talk it over. Assuredly a well-connected steady person would be of the greatest consequence to us. I like your plan of pitting much; and to compromise betwixt you and Tom, do one half with superior attention, and slit in the others for mere nurses. But I am no friend to that same slitting.

I adhere to trying a patch or two of larches, of a quarter of an acre each, upon the Athole plan, by way of experiment. We can plant them up if they do not thrive. On the whole, three-and-a-half feet is, I think, the right

distance. I have no fear of the ground being impoverished. Trees are not like arable crops, which necessarily derive their sustenance from the superficial earth—the roots of trees go far and wide, and, if incommoded by a neighbor, they send out suckers to procure nourishment elsewhere. They never hurt each other till their tops interfere, which may be easily prevented by timely weeding.

I rejoice in the sawmill. Have you settled with Harper?—and how do Og and Bashan come on? I cannot tell you how delighted I am with the account Hogg gives me of Mr. Grieve. The great Cameron was chaplain in the house of my great something grandfather, and so I hope Mr. Grieve will be mine. If, as the King of Prussia said to Rousseau, "a little persecution is necessary to make his home entirely to his mind," he shall have it; and what persecutors seldom promise, I will stop whenever he is tired of it. I have a pair of thumbikins also much at his service, if he requires their assistance to glorify God and the Covenant. Sincerely, I like enthusiasm of every kind so well, especially when united with worth of character, that I shall be delighted with this old gentleman. Ever yours,

W. Scott.

The last paragraph of this letter refers to an uncle of Laidlaw's (the father of Hogg's friend, John Grieve), who at this time thought of occupying a cottage on Scott's estate. He was a preacher of the Cameronian sect, and had long ministered to a very small remnant of "the hill-folk" scattered among the wilds of Ettrick. He was a very good man, and had a most venerable and apostolical benignity of aspect; but his prejudices were as extravagant as those of Cameron, his patriarch, himself could have been. The project of his removal to Tweedside was never realized.

The following admirable letter was written at the request of Messrs. Constable, who had, on Scott's recommendation, undertaken the publication of Mr. Maturin's novel, Women, or *Pour et Contre*. The reverend author's Bertram had, it may be remembered, undergone some rather rough usage in Coleridge's Biographia Literaria; and he was now desirous to revenge himself by a preface of the polemical sort:—

TO THE REV. C. R. MATURIN, DUBLIN.

26th February, 1818.

Dear Sir,—I am going to claim the utmost and best privilege of sincere friendship and good-will, that of offering a few words of well-meant advice; and you may be sure that the occasion seems important to induce me to venture so far upon your tolerance. It respects the preface to your work, which Constable and Co. have sent to me. It is as well written as that sort of thing can be; but will you forgive me if I say—it is too much in the tone of the offence which gave rise to it, to be agreeable either to good taste or to general feeling. Coleridge's work has been little read or heard of, and has made no general impression whatever—certainly no impression unfavorable to you or your play. In the opinion, therefore, of many, you will be resenting an injury of which they are unacquainted with the existence. If I see a man beating another unmercifully, I am apt to condemn him upon the first blush of the business, and hardly excuse him though I may afterwards learn he had ample provocation. Besides, your diatribe is not *hujus loci*. We take up a novel for amusement, and this current of controversy breaks out upon us like a stream of lava out of the side of a beautiful green hill; men will say you should have reserved your disputes for reviews or periodical publications, and they will sympathize less with your anger, because they will not think the time proper for expressing it. We are bad judges, bad physicians, and bad divines in our own case; but, above all, we are seldom able, when injured or insulted, to judge of the degree of sympathy which the world will bear in our resentment and our retaliation. The instant, however, that such degree of sympathy is exceeded, we hurt ourselves, and not our adversary. I am so convinced of this, and so deeply fixed in the opinion, that besides the uncomfortable feelings which are generated in the course of literary debate, a man lowers his estimation in the public eye by engaging in such controversy, that, since I have been dipped in ink, I have suffered no personal attacks (and I have been honored with them of all descriptions) to provoke me to reply. A man will certainly be vexed on such occasions, and I have wished to have the knaves *where the muircock was the bailie*—or, as *you* would say, *upon the sod*—but I never let the thing cling to my mind, and always adhered to my resolution, that if my writings and tenor of life did not confute such attacks, my words never should. Let me entreat you to view Coleridge's violence as a thing to be contemned, not retaliated—the opinion of a British public may surely be set in honest opposition to that of one disappointed and wayward man. You should also consider, *en bon Chrétien*, that Coleridge has had some room to

be spited at the world, and you are, I trust, to continue to be a favorite with the public—so that you should totally neglect and despise criticism, however virulent, which arises out of his bad fortune and your good.

I have only to add that Messrs. Constable and Co. are seriously alarmed for the effects of the preface upon the public mind as unfavorable to the work. In this they must be tolerable judges, for their experience as to popular feeling is very great; and as they have met your wishes, in all the course of the transaction, perhaps you will be disposed to give some weight to their opinion upon a point like this. Upon my own part I can only say that I have no habits of friendship, and scarce those of acquaintance with Coleridge—I have not even read his Autobiography—but I consider him as a man of genius, struggling with bad habits and difficult circumstances. It is, however, entirely upon your account that I take the liberty of stating an opinion on a subject of such delicacy. I should wish you to give your excellent talents fair play, and to ride this race without carrying any superfluous weight; and I am so well acquainted with my old friend the public, that I could bet a thousand pounds to a shilling, that the preface (if that controversial part of it is not cancelled) will greatly prejudice your novel.

I will not ask your forgiveness for the freedom I have used, for I am sure you will not suspect me of any motives but those which arise from regard to your talents and person; but I shall be glad to hear (whether you follow my advice or no) that you are not angry with me for having volunteered to offer it.

My health is, I think, greatly improved; I have had some returns of my spasmodic affection, but tolerable in degree, and yielding to medicine. I hope gentle exercise and the air of my hills will set me up this summer. I trust you will soon be out now. I have delayed reading the sheets in progress after Vol. I., that I might enjoy them when collected. Ever yours, etc.,

Walter Scott.

TO MR. LAIDLAW.

Edinburgh, Wednesday. [March, 1818.]

Dear Willie,—I am delighted to hear the plantings get on so well. The weather here has been cruelly changeable—fresh one day—frost the next—snow the third. This morning the snow lay three inches thick, and before noon it was gone, and blowing a tempest. Many of the better ranks are ill of the typhus fever, and some deaths. How do your poor folks come on? Let Tom advance you money when it is wanted. I do not propose, like the heroine of a novel, to convert the hovels of want into the abodes of elegant plenty, but we have enough to spare to relieve actual distress, and do not wish to economize where we can find out (which is difficult) where the assistance is instantly useful.

Don't let Tom forget hedgerow trees, which he is very unwilling to remember; and also to plant birches, oaks, elms, and such like round-headed trees along the verges of the Kaeside plantations; they make a beautiful outline, and also a sort of fence, and were not planted last year because the earth at the sunk fences was too newly travelled. This should be mixed with various bushes, as hollies, thorns, so as to make a wild hedge, or thickety obstruction to the inroads of cattle. A few sweetbriers, alders, honeysuckles, laburnums, etc., should be thrown in. A verdant screen may be made in this way, of the wildest and most beautiful description, which should never be clipt, only pruned, allowing the loose branches to drop over those that are taken away. Tom is very costive about trees, and talks only of 300 poplars. I shall send at least double that number; also some hagberries, etc. He thinks he is saving me money when he is starving my projects; but he is a pearl of honesty and good intention, and I like him the better for needing driving where expense is likely. Ever yours,

W. Scott.

TO JOHN MURRAY, ESQ., ALBEMARLE STREET, LONDON.

Abbotsford, 23d March, 1818.

Dear Murray,—

> "Grieve not for me, my dearest dear,
> I am not dead but sleepeth here."—

I have little to plead for myself, but the old and vile apologies of laziness and indisposition. I think I have been so unlucky of late as to have always the will to work when sitting at the desk hurts me, and the irresistible propensity to be lazy, when I might, like the man whom Hogarth introduces into Bridewell with his hands strapped up against the wall, "better work than stand thus." I laid Kirkton aside half finished, from a desire to get the original edition of the lives of Cameron, etc., by Patrick Walker, which I had not seen since a boy, and now I have got it, and find, as I suspected, that some curious *morceaux* have been cut out by subsequent editors. I will, without loss of time, finish the article, which I think you will like. Blackwood kidnapped an article for his Magazine on the Frankenstein story, which I intended for you. A very old friend and school companion of mine, and a gallant soldier, if ever there was one, Sir Howard Douglas, has asked me to review his work on Military Bridges. I must get a friend's assistance for the scientific part, and add some balaam of mine own (as printers' devils say) to make up four or five pages. I have no objection to attempt Lord Orford if I have time, and find I can do it with ease. Though far from admiring his character, I have always had a high opinion of his talents, and am well acquainted with his works. The letters you have published are, I think, his very best—lively, entertaining, and unaffected. I am greatly obliged to you for these and other literary treasures which I owe to your goodness from time to time. Although not thankfully acknowledged as they should be in course, these things are never thanklessly received.

I could have sworn that Beppo was founded on Whistlecraft, as both were on Anthony Hall, who, like Beppo, had more wit than grace.

I am not, however, in spirits at present for treating either these worthies, or my friend Rose, though few have warmer wishes to any of the trio. But this confounded changeable weather has twice within this fortnight brought back my cramp in the stomach. Adieu. My next shall be with a packet.—Yours truly,

W. Scott.

In the next letter we have Scott's lamentation over the death of Mrs. Murray Keith—the Mrs. Bethune Baliol of his Chronicles of the Canongate. The person alluded to under the designation of "Prince of the Black Marble

Islands" was Mr. George Bullock, already often mentioned as, with Terry and Mr. Atkinson, consulted about all the arrangements of the rising house at Abbotsford. Scott gave him this title from the Arabian Nights, on occasion of his becoming the lessee of some marble quarries in the Isle of Anglesea.

TO D. TERRY, ESQ., LONDON.

April 30, 1818—Selkirk.

My Dear Terry,—Your packet arrived this morning. I was much disappointed not to find the Prince of the Black Islands' plan in it, nor have I heard a word from him since anent it, or anent the still more essential articles of doors and windows. I heard from Hector Macdonald Buchanan, that the said doors and windows were packing a fortnight since, but there are no news of them. Surely our friend's heart has grown as hard as his materials; or the spell of the enchantress, which confined itself to the extremities of his predecessor, has extended over his whole person. Mr. Atkinson has kept tryst charmingly, and the ceiling of the dining-room will be superb. I have got I know not how many casts, from Melrose and other places, of pure Gothic antiquity. I must leave this on the 12th, and I could bet a trifle the doors, etc., will arrive the very day I set out, and be all put up *à la bonne aventure*. Meantime I am keeping open house, not much to my convenience, and I am afraid I shall be stopped in my plastering by the want of these matters. The exposed state of my house has led to a mysterious disturbance. The night before last we were awaked by a violent noise, like drawing heavy boards along the new part of the house. I fancied something had fallen, and thought no more about it. This was about *two* in the morning. Last night, at the same witching hour, the very same noise occurred. Mrs. S., as you know, is rather *timbersome*, so up got I, with Beardie's broadsword under my arm,

> "So bolt upright,
> And ready to fight."

But nothing was out of order, neither can I discover what occasioned the disturbance. However, I went to bed, grumbling against Tenterden Street, and all its works. If there was no entrance but the keyhole, I should warrant myself against the ghosts. We have a set of idle fellows called workmen

about us, which is a better way of accounting for nocturnal noises than any that is to be found in Baxter or Glanville.

When you see Mr. Atkinson, will you ask him how far he is satisfied with the arch between the armory and the ante-room, and whether it pleases him as it now stands? I have a brave old oaken cabinet, as black as ebony, 300 years old at least, which will occupy one side of the ante-room for the present. It is seven feet and a half long, about eighteen inches deep, and upwards of six feet high—a fine stand for china, etc.

You will be sorry to hear that we have lost our excellent old friend, Mrs. Murray Keith. She enjoyed all her spirits and excellent faculties till within two days of her death, when she was seized with a feverish complaint, which eighty-two years were not calculated to resist. Much tradition, and of the very best kind, has died with this excellent old lady; one of the few persons whose spirits and cleanliness, and freshness of mind and body, made old age lovely and desirable. In the general case, it seems scarce endurable.

It seems odd to me that Rob Roy should have made good fortune; pray let me know something of its history. There is in Jedediah's present work a thing capable of being woven out a *bourgeoise* tragedy. I think of contriving that it shall be in your hands some time before the public see it, that you may try to operate upon it yourself. This would not be difficult, as vol. 4, and part of 3d, contain a different story. *Avowedly* I will never write for the stage; if I do, "call me *horse*." And indeed I feel severely the want of knowledge of theatrical business and effect: however, something we will do. I am writing in the noise and babble of a head-court of freeholders; therefore my letter is incoherent, and therefore it is written also on long paper; but therefore, moreover, it will move by frank, as the member is here, and stands upon his popularity. Kind compliments to Mrs. Terry and Walter.

Yours very truly,

Walter Scott.

On the morning that Mr. Terry received the foregoing letter in London, Mr. William Erskine was breakfasting with him; and the chief subject of their

conversation was the sudden death of George Bullock, which had occurred on the same night, and, as nearly as they could ascertain, at the very hour when Scott was roused from his sleep by the "mysterious disturbance" here described, and sallied from his chamber with old Beardie's Killiecrankie claymore in his hand. This coincidence, when Scott received Erskine's minute detail of what had happened in Tenterden Street, made a much stronger impression on his mind than might be gathered from the tone of an ensuing communication.

TO D. TERRY, ESQ., LONDON.

Abbotsford, 4th May, 1818.

Dear Terry,—I received with the greatest surprise, and the most sincere distress, the news of poor George Bullock's death. In the full career of honorable industry,—distinguished by his uncommon taste and talent,—esteemed by all who transacted business with him,—and loved by those who had the pleasure of his more intimate acquaintance,—I can scarce conceive a more melancholy summons. It comes as a particular shock to me, because I had, particularly of late, so much associated his idea with the improvements here, in which his kind and enthusiastic temper led him to take such interest; and in looking at every unfinished or projected circumstance, I feel an impression of melancholy which will for some time take away the pleasure I have found in them. I liked George Bullock because he had no trumpery selfishness about his heart, taste, or feelings. Pray let me know about the circumstances of his family, etc. I feel most sincerely interested in all that concerns him. It must have been a dreadful surprise to Mr. Atkinson and you who lived with him so much. I need not, I am sure, beg you to be in no hurry about my things. The confusion must be cruelly great, without any friend adding to it; and in fact, at this moment, I am very indifferent on the subject. The poor kind fellow! He took so much notice of little Charles, and was so domesticated with us all, that I really looked with a schoolboy's anxiety for his being here in the season, to take his own quiet pleasures, and to forward mine. But God's will be done. All that surviving friends can do upon such a loss is, if possible, to love each other still better.—I beg to be kindly remembered to Mrs. Terry and Monsieur Walter. Ever most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, 16th May, 1818.

My Dear Terry,—Mr. Nasmyth has obligingly given me an opportunity of writing to you a few lines, as he is setting out for London. I cannot tell you how much I continue to be grieved for our kind-hearted and enthusiastic friend Bullock. I trust he has left his family comfortably settled, though, with so many plans which required his active and intelligent mind to carry them through, one has natural apprehensions upon that score. When you can with propriety make inquiry how my matters stand, I should be glad to know. Hector Macdonald tells me that my doors and windows were ready packed, in which case, perhaps, the sooner they are embarked the better, not only for safety, but because they can only be in the way, and the money will now be the more acceptable. Poor Bullock had also the measures for my chimney-pieces, for grates of different kinds, and orders for beds, dining-room tables and chairs. But how far these are in progress of being executed, or whether they can now be executed, I must leave to your judgment and inquiry. Your good sense and delicacy will understand the *façon de faire* better than I can point it out. I shall never have the pleasure in these things that I expected.

I have just left Abbotsford to attend the Summer session—left it when the leaves were coming out—the most delightful season for a worshipper of the country like me. The Home-bank, which we saw at first green with turnips, will now hide a man somewhat taller than Johnny Ballantyne in its shades. In fact, the trees cover the ground, and have a very pretty bosky effect; from six years to ten or twelve, I think wood is as beautiful as ever it is afterwards until it figures as aged and magnificent. Your hobbledehoy tree of twenty-five years' standing is neither so beautiful as in its infancy, nor so respectable as in its age.

Counsellor Erskine is returned, much pleased with your hospitality, and giving an excellent account of you. Were you not struck with the fantastical coincidence of our nocturnal disturbances at Abbotsford with the melancholy event that followed? I protest to you the noise resembled half-a-dozen men hard at work putting up boards and furniture, and nothing can be

more certain than that there was nobody on the premises at the time. With a few additional touches, the story would figure in Glanville or Aubrey's Collection. In the mean time you may set it down with poor Dubisson's warnings, as a remarkable coincidence coming under your own observation. I trust we shall see you this season. I think we could hammer a neat *comédie bourgeoise* out of The Heart of Mid-Lothian. Mrs. Scott and family join in kind compliments to Mrs. Terry; and I am ever yours truly,

Walter Scott.

It appears from one of these letters to Terry, that, so late as the 30th of April, Scott still designed to include two separate stories in the second series of the Tales of my Landlord. But he must have changed his plan soon after that date; since the four volumes, entirely occupied with The Heart of Mid-Lothian, were before the public in the course of June. The story thus deferred, in consequence of the extent to which that of Jeanie Deans grew on his hands, was The Bride of Lammermoor.

Chapter XLI

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Dinner at Mr. Home Drummond's. — Scott's Edinburgh Den. — Details of His Domestic Life in Castle Street. — His Sunday Dinners. — His Evening Drives, Etc. — His Conduct in the General Society of Edinburgh. — Dinners at John Ballantyne's Villa, and at James Ballantyne's in St. John Street, on the Appearance of a New Novel. — Anecdotes of the Ballantynes, and of Constable.

1818.

On the 12th of May, as we have seen, Scott left Abbotsford, for the summer session in Edinburgh.

At this moment, his position, take it for all in all, was, I am inclined to believe, what no other man had ever won for himself by the pen alone. His works were the daily food, not only of his countrymen, but of all educated Europe. His society was courted by whatever England could show of eminence. Station, power, wealth, beauty, and genius, strove with each other in every demonstration of respect and worship—and, a few political fanatics and envious poetasters apart—wherever he appeared in town or in country, whoever had Scotch blood in him, "gentle or simple," felt it move more rapidly through his veins when he was in the presence of Scott. To descend to what many looked on as higher things, he considered himself, and was considered by all about him, as rapidly consolidating a large fortune: the annual profits of his novels alone had, for several years, been not less than £10,000: his domains were daily increased—his castle was rising—and perhaps few doubted that erelong he might receive from the just favor of his Prince some distinction in the way of external rank, such as had seldom before been dreamt of as the possible consequence of a mere literary celebrity. It was about this time that the compiler of these pages first had the opportunity of observing the plain easy modesty which had survived the many temptations of such a career; and the kindness of heart pervading, in all circumstances, his gentle deportment, which made him the rare, perhaps the solitary, example of a man signally elevated from humble

beginnings, and loved more and more by his earliest friends and connections, in proportion as he had fixed on himself the homage of the great, and the wonder of the world.

It was during the sitting of the General Assembly of the Kirk in May, 1818, that I first had the honor of meeting him in private society: the party was not a large one, at the house of a much-valued common friend—Mr. Home Drummond of Blair Drummond, the grandson of Lord Kames. Mr. Scott, ever apt to consider too favorably the literary efforts of others, and more especially of very young persons, received me, when I was presented to him, with a cordiality which I had not been prepared to expect from one filling a station so exalted. This, however, is the same story that every individual, who ever met him under similar circumstances, has had to tell. When the ladies retired from the dinner-table, I happened to sit next him; and he, having heard that I had lately returned from a tour in Germany, made that country and its recent literature the subject of some conversation. In the course of it, I told him that when, on reaching the inn at Weimar, I asked the waiter whether Goethe was then in the town, the man stared as if he had not heard the name before; and that on my repeating the question, adding *Goethe der grosse dichter* (the great poet), he shook his head as doubtfully as before—until the landlady solved our difficulties, by suggesting that perhaps the traveller might mean "the *Herr Geheimer-Rath* (Privy Counsellor) *Von Goethe*." Scott seemed amused with this, and said, "I hope you will come one of these days and see me at Abbotsford; and when you reach Selkirk or Melrose, be sure you ask even the landlady for nobody but *the Sheriff*." He appeared particularly interested when I described Goethe as I first saw him, alighting from a carriage, crammed with wild plants and herbs which he had picked up in the course of his morning's botanizing among the hills above Jena. "I am glad," said he, "that my old master has pursuits somewhat akin to my own. I am no botanist, properly speaking; and though a dweller on the banks of the Tweed, shall never be knowing about Flora's beauties; but how I should like to have a talk with him about trees!" I mentioned how much any one must be struck with the majestic beauty of Goethe's countenance (the noblest certainly by far that I have ever yet seen): "Well," said he, "the grandest demigod I ever saw was Dr. Carlyle, minister of Musselburgh, commonly called *Jupiter Carlyle*, from having sat more than once for the king of gods and men to Gavin Hamilton—and a shrewd, clever old carle was he, no doubt, but no

more a poet than his precentor. As for poets, I have seen, I believe, all the best of our own time and country—and, though Burns had the most glorious eyes imaginable, I never thought any of them would come up to an artist's notion of the character, except Byron." A reverend gentleman present (I think, Principal Nicoll of St. Andrews) expressed his regret that he had never seen Lord Byron. "And the prints," resumed Scott, "give one no impression of him—the lustre is there, Doctor, but it is not lighted up. Byron's countenance is *a thing to dream of*. A certain fair lady, whose name has been too often mentioned in connection with his, told a friend of mine, that when she first saw Byron, it was in a crowded room, and she did not know who it was, but her eyes were instantly nailed, and she said to herself, *that pale face is my fate*. And, poor soul, if a godlike face and godlike powers could have made any excuse for devilry, to be sure she had one." In the course of this talk, an old friend and schoolfellow of Scott's asked him across the table if he had any faith in the antique busts of Homer. "No, truly," he answered, smiling, "for if there had been either limners or stuccoyers worth their salt in those days, the owner of such a headpiece would never have had to trail the poke. They would have alimented the honest man decently among them for a lay-figure."

A few days after this, I received a communication from the Messrs. Ballantyne, to the effect that Mr. Scott's various avocations had prevented him from fulfilling his agreement with them as to the historical department of the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1816, and that it would be acceptable to him as well as them, if I could undertake to supply it in the course of the autumn. This proposal was agreed to on my part, and I had consequently occasion to meet him pretty often during that summer session. He told me, that if the war had gone on, he should have liked to do the historical summary as before; but that the prospect of having no events to record but radical riots, and the passing or rejecting of corn bills and poor bills, sickened him; that his health was no longer what it had been; and that though he did not mean to give over writing altogether—(here he smiled significantly, and glanced his eye towards a pile of MS. on the desk by him)—he thought himself now entitled to write nothing but what would rather be an amusement than a fatigue to him—"*Juniores ad labores*."

He at this time occupied as his *den* a square small room, behind the dining parlor in Castle Street. It had but a single Venetian window, opening on a patch of turf not much larger than itself, and the aspect of the place

was on the whole sombrous. The walls were entirely clothed with books; most of them folios and quartos, and all in that complete state of repair which at a glance reveals a tinge of bibliomania. A dozen volumes or so, needful for immediate purposes of reference, were placed close by him on a small movable frame—something like a dumb-waiter. All the rest were in their proper niches, and wherever a volume had been lent, its room was occupied by a wooden block of the same size, having a card with the name of the borrower and date of the loan, tacked on its front. The old bindings had obviously been retouched and regilt in the most approved manner; the new, when the books were of any mark, were rich, but never gaudy—a large proportion of blue morocco—all stamped with his *device* of the portcullis, and its motto, *clausus tutus ero*—being an anagram of his name in Latin. Every case and shelf was accurately lettered, and the works arranged systematically; history and biography on one side—poetry and the drama on another—law books and dictionaries behind his own chair. The only table was a massive piece of furniture which he had had constructed on the model of one at Rokeby, with a desk and all its appurtenances on either side, that an amanuensis might work opposite to him when he chose; and with small tiers of drawers, reaching all round to the floor. The top displayed a goodly array of session papers, and on the desk below were, besides the MS. at which he was working, sundry parcels of letters, proof sheets, and so forth, all neatly done up with red tape. His own writing apparatus was a very handsome old box, richly carved, lined with crimson velvet, and containing ink-bottles, taper-stand, etc., in silver—the whole in such order that it might have come from the silversmith's window half an hour before. Besides his own huge elbow-chair, there were but two others in the room, and one of these seemed, from its position, to be reserved exclusively for the amanuensis. I observed, during the first evening I spent with him in this *sanctum*, that while he talked, his hands were hardly ever idle—sometimes he folded letter-covers—sometimes he twisted paper into matches, performing both tasks with great mechanical expertness and nicety; and when there was no loose paper fit to be so dealt with, he snapped his fingers, and the noble Maida aroused himself from his lair on the hearth-rug, and laid his head across his master's knees, to be caressed and fondled. The room had no space for pictures except one, an original portrait of Claverhouse, which hung over the chimney-piece, with a Highland target on either side, and broadswords and dirks (each having its

own story), disposed star-fashion round them. A few green tin-boxes, such as solicitors keep title-deeds in, were piled over each other on one side of the window; and on the top of these lay a fox's tail, mounted on an antique silver handle, wherewith, as often as he had occasion to take down a book, he gently brushed the dust off the upper leaves before opening it. I think I have mentioned all the furniture of the room except a sort of ladder, low, broad, well carpeted, and strongly guarded with oaken rails, by which he helped himself to books from his higher shelves. On the top step of this convenience, Hinse of Hinsfeldt, (so called from one of the German *Kinder-märchen*,) a venerable tom-cat, fat and sleek, and no longer very locomotive, usually lay watching the proceedings of his master and Maida with an air of dignified equanimity; but when Maida chose to leave the party, he signified his inclinations by thumping the door with his huge paw, as violently as ever a fashionable footman handled a knocker in Grosvenor Square; the Sheriff rose and opened it for him with courteous alacrity,—and then Hinse came down purring from his perch, and mounted guard by the footstool, *vice* Maida absent upon furlough. Whatever discourse might be passing, was broken every now and then by some affectionate apostrophe to these four-footed friends. He said they understood everything he said to them—and I believe they did understand a great deal of it. But at all events, dogs and cats, like children, have some infallible tact for discovering at once who is and who is not really fond of their company; and I venture to say, Scott was never five minutes in any room before the little pets of the family, whether dumb or lisping, had found out his kindness for all their generation.

I never thought it lawful to keep a journal of what passes in private society, so that no one need expect from the sequel of this narrative any detailed record of Scott's familiar talk. What fragments of it have happened to adhere to a tolerably retentive memory, and may be put into black and white without wounding any feelings which my friend, were he alive, would have wished to spare, I shall introduce as the occasion suggests or serves. But I disclaim on the threshold anything more than this; and I also wish to enter a protest once for all against the general fidelity of several literary gentlemen who have kindly forwarded to me private lucubrations of theirs, designed to *Boswellize* Scott, and which they may probably publish hereafter. To report conversations fairly, it is a necessary prerequisite that we should be completely familiar with all the interlocutors, and understand

thoroughly all their minutest relations, and points of common knowledge and common feeling with each other. He who does not, must be perpetually in danger of misinterpreting sportive allusion into serious statement; and the man who was only recalling, by some jocular phrase or half-phrase, to an old companion, some trivial reminiscence of their boyhood or youth, may be represented as expressing, upon some person or incident casually tabled, an opinion which he had never framed, or if he had, would never have given words to in any mixed assemblage—not even among what the world calls *friends* at his own board. In proportion as a man is witty and humorous, there will always be about him and his a widening maze and wilderness of cues and catchwords, which the uninitiated will, if they are bold enough to try interpretation, construe, ever and anon, egregiously amiss—not seldom into arrant falsity. For this one reason, to say nothing of many others, I consider no man justified in journalizing what he sees and hears in a domestic circle where he is not thoroughly at home; and I think there are still higher and better reasons why he should not do so where he is.

Before I ever met Scott in private, I had, of course, heard many people describe and discuss his style of conversation. Everybody seemed to agree that it overflowed with hearty good-humor, as well as plain unaffected good sense and sagacity; but I had heard not a few persons of undoubted ability and accomplishment maintain that the genius of the great poet and novelist rarely, if ever, revealed itself in his talk. It is needless to say, that the persons I allude to were all his own countrymen, and themselves imbued, more or less, with the conversational habits derived from a system of education in which the study of metaphysics occupies a very large share of attention. The best table-talk of Edinburgh was, and probably still is, in a very great measure made up of brilliant disquisition—such as might be transferred without alteration to a professor's note-book, or the pages of a critical Review—and of sharp word-catchings, ingenious thrusting and parrying of dialectics, and all the quips and quibblets of bar pleading. It was the talk of a society to which lawyers and lecturers had, for at least a hundred years, given the tone. From the date of the Union, Edinburgh ceased to be the headquarters of the Scotch nobility—and long before the time of which I speak, they had all but entirely abandoned it as a place of residence. I think I never knew above two or three of the Peerage to have houses there at the same time—and these were usually among the poorest

and most insignificant of their order. The wealthier gentry had followed their example. Very few of that class ever spent any considerable part of the year in Edinburgh, except for the purposes of educating their children, or superintending the progress of a lawsuit; and these were not more likely than a score or two of comatose and lethargic old Indians, to make head against the established influences of academical and forensic celebrity. Now Scott's tastes and resources had not much in common with those who had inherited and preserved the chief authority in this provincial hierarchy of rhetoric. He was highly amused with watching their dexterous logomachies —but his delight in such displays arose mainly, I cannot doubt, from the fact of their being, both as to subject-matter and style and method, remote *a Scævolæ studiis*. He sat by, as he would have done at a stage-play or a fencing-match, enjoying and applauding the skill exhibited, but without feeling much ambition to parade himself as a rival either of the foil or the buskin. I can easily believe, therefore, that in the earlier part of his life— before the blaze of universal fame had overawed local prejudice, and a new generation, accustomed to hear of that fame from their infancy, had grown up—it may have been the commonly adopted creed in Edinburgh, that Scott, however distinguished otherwise, was not to be named as a table-companion in the same day with this or that master of luminous dissertation or quick rejoinder, who now sleeps as forgotten as his grandmother. It was natural enough that persons brought up in the same circle with him, who remembered all his beginnings, and had but slowly learned to acquiesce in the justice of his claim to unrivalled honor in literature, should have clung all the closer for that late acquiescence to their original estimate of him as inferior to themselves in other titles to admiration. It was also natural that their prejudice on that score should be readily taken up by the young aspirants who breathed, as it were, the atmosphere of their professional renown. Perhaps, too, Scott's steady Toryism, and the effect of his genius and example in modifying the intellectual sway of the long dominant Whigs in the north, may have had some share in this matter. However all that may have been, the substance of what I had been accustomed to hear certainly was, that Scott had a marvellous stock of queer stories, which he often told with happy effect, but that, bating these drafts on a portentous memory, set off with a simple old-fashioned *naïveté* of humor and pleasantry, his strain of talk was remarkable neither for depth of remark nor felicity of illustration; that his views and opinions on the most important topics of

practical interest were hopelessly perverted by his blind enthusiasm for the dreams of bygone ages; and that, but for the grotesque phenomenon presented by a great writer of the nineteenth century gravely uttering sentiments worthy of his own Dundees and Invernahyles, the main texture of his discourse would be pronounced, by any enlightened member of modern society, rather bald and poor than otherwise. I think the epithet most in vogue was *commonplace*.

It will easily be believed that, in companies such as I have been alluding to, made up of, or habitually domineered over, by voluble Whigs and political economists, Scott was often tempted to put forth his Tory doctrines and antiquarian prejudices in an exaggerated shape—in colors, to say the truth, altogether different from what they assumed under other circumstances, or which had any real influence upon his mind and conduct on occasions of practical moment. But I fancy it will seem equally credible, that the most sharp-sighted of these social critics may not always have been capable of tracing, and doing justice to, the powers which Scott brought to bear upon the topics which they, not he, had chosen for discussion. In passing from a gas-lit hall into a room with wax candles, the guests sometimes complain that they have left splendor for gloom; but let them try by what sort of light it is most satisfactory to read, write, or embroider, or consider at leisure under which of the two, either men or women look their best.

The strongest, purest, and least observed of all lights, is, however, daylight; and his talk was commonplace, just as sunshine is, which gilds the most indifferent objects, and adds brilliancy to the brightest. As for the old-world anecdotes which these clever persons were condescending enough to laugh at as pleasant extravagances, serving merely to relieve and set off the main stream of debate, they were often enough, it may be guessed, connected with the theme in hand by links not the less apt that they might be too subtle to catch their bedazzled and self-satisfied optics. There might be keener knowledge of human nature than was "dreamt of in their philosophy"—which passed with them for *commonplace*, only because it was clothed in plain familiar household words, not dressed up in some pedantic masquerade of antithesis. "There are people," says Landor, "who think they write and speak finely, merely because they have forgotten the language in which their fathers and mothers used to talk to them;" and surely there are a thousand homely old proverbs, which many a dainty

modern would think it beneath his dignity to quote either in speech or writing, any one of which condenses more wit (take that word in any of its senses) than could be extracted from all that was ever said or written by the *doctrinaires* of the Edinburgh school. Many of those gentlemen held Scott's conversation to be commonplace exactly for the same reason that a child thinks a perfectly limpid stream, though perhaps deep enough to drown it three times over, must needs be shallow. But it will be easily believed that the best and highest of their own idols had better means and skill of measurement: I can never forget the pregnant expression of one of the ablest of that school and party—Lord Cockburn—who, when some glib youth chanced to echo in his hearing the consolatory tenet of local mediocrity, answered quietly: "I have the misfortune to think differently from you—in my humble opinion, Walter Scott's *sense* is a still more wonderful thing than his *genius*."

Indeed I have no sort of doubt that, long before 1818, full justice was done to Scott, even in these minor things, by all those of his Edinburgh acquaintance, whether Whig or Tory, on whose personal opinion he could have been supposed to set much value. With few exceptions, the really able lawyers of his own or nearly similar standing had ere that time attained stations of judicial dignity, or were in the springtide of practice; and in either case they were likely to consider general society much in his own fashion, as the joyous relaxation of life, rather than the theatre of exertion and display. Their tables were elegantly, some of them sumptuously spread; and they lived in a pretty constant interchange of entertainments upon a large scale, in every circumstance of which, conversation included, it was their ambition to imitate those voluptuous metropolitan circles, wherein most of them had from time to time mingled, and several of them with distinguished success. Among such prosperous gentlemen, like himself past the *mezzo cammin*, Scott's picturesque anecdotes, rich easy humor, and gay involuntary glances of mother-wit, were, it is not difficult to suppose, appreciated above contributions of a more ambitious stamp; and no doubt his London *réputation de salon* (which had by degrees risen to a high pitch, although he cared nothing for it) was not without its effect in Edinburgh. But still the old prejudice lingered on in the general opinion of the place, especially among the smart praters of *the Outer-House*, whose glimpses of the social habits of their superiors were likely to be rare, and their gall-bladders to be more distended than their purses.

In truth, it was impossible to listen to Scott's oral narrations, whether gay or serious, or to the felicitous fun with which he parried absurdities of all sorts, without discovering better qualities in his talk than *wit*—and of a higher order; I mean especially a power of *vivid painting*—the true and primary sense of what is called *Imagination*. He was like Jaques—though not a "Melancholy Jaques;" and "moralized" a common topic "into a thousand similitudes." Shakespeare and the banished Duke would have found him "full of matter." He disliked mere disquisitions in Edinburgh, and prepared *impromptus* in London; and puzzled the promoters of such things sometimes by placid silence, sometimes by broad merriment. To such men he seemed *commonplace*—not so to the most dexterous masters in what was to some of them almost a science; not so to Rose, Hallam, Moore, or Rogers,—to Ellis, Mackintosh, Croker, or Canning.

Scott managed to give and receive such great dinners as I have been alluding to, at least as often as any other private gentleman in Edinburgh; but he very rarely accompanied his wife and daughters to the evening assemblies, which commonly ensued under other roofs—for *early to rise*, unless in the case of spare-fed anchorites, takes for granted *early to bed*. When he had no dinner engagement, he frequently gave a few hours to the theatre; but still more frequently, when the weather was fine, and still more, I believe, to his own satisfaction, he drove out with some of his family, or a single friend, in an open carriage; the favorite rides being either to the Blackford Hills, or to Ravelston, and so home by Corstorphine; or to the beach of Portobello, where Peter was always instructed to keep his horses as near as possible to the sea. More than once, even in the first summer of my acquaintance with him, I had the pleasure of accompanying him on these evening excursions; and never did he seem to enjoy himself more fully than when placidly surveying, at such sunset or moonlight hours, either the massive outlines of his "own romantic town," or the tranquil expanse of its noble estuary. He delighted, too, in passing, when he could, through some of the quaint windings of the ancient city itself, now deserted, except at mid-day, by the upper world. How often have I seen him go a long way round about, rather than miss the opportunity of halting for a few minutes on the vacant esplanade of Holyrood, or under the darkest shadows of the Castle rock, where it overhangs the Grassmarket, and the huge slab that still marks where the gibbet of Porteous and the Covenanters had its station. His coachman knew him too well to move at a Jehu's pace amidst

such scenes as these. No funeral hearse crept more leisurely than did his landau up the Canongate or the Cowgate; and not a queer tottering gable but recalled to him some long-buried memory of splendor or bloodshed, which, by a few words, he set before the hearer in the reality of life. His image is so associated in my mind with the antiquities of his native place, that I cannot now revisit them without feeling as if I were treading on his gravestone.

Whatever might happen on the other evenings of the week, he always dined at home on Sunday, and usually some few friends were then with him, but never any person with whom he stood on ceremony. These were, it may be readily supposed, the most agreeable of his entertainments. He came into the room rubbing his hands, his face bright and gleesome, like a boy arriving at home for the holidays, his Peppers and Mustards gambolling about his heels, and even the stately Maida grinning and wagging his tail in sympathy. Among the most regular guests on these happy evenings were, in my time, as had long before been the case, Mrs. Maclean Clephane of Torloisk (with whom he agreed cordially on all subjects except the authenticity of Ossian), and her daughters, whose guardian he had become, at their own choice. The eldest of them had been for some years married to the Earl Compton (now Marquis of Northampton), and was of course seldom in the north; but the others had much of the same tastes and accomplishments which so highly distinguished the late Lady Northampton; and Scott delighted especially in their proficiency in the poetry and music of their native isles. Mr. and Mrs. Skene of Rubislaw were frequent attendants—and so were the Macdonald-Buchanans of Drumakiln, whose eldest daughter, Isabella, was his chief favorite among all his *nieces* of the Clerk's table—as was, among the *nephews*, my own dear friend and companion, Joseph Hume, a singularly graceful young man, rich in the promise of hereditary genius, but, alas, cut off in the early bloom of his days. The well-beloved Erskine was seldom absent; and very often Terry or James Ballantyne came with him—sometimes, though less frequently, Constable. Among other persons who now and then appeared at these "dinners without the silver dishes," as Scott called them, I may mention—to say nothing of such old cronies as Mr. Clerk, Mr. Thomson, and Mr. Kirkpatrick Sharpe—Sir Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck, who had all his father *Bozzy's* cleverness, good-humor, and joviality, without one touch of his meaner qualities,—wrote Jenny dang the Weaver, and some other

popular songs, which he sang capitally—and was moreover a thorough bibliomaniac; the late Sir Alexander Don of Newton, in all courteous and elegant accomplishments the model of a cavalier; and last, not least, William Allan, R. A., who had shortly before this time returned to Scotland from several years of travel in Russia and Turkey. At one of these plain hearty dinners, however, the company rarely exceeded three or four, besides the as yet undivided family.

Scott had a story of a topping goldsmith on the Bridge, who prided himself on being the mirror of Amphitryons, and accounted for his success by stating that it was his invariable custom to set his own stomach at ease, by a beefsteak and a pint of port in his back-shop, half an hour before the arrival of his guests. But the host of Castle Street had no occasion to imitate this prudent arrangement, for his appetite at dinner was neither keen nor nice. Breakfast was his chief meal. Before that came, he had gone through the severest part of his day's work, and he then set to with the zeal of Crabbe's Squire Tovell—

"And laid at once a pound upon his plate."

No fox-hunter ever prepared himself for the field by more substantial appliances. His table was always provided, in addition to the usually plentiful delicacies of a Scotch breakfast, with some solid article, on which he did most lusty execution—a round of beef—a pasty, such as made Gil Blas's eyes water—or, most welcome of all, a cold sheep's head, the charms of which primitive dainty he has so gallantly defended against the disparaging sneers of Dr. Johnson and his bear-leader. A huge brown loaf flanked his elbow, and it was placed upon a broad wooden trencher, that he might cut and come again with the bolder knife. Often did the *Clerks' coach*, commonly called among themselves *the Lively*—which trundled round every morning to pick up the brotherhood, and then deposited them at the proper minute in the Parliament Close—often did this lumbering hackney arrive at his door before he had fully appeased what Homer calls "the sacred rage of hunger;" and vociferous was the merriment of the learned *uncles*, when the surprised poet swung forth to join them, with an extemporized sandwich, that looked like a ploughman's luncheon, in his hand. But this robust supply would have served him in fact for the day. He never tasted anything more before dinner, and at dinner he ate almost as sparingly as Squire Tovell's niece from the boarding-school,—

—"Who cut the sanguine flesh in frustums fine,
And marvelled much to see the creatures dine."

The only dishes he was at all fond of were the old-fashioned ones to which he had been accustomed in the days of Saunders Fairford; and which really are excellent dishes,—such, in truth, as Scotland borrowed from France before Catherine de' Medici brought in her Italian *virtuosi* to revolutionize the kitchen like the court. Of most of these, I believe, he has in the course of his novels found some opportunity to record his esteem. But, above all, who can forget that his King Jamie, amidst the splendors of Whitehall, thinks himself an ill-used monarch unless his first course includes *cocky-leeky*?

It is a fact, which some philosophers may think worth setting down, that Scott's organization, as to more than one of the senses, was the reverse of exquisite. He had very little of what musicians call an ear; his smell was hardly more delicate. I have seen him stare about, quite unconscious of the cause, when his whole company betrayed their uneasiness at the approach of an overkept haunch of venison; and neither by the nose nor the palate could he distinguish corked wine from sound. He could never tell Madeira from sherry,—nay, an Oriental friend having sent him a butt of *sheeraz*, when he remembered the circumstance some time afterwards, and called for a bottle to have Sir John Malcolm's opinion of its quality, it turned out that his butler, mistaking the label, had already served up half the bin as *sherry*. Port he considered as physic: he never willingly swallowed more than one glass of it, and was sure to anathematize a second, if offered, by repeating John Home's epigram:—

"Bold and erect the Caledonian stood,
Old was his mutton, and his claret good;
Let him drink port, the English statesman cried—
He drank the poison, and his spirit died."

In truth, he liked no wines except sparkling champagne and claret; but even as to this last he was no connoisseur; and sincerely preferred a tumbler of whiskey-toddy to the most precious "liquid ruby" that ever flowed in the cup of a prince. He rarely took any other potation when quite alone with his family; but at the Sunday board he circulated the champagne briskly during dinner, and considered a pint of claret each man's fair share afterwards. I should not omit, however, that his Bordeaux was uniformly preceded by a

small libation of the genuine *mountain dew*, which he poured with his own hand, *more majorum*, for each guest—making use for the purpose of such a multifarious collection of ancient Highland *quaighs* (little cups of curiously dovetailed wood, inlaid with silver) as no Lowland sideboard but his was ever equipped with—but commonly reserving for himself one that was peculiarly precious in his eyes, as having travelled from Edinburgh to Derby in the canteen of Prince Charlie. This relic had been presented to "the wandering Ascanius" by some very careful follower, for its bottom is of glass, that he who quaffed might keep his eye the while upon the dirk hand of his companion.

The sound of music (even, I suspect, of any sacred music but psalm-singing) would be considered indecorous in the streets of Edinburgh on a Sunday night; so, upon the occasions I am speaking of, the harp was silent, and Otterburne and The Bonnie House of Airlie must needs be dispensed with. To make amends, after tea in the drawing-room, Scott usually read some favorite author for the amusement of his little circle; or Erskine, Ballantyne, or Terry, did so, at his request. He himself read aloud high poetry with far greater simplicity, depth, and effect, than any other man I ever heard; and in Macbeth or Julius Cæsar, or the like, I doubt if Kemble could have been more impressive. Yet the changes of intonation were so gently managed, that he contrived to set the different interlocutors clearly before us, without the least approach to theatrical artifice. Not so the others I have mentioned; they all read cleverly and agreeably, but with the decided trickery of stage recitation. To them he usually gave the book when it was a comedy, or, indeed, any other drama than Shakespeare's or Joanna Baillie's. Dryden's Fables, Johnson's two Satires, and certain detached scenes of Beaumont and Fletcher, especially that in The Lover's Progress, where the ghost of the musical innkeeper makes his appearance, were frequently selected. Of the poets, his contemporaries, however, there was not one that did not come in for his part. In Wordsworth, his pet pieces were, I think, the Song for Brougham Castle, the Laodamia, and some of the early sonnets; in Southey, Queen Orraca, Fernando Ramirez, the Lines on the Holly Tree—and, of his larger poems, the Thalaba. Crabbe was perhaps, next to Shakespeare, the standing resource; but in those days Byron was pouring out his spirit fresh and full: and, if a new piece from his hand had appeared, it was sure to be read by Scott the Sunday evening afterwards, and that with such delighted emphasis as showed how completely the elder bard had kept

all his enthusiasm for poetry at the pitch of youth, all his admiration of genius, free, pure, and unstained by the least drop of literary jealousy. Rare and beautiful example of a happily constituted and virtuously disciplined mind and character!

Very often something read aloud by himself or his friends suggested an old story of greater compass than would have suited a dinner-table—and he told it, whether serious or comical, or, as more frequently happened, part of both, exactly in every respect in the tone and style of the notes and illustrations to his novels. A great number of his best oral narratives have, indeed, been preserved in those parting lucubrations; and not a few in his letters. Yet very many there were of which his pen has left no record—so many, that, were I to task my memory, I could, I believe, recall the outlines at least of more than would be sufficient to occupy a couple of these volumes. Possibly, though well aware how little justice I could do to such things, rather than think of their perishing forever, and leaving not even a shadow behind, I may at some future day hazard the attempt.

Let me turn, meanwhile, to some dinner-tables very different from his own, at which, from this time forward, I often met Scott. It is very true of the societies I am about to describe, that he was "among them, not of them;" and it is also most true that this fact was apparent in all the demeanor of his bibliopolical and typographical allies towards him whenever he visited them under their roofs—not a bit less so than when they were received at his own board; but still, considering how closely his most important worldly affairs were connected with the personal character of the Ballantynes, I think it a part, though neither a proud nor a very pleasing part, of my duty as his biographer, to record my reminiscences of them and their doings in some detail.

James Ballantyne then lived in St. John Street, a row of good, old-fashioned, and spacious houses, adjoining the Canongate and Holyrood, and at no great distance from his printing establishment. He had married a few years before the daughter of a wealthy farmer in Berwickshire—a quiet, amiable woman, of simple manners, and perfectly domestic habits: a group of fine young children were growing up about him; and he usually, if not constantly, had under his roof his aged mother, his and his wife's tender care of whom it was most pleasing to witness. As far as a stranger might judge, there could not be a more exemplary household, or a happier one; and I have occasionally met the poet in St. John Street when there were no other

guests but Erskine, Terry, George Hogarth, and another intimate friend or two, and when James Ballantyne was content to appear in his own true and best colors, the kind head of his family, the respectful but honest schoolfellow of Scott, the easy landlord of a plain, comfortable table. But when any great event was about to take place in the business, especially on the eve of a new novel, there were doings of a higher strain in St. John Street; and to be present at one of those scenes was truly a rich treat, even—if not especially—for persons who, like myself, had no more *knowledge* than the rest of the world as to the authorship of Waverley. Then were congregated about the printer all his own literary allies, of whom a considerable number were by no means personally familiar with "THE GREAT UNKNOWN:"—who, by the way, owed to him that widely adopted title;—and He appeared among the rest with his usual open aspect of buoyant good-humor—although it was not difficult to trace, in the occasional play of his features, the diversion it afforded him to watch all the procedure of his swelling confidant, and the curious neophytes that surrounded the well-spread board.

The feast was, to use one of James's own favorite epithets, *gorgeous*; an aldermanic display of turtle and venison, with the suitable accompaniments of iced punch, potent ale, and generous Madeira. When the cloth was drawn, the burly preses arose, with all he could muster of the port of John Kemble, and spouted with a sonorous voice the formula of Macbeth:—

> "Fill full!
> I drink to the general joy of the whole table!"

This was followed by "The King, God bless him!" and second came —"Gentlemen, there is another toast which never has been nor shall be omitted in this house of mine—I give you the health of Mr. Walter Scott with three times three!" All honor having been done to this health, and Scott having briefly thanked the company with some expressions of warm affection to their host, Mrs. Ballantyne retired; the bottles passed round twice or thrice in the usual way; and then James rose once more, every vein on his brow distended, his eyes solemnly fixed upon vacancy, to propose, not as before in his stentorian key, but with "'bated breath," in the sort of whisper by which a stage conspirator thrills the gallery,—"*Gentlemen, a bumper to the immortal Author of Waverley!*" The uproar of cheering, in

which Scott made a fashion of joining, was succeeded by deep silence, and then Ballantyne proceeded—

> "In his Lord Burleigh look, serene and serious,
> A something of imposing and mysterious"—

to lament the obscurity in which his illustrious but too modest correspondent still chose to conceal himself from the plaudits of the world, to thank the company for the manner in which the *nominis umbra* had been received, and to assure them that the Author of Waverley would, when informed of the circumstance, feel highly delighted—"the proudest hour of his life," etc., etc. The cool, demure fun of Scott's features during all this mummery was perfect; and Erskine's attempt at a gay *nonchalance* was still more ludicrously meritorious. Aldiborontiphoscophornio, however, bursting as he was, knew too well to allow the new novel to be made the subject of discussion. Its name was announced, and success to it crowned another cup; but after that, no more of Jedediah. To cut the thread, he rolled out unbidden some one of his many theatrical songs, in a style that would have done no dishonor to almost any orchestra—The Maid of Lodi—or perhaps, The Bay of Biscay, O!—or The Sweet Little Cherub that Sits up Aloft. Other toasts followed, interspersed with ditties from other performers;—old George Thomson, the friend of Burns, was ready, for one, with The Moorland Wedding, or Willie Brew'd a Peck o' Maut;—and so it went on, until Scott and Erskine, with any clerical or very staid personage that had chanced to be admitted, saw fit to withdraw. Then the scene was changed. The claret and olives made way for broiled bones and a mighty bowl of punch; and when a few glasses of the hot beverage had restored his powers, James opened *ore rotundo* on the merits of the forthcoming romance. "One chapter, one chapter only," was the cry. After "*Nay, by'r Lady, nay!*" and a few more coy shifts, the proof sheets were at length produced, and James, with many a prefatory hem, read aloud what he considered as the most striking dialogue they contained.

The first I heard so read was the interview between Jeanie Deans, the Duke of Argyle, and Queen Caroline, in Richmond Park; and notwithstanding some spice of the pompous tricks to which he was addicted, I must say he did the inimitable scene great justice. At all events, the effect it produced was deep and memorable, and no wonder that the exulting typographer's *one bumper more to Jedediah Cleishbotham*

preceded his parting stave, which was uniformly The Last Words of Marmion, executed certainly with no contemptible rivalry of Braham.

What a different affair was a dinner, although probably including many of the same guests, at the junior partner's! He in those days retained, I think, no private apartments attached to his auction-rooms in Hanover Street, over the door of which he still kept emblazoned "John Ballantyne and Company, Booksellers." At any rate, such of his entertainments as I ever saw Scott partake of, were given at his villa near to the Frith of Forth, by Trinity;—a retreat which the little man had named "Harmony Hall," and invested with an air of dainty voluptuous finery, contrasting strikingly enough with the substantial citizen-like snugness of his elder brother's domestic appointments. His house was surrounded by gardens so contrived as to seem of considerable extent, having many a shady tuft, trellised alley, and mysterious alcove, interspersed among their bright parterres. It was a fairy-like labyrinth, and there was no want of pretty Armidas, such as they might be, to glide half-seen among its mazes. The sitting-rooms opened upon gay and perfumed conservatories, and John's professional excursions to Paris and Brussels in quest of objects of *virtu*, had supplied both the temptation and the means to set forth the interior in a fashion that might have satisfied the most fastidious *petite maîtresse* of Norwood or St. Denis. John, too, was a married man: he had, however, erected for himself a private wing, the accesses to which, whether from the main building or the *bosquet*, were so narrow that it was physically impossible for the handsome and portly lady who bore his name to force her person through any one of them. His dinners were in all respects Parisian, for his wasted palate disdained such John Bull luxuries as were all in all with James. The piquant pasty of Strasburg or Perigord was never to seek; and even the *pièce de résistance* was probably a boar's head from Coblentz, or a turkey ready stuffed with truffles from the Palais Royal. The pictures scattered among John's innumerable mirrors were chiefly of theatrical subjects—many of them portraits of beautiful actresses—the same Peg Woffingtons, Bellamys, Kitty Clives, and so forth, that found their way in the sequel to Charles Mathews's gallery at Highgate. Here that exquisite comedian's own mimicries and parodies were the life and soul of many a festival, and here, too, he gathered from his facetious host not a few of the richest materials for his *at homes* and *monopolylogues*. But, indeed, whatever actor or singer of eminence visited Edinburgh, of the evenings when he did not perform several were sure to be reserved for

Trinity. Here Braham quavered, and here Liston drolled his best—here Johnstone, and Murray, and Yates mixed jest and stave—here Kean revelled and rioted—and here the Roman Kemble often played the Greek from sunset to dawn. Nor did the popular *cantatrice* or *danseuse* of the time disdain to freshen her roses, after a laborious week, amidst these Paphian arbors of Harmony Hall.

Johnny had other tastes that were equally expensive. He had a well-furnished stable, and followed the foxhounds whenever the cover was within an easy distance. His horses were all called after heroes in Scott's poems or novels; and at this time he usually rode up to his auction on a tall milk-white hunter, yclept *Old Mortality*, attended by a leash or two of greyhounds,—Die Vernon, Jenny Dennison, and so forth, by name. The featherweight himself appeared uniformly, hammer-in-hand, in the half-dress of some sporting club—a light gray frock, with emblems of the chase on its silver buttons, white cord breeches, and jockey-boots in Meltonian order. Yet he affected in the pulpit rather a grave address; and was really one of the most plausible and imposing of the Puff tribe. Probably Scott's presence overawed his ludicrous propensities; for the poet was, when sales were going on, almost a daily attendant in Hanover Street, and himself not the least energetic of the numerous competitors for Johnny's uncut *fifteeners*, Venetian lamps, Milanese cuirasses, and old Dutch cabinets. Maida, by the way, was so well aware of his master's habits, that about the time when the Court of Session was likely to break up for the day, he might usually be seen couched in expectation among Johnny's own *tail* of greyhounds at the threshold of the mart.

It was at one of those Trinity dinners this summer that I first saw Constable. Being struck with his appearance, I asked Scott who he was, and he told me—expressing some surprise that anybody should have lived a winter or two in Edinburgh without knowing, by sight at least, a citizen whose name was so familiar to the world. I happened to say that I had not been prepared to find the great bookseller a man of such gentlemanlike and even distinguished bearing. Scott smiled, and answered, "Ay, Constable is indeed a grand-looking chield. He puts me in mind of Fielding's apology for Lady Booby—to wit, that Joseph Andrews had an air which, to those who had not seen many noblemen, would give an idea of nobility." I had not in those days been much initiated in the private jokes of what is called, by way of excellence, *the trade*, and was puzzled when Scott, in the course of the

dinner, said to Constable, "Will your Czarish Majesty do me the honor to take a glass of champagne?" I asked the master of the feast for an explanation. "Oh!" said he, "are you so green as not to know that Constable long since dubbed himself *The Czar of Muscovy*, John Murray, *The Emperor of the West*, and Longman and his string of partners *The Divan*?" "And what title," I asked, "has Mr. John Ballantyne himself found in this new *almanach imperial*?"—"Let that flee stick to the wa'," quoth Johnny: "When I set up for a bookseller, The Crafty christened me *The Dey of Alljeers*—but he now considers me as next thing to dethroned." He added, "His Majesty the autocrat is too fond of these nicknames. One day a partner of the house of Longman was dining with him in the country, to settle an important piece of business, about which there occurred a good deal of difficulty. 'What fine swans you have in your pond there!' said the Londoner, by way of parenthesis.—'Swans!' cried Constable; 'they are only geese, man. There are just five of them, if you please to observe, and their names are Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown.' This skit cost The Crafty a good bargain."

It always appeared to me that James Ballantyne felt his genius rebuked in the presence of Constable: his manner was constrained, his smile servile, his hilarity elaborate. Not so with Johnny: the little fellow never seemed more airily frolicsome than when he capered for the amusement of the Czar. I never, however, saw those two together, where, I am told, the humors of them both were exhibited to the richest advantage—I mean at the dinners with which Constable regaled, among others, his own circle of literary serfs, and when "Jocund Johnny" was very commonly his croupier. There are stories enough of practical jokes upon such occasions, some of them near akin to those which the author of Humphrey Clinker has thought fit to record of his own suburban villa, in the most diverting of young Melford's letters to Sir Watkin Philips. I have heard, for example, a luculent description of poor *Allister Campbell*, and another drudge of the same class, running a race after dinner for a new pair of breeches, which Mr. David Bridges, tailor in ordinary to this northern potentate,—himself a wit, a virtuoso, and the croupier on that day in lieu of Rigdum,—had been instructed to bring with him, and display before the threadbare rivals. But I had these pictures from John Ballantyne, and I dare say they might be overcharged. That Constable was a most bountiful and generous patron to the ragged tenants of Grub Street, there can, however, be no doubt: and as

little that John himself acted on all occasions by them in the same spirit, and this to an extent greatly beyond what prudence (if he had ever consulted that guide in anything) would have dictated.

When I visited Constable, as I often did at a period somewhat later than that of which I now speak, and for the most part in company with Scott, I found the bookseller established in a respectable country gentleman's seat, some six or seven miles out of Edinburgh, and doing the honors of it with all the ease that might have been looked for had he been the long-descended owner of the place; there was no foppery, no show, no idle luxury, but to all appearance the plain abundance and simple enjoyment of hereditary wealth. His conversation was manly and vigorous, abounding in Scotch anecdotes of the old time, which he told with a degree of spirit and humor only second to his great author's. No man could more effectually control, when he had a mind, either the extravagant vanity which, on too many occasions, made him ridiculous, or the despotic temper, which habitually held in fear and trembling all such as were in any sort dependent on his Czarish Majesty's pleasure. In him I never saw (at this period) anything but the unobtrusive sense and the calm courtesy of a well-bred gentleman. His very equipage kept up the series of contrasts between him and the two Ballantynes. Constable went back and forward between the town and Polton in a deep-hung and capacious green barouche, without any pretence at heraldic blazonry, drawn by a pair of sleek, black, long-tailed horses, and conducted by a grave old coachman in plain blue livery. The Printer of the Canongate drove himself and his wife about the streets and suburbs in a snug machine, which did not overburthen one powerful and steady cob; while the gay auctioneer, whenever he left the saddle for the box, mounted a bright blue dogcart, and rattled down the Newhaven road with two high-mettled steeds, prancing *tandem* before him, and most probably—especially if he was on his way to the races at Musselburgh—with some "sweet singer of Israel" flaming, with all her feathers, beside him. On such occasions, by the bye, Johnny sometimes had a French horn with him, and he played on it with good skill, and with an energy by no means prudent in the state of his lungs.

The Sheriff told with peculiar unction the following anecdote of this spark. The first time he went over to pick up curiosities at Paris, it happened that he met, in the course of his traffickings, a certain brother bookseller of Edinburgh, as unlike him as one man could well be to another—a grave, dry Presbyterian, rigid in all his notions as the buckle of his wig. This precise

worthy having ascertained John's address, went to call on him, a day or two afterwards, with the news of some richly illuminated missal, which he might possibly be glad to make prize of. On asking for his friend, a smiling *laquais de place* informed him that *Monsieur* had gone out, but that *Madame* was at home. Not doubting that Mrs. Ballantyne had accompanied her husband on his trip, he desired to pay his respects to *Madame*, and was ushered in accordingly. "But oh, Mr. Scott!" said, or rather groaned, the austere elder, on his return from this modern Babylon, "oh, Mr. Scott, there was nae Mrs. John yonder, but a painted Jezebel sittin' up in her bed, wi' a wheen impudent French limmers like hersel', and twa or three whiskered blackguards, takin' their collation o' knickknacks and champagne wine! I ran out o' the house as if I had been shot. What judgment will this wicked warld come to! The Lord pity us!" Scott was a severe enough censor in the general of such levities, but somehow, in the case of Rigdumfunnidos, he seemed to regard them with much the same toleration as the naughty tricks of a monkey in the "Jardin des Plantes."

Why did Scott persist in mixing up all his most important concerns with such people as I have been describing? I asked himself that question too unceremoniously at a long subsequent period, and in due time the reader shall see the answer I received; but it left the main question, to my apprehension, as much in the dark as ever. I shall return to the sad subject hereafter more seriously; but in the mean time let it suffice to say, that he was the most patient, long-suffering, affectionate, and charitable of mankind; that in the case of both the Ballantynes he could count, after all, on a sincerely, nay, a passionately devoted attachment to his person; that, with the greatest of human beings, use is in all but unconquerable power; and that he who so loftily tossed aside the seemingly most dangerous assaults of flattery, the blandishment of dames, the condescension of princes, the enthusiasm of crowds—had still his weak point, upon which two or three humble besiegers, and one unwearied, though most frivolous underminer, well knew how to direct their approaches. It was a favorite saw of his own, that the wisest of our race often reserve the average stock of folly to be all expended upon some one flagrant absurdity.

Chapter XLII

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Publication of the Heart of Mid-Lothian. — Its Reception in Edinburgh and in England. — Abbotsford in October. — Melrose Abbey, Dryburgh, Etc. — Lion-Hunters From America. — Tragedy of the Cherokee Lovers. — Scott's Dinner to the Selkirkshire Yeomen.

1818.

Hoping to be forgiven for a long digression, the biographer willingly returns to the thread of Scott's story. The Heart of Mid-Lothian appeared, as has been mentioned, before the close of June, 1818, and among the letters which he received soon afterwards from the friends by this time in the secret, there is one which (though I do not venture to name the writer) I am tempted to take the liberty of quoting:—

"Now for it, dear Mr. Scott. I can speak to the purpose, as I have not only read it myself, but am in a house where everybody is tearing it out of each other's hands, and talking of nothing else. So much for its success—the more flattering, because it overcomes a prejudice. People were beginning to say the author would wear himself out; it was going on too long in the same key, and no striking notes could possibly be produced. On the contrary, I think the interest is stronger here than in any of the former ones—(always excepting my first-love Waverley)—and one may congratulate you upon having effected what many have tried to do, and nobody yet succeeded in, making the perfectly good character the most interesting. Of late days, especially since it has been the fashion to write moral and even religious novels, one might almost say of some of the wise good heroines, what a lively girl once said to [me] of her well-meaning aunt—'Upon my word she is enough to make anybody wicked.' And though beauty and talents are heaped on the right side, the writer, in spite of himself, is sure to put agreeableness on the wrong; the person from whose errors he means you should take warning, runs away with your secret partiality in the mean time. Had this very story been conducted by a common hand, Effie would have

attracted all our concern and sympathy—Jeanie only cold approbation. Whereas Jeanie, without youth, beauty, genius, warm passions, or any other novel-perfection, is here our object from beginning to end. This is 'inlisting the affections in the cause of virtue' ten times more than ever Richardson did; for whose male and female pedants, all-excelling as they are, I never could care half so much as I found myself inclined to do for Jeanie before I finished the first volume....

"You know I tell you my opinion just as I should do to a third person, and I trust the freedom is not unwelcome. I was a little tired of your Edinburgh lawyers in the introduction; English people in general will be more so, as well as impatient of the passages alluding to Scotch law throughout. Mr. Saddletree will not entertain them. The latter part of the fourth volume unavoidably flags to a certain degree; after Jeanie is happily settled at Roseneath, we have no more to wish for. But the chief fault I have to find relates to the reappearance and shocking fate of the boy. I hear on all sides, 'Oh, I do not like that!' I cannot say what I would have had instead; but I do not like it either; it is a lame, huddled conclusion. I know you so well in it, by the bye!—you grow tired yourself, want to get rid of the story, and hardly care how. Sir George Staunton finishes his career very fitly; he ought not to die in his bed, and for Jeanie's sake one would not have him hanged. It is unnatural, though, that he should ever have gone within twenty miles of the Tolbooth, or shown his face in the streets of Edinburgh, or dined at a public meeting, if the Lord Commissioner had been his brother. Here ends my *per contra* account. The opposite page would make my letter too long if I entered equally into particulars. Carlisle and Corby Castles in Waverley did not affect me more deeply than the prison and trial scenes. The end of poor Madge Wildfire is also most pathetic. The meeting at Muschat's Cairn tremendous. Dumbiedikes and Rory Bean are delightful. And I shall own that my prejudices were secretly gratified by the light in which you place [Uncle] John of Argyle, whom Mr. Coxe so ran down to please Lord Orford. You have drawn him to the very life. I heard so much of him in my youth, so many anecdotes, so often 'as the Duke of Argyle used to say'—that I really believe I am almost as good a judge as if I had seen and lived with him.... [My beloved mother] has told me, that when she married, [in 1737, the very time], he was still remarkably handsome; with manners more graceful and engaging than she ever saw in any one else; the most agreeable

person in conversation, the best teller of a story. When fifty-seven thus captivates eighteen, the natural powers of pleasing must be extraordinary. You have likewise colored Queen Caroline exactly right—but I was bred up in another creed about Lady Suffolk, of whom, as a very old deaf woman, I have some faint recollection. [My mother] knew her intimately, and never would allow she had been the King's mistress, though she owned it was currently believed. She said he had just enough liking for her to make the Queen very civil to her, and very jealous and spiteful; the rest remained always uncertain at most, like a similar scandal in our days, where I, for one, imagine love of seeming influence on one side, and love of lounging, of an easy house and a good dinner on the other, to be all the criminal passions concerned. However, I confess, [my mother] had that in herself which made her not ready to think the worst of her fellow-women.

"Did you ever hear the history of John, Duke of Argyle's marriage, and constant attachment, before and after, to a woman not handsomer or much more elegant than Jeanie Deans, though very unlike her in understanding? I can give it you, if you wish it, for it is at my fingers' ends. [I was so much the youngest of a numerous family that I had no playfellow, and for that reason listened with all my ears to the grown people's conversation, most especially when my mother and the friends of her youth got upon old stories; nor did I lose my taste for them when I grew old enough to converse with her on equal terms, and enquire into particulars.] Now I am [an] ancient [tabby] myself, I should be a great treasure of anecdote to anybody who had the same humor,—but I meet with few who have. They read vulgar tales in books, Wraxall, and so forth, what the footmen and maids only gave credit to at the moment, but they desire no farther information. I dare swear many of your readers never heard of the Duke of Argyle before. 'Pray, who was Sir Robert Walpole,' they ask me, 'and when did he live?'—or perhaps —'Was not the great Lord Chatham in Queen Anne's days?'

"[Amongst the persons most pleased here is Lady Charlotte Lindsay. She has the true North humor, and love of humor, and she does enjoy it heartily. They] have, to help [them], an exemplification on two legs in [their] country apothecary, whom you have painted over and over without the honor of knowing him; an old, dry, arguing, prosing, obstinate Scotchman, very shrewd, rather sarcastic, a sturdy Whig and Presbyterian, *tirant un peu sur le démocrate*. Your books are birdlime to him, however; he hovers about

the house to obtain a volume when others have done with it. I long to ask him whether Douce Davie was any way *sib* to him. He acknowledges he would not *now* go to Muschat's Cairn at night for any money—he had such a horror of it 'sixty years ago' when a laddie. But I am come to the end of my fourth page, and will not tire you with any more scribbling....

"P. S.—If I had known nothing, and the whole world had told me the contrary, I should have found you out in that one parenthesis,—'for the man was mortal, and had been a schoolmaster.'"

This letter was addressed from a great country house in the south; and may, I presume, be accepted as a fair index of the instantaneous English popularity of Jeanie Deans. From the choice of localities, and the splendid blazoning of tragical circumstances that had left the strongest impression on the memory and imagination of every inhabitant, the reception of this tale in Edinburgh was a scene of all-engrossing enthusiasm, such as I never witnessed there on the appearance of any other literary novelty. But the admiration and delight were the same all over Scotland. Never before had he seized such really noble features of the national character as were canonized in the person of his homely heroine: no art had ever devised a happier running contrast than that of her and her sister, or interwoven a portraiture of lowly manners and simple virtues, with more graceful delineations of polished life, or with bolder shadows of terror, guilt, crime, remorse, madness, and all the agony of the passions.

In the introduction and notes to The Heart of Mid-Lothian, drawn up in 1830, we are presented with details concerning the suggestion of the main plot, and the chief historical incidents made use of, to which I can add nothing of any moment.

The 12th of July restored the author as usual to the supervision of his trees and carpenters; but he had already told the Ballantynes that the story which he had found it impossible to include in the recent series of Jedediah should be forthwith taken up as the opening one of a third; and instructed John to embrace the first favorable opportunity of offering Constable the publication of this, on the footing of 10,000 copies again forming the first edition; but now at length without any more stipulations connected with the unfortunate "old stock" of the Hanover Street Company.

Before he settled himself to his work, however, he made a little tour of the favorite description with his wife and children—halting for a few days

at Drumlanrig, thence crossing the Border to Carlisle and Rokeby, and returning by way of Alnwick. On the 17th August he writes thus to John Ballantyne from Drumlanrig: "This is heavenly weather, and I am making the most of it, as I shall have a laborious autumn before me. I may say of my head and fingers as the farmer of his mare, when he indulged her with an extra feed,—

'Ye ken that Maggie winna sleep
For that or Simmer.'

We have taken our own horses with us, and I have my pony, and ride when I find it convenient."

The following seems to have been among the first letters he wrote after his return:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., ROKEBY.

Abbotsford, 10th September, 1818.

My dear Morritt,—We have been cruising to and fro since we left your land of woods and streams. Lord Melville wished me to come and stay two days with him at Melville Castle, which has broken in upon my time a little, and interrupted my purpose of telling you as how we arrived safe at Abbotsford, without a drop of rain, thus completing a tour of three weeks in the same fine weather in which we commenced it—a thing which never fell to my lot before. Captain Ferguson is inducted into the office of Keeper of the Regalia, to the great joy, I think, of all Edinburgh. He has entered upon a farm (of eleven acres) in consequence of this advancement, for you know it is a general rule, that whenever a Scotsman gets his head *above water*, he immediately turns it to *land*. As he has already taken all the advice of all the *notables* in and about the good village of Darnick, we expect to see his farm look like a tailor's book of patterns, a snip of every several opinion which he has received occupying its appropriate corner. He is truly what the French call *un drôle de corps*.

I wish you would allow your coachman to look out for me among your neighbors a couple of young colts (rising three would be the best age) that would match for a carriage some two years hence. I have plenty of grass for them in the mean while, and should never know the expense of their keep at

Abbotsford. He seemed to think he could pick them up at from £25 to £30, which would make an immense saving hereafter. Peter Matheson and he had arranged some sort of plan of this kind. For a pair of very ordinary carriage-horses in Edinburgh they ask £140 or more; so it is worth while to be a little provident. Even then you only get one good horse, the other being usually a brute. Pray you excuse all this palaver,—

"These little things are great to little men."

Our harvest is almost all in, but as farmers always grumble about something, they are now growling about the lightness of the crop. All the young part of our household are wrapt up in uncertainty concerning the Queen's illness—for—if her Majesty parts cable, there will be no Forest Ball, and that is a terrible prospect. On Wednesday (when no post arrives from London) Lord Melville chanced to receive a letter with a black seal by express, and as it was of course argued to contain the expected intelligence of poor Charlotte, it sold a good many ells of black cloth and stuffs before it was ascertained to contain no such information. Surely this came within the line of high treason, being an imagining of the Queen's death.

Ever yours truly,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—Once more *anent* the colts. I am indifferent about color; but, *cæteris paribus*, would prefer black or brown, to bright bay or gray. I mention two off—as the age at which they can be best judged of by the buyer.

Of the same date I find written in pencil, on what must have been the envelope of some sheriff's-process, this note, addressed to Mr. Charles Erskine, the Sheriff-Substitute of Selkirkshire:—

September 10, 1818.

Dear Charles,—I have read these papers with all attention this morning—but think you will agree with me that there must be an Eke to the Condescendence. Order the Eke against next day.—Tom leaves with this packet a blackcock, and (more's the pity) a gray hen. Yours,

W. S.

And again he thus writes by post to James Ballantyne:

Abbotsford, September 10, 1818.

Dear James,—I am quite satisfied with what has been done as to the London bills. I am glad the presses move. I have been interrupted sadly since my return by tourist gazers. This day a confounded pair of Cambridge boys have robbed me of two good hours, and you of a sheet of copy—though whether a good sheet or no, deponent saith not. The story is a dismal one, and I doubt sometimes whether it will bear working out to much length after all. Query, if I shall make it so effective in two volumes as my mother does in her quarter of an hour's crack by the fireside? But *nil desperandum*. You shall have a bunch to-morrow or next day—and when the proofs come in, my pen must and shall step out. By the bye, I want a supply of pens—and ditto of ink. Adieu for the present, for I must go over to Toftfield, to give orders *anent* the dam and the footpath, and see *item* as to what should be done *anent* steps at the Rhymer's Waterfall, which I think may be made to turn out a decent bit of a linn, as would set True Thomas his worth and dignity. Ever yours,

W. S.

It must, I think, be allowed that these careless scraps, when combined, give a curious picture of the man who was brooding over the first chapters of The Bride of Lammermoor. One of his visitors of that month was Mr. R. Cadell, who was of course in all the secrets of the house of Constable; and observing how his host was harassed with lion-hunters, and what a number of hours he spent daily in the company of his work-people, he expressed, during one of their walks, his wonder that Scott should ever be able to write books at all while in the country. "I know," he said, "that you contrive to get a few hours in your own room, and that may do for the mere pen-work; but when is it that you think?" "Oh," said Scott, "I lie *simmering* over things for an hour or so before I get up—and there's the time I am dressing to overhaul my half-sleeping, half-waking *projet de chapitre*—and when I get the paper before me, it commonly runs off pretty easily.—Besides, I often take a doze in the plantations, and while Tom marks out a dyke or a drain as I have directed, one's fancy may be running its ain riggs in some other world."

It was in the month following that I first saw Abbotsford. He invited my friend John Wilson (now Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh) and myself to visit him for a day or two on our return from an excursion to Mr. Wilson's beautiful villa on the Lake of Windermere, but named the particular day (October 8) on which it would be most convenient for him to receive us; and we discovered on our arrival that he had fixed it from a good-natured motive. We found him walking in one of his plantations, at no great distance from the house, with five or six young people, and his friends Lord Melville and Captain Ferguson. Having presented us to the First Lord of the Admiralty, he fell back a little and said, "I am glad you came to-day, for I thought it might be of use to you both, some time or other, to be known to my old schoolfellow here, who is, and I hope will long continue to be, the great giver of good things in the Parliament House. I trust you have had enough of certain pranks with your friend Ebony, and if so, Lord Melville will have too much sense to remember them." We then walked round the plantation, as yet in a very young state, and came back to the house by a formidable work which he was constructing for the defence of his *haugh* against the wintry violences of the Tweed; and he discoursed for some time with keen interest upon the comparative merits of different methods of embankment, but stopped now and then to give us the advantage of any point of view in which his new building on the eminence above pleased his eye. It had a fantastic appearance—being but a fragment of the existing edifice—and not at all harmonizing in its outline with "Mother Retford's" original tenement to the eastward. Scott, however, expatiated *con amore* on the rapidity with which, being chiefly of darkish granite, it was assuming a "time-honored" aspect. Ferguson, with a grave and respectful look, observed, "Yes, it really has much the air of some old fastness hard by the river Jordan." This allusion to the Chaldee MS., already quoted, in the manufacture of which Ferguson fancied Wilson and myself to have had a share, gave rise to a burst of laughter among Scott's merry young folks and their companions, while he himself drew in his nether lip, and rebuked the Captain with "Toots, Adam! toots, Adam!" He then returned to his embankment, and described how a former one had been entirely swept away in one night's flood. But the Captain was ready with another verse of the Chaldee MS., and groaned out, by way of echo, "Verily my fine gold hath perished!" Whereupon the "Great Magician" elevated his huge oaken staff as if to lay it on the waggish soldier's back—but flourished it gayly

over his own head, and laughed louder than the youngest of the company. As we walked and talked, the Pepper and Mustard terriers kept snuffing about among the bushes and heather near us, and started every five minutes a hare, which scudded away before them and the ponderous staghound Maida—the Sheriff and all his tail hollowing and cheering, in perfect confidence that the dogs could do no more harm to poor puss than the venerable tom-cat, Hinse of Hinsfeldt, who pursued the vain chase with the rest.

At length we drew near *Peterhouse*, and found sober Peter himself, and his brother-in-law, the facetious factotum Tom Purdie, superintending, pipe in mouth, three or four sturdy laborers busy in laying down the turf for a bowling-green. "I have planted hollies all round it, you see," said Scott, "and laid out an arbor on the right-hand side for the laird; and here I mean to have a game at bowls after dinner every day in fine weather—for I take that to have been among the indispensables of our old *vie de château*." But I must not forget the reason he gave me some time afterwards for having fixed on that spot for his bowling-green. "In truth," he then said, "I wished to have a smooth walk, and a canny seat for myself within ear-shot of Peter's evening psalm." The coachman was a devout Presbyterian, and many a time have I in after-years accompanied Scott on his evening stroll, when the principal object was to enjoy, from the bowling-green, the unfailing melody of this good man's family worship—and heard him repeat, as Peter's manly voice led the humble choir within, that beautiful stanza of Burns's Saturday Night:—

> "They chaunt their artless notes in simple guise;
> They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim," etc.

It was near the dinner-hour before we reached the house, and presently I saw assembled a larger company than I should have fancied to be at all compatible with the existing accommodations of the place; but it turned out that Captain Ferguson, and the friends whom I have not as yet mentioned, were to find quarters elsewhere for the night. His younger brother, Captain John Ferguson of the Royal Navy (a favorite lieutenant of Lord Nelson's), had come over from Huntly Burn; there were present, also, Mr. Scott of Gala, whose residence is within an easy distance; Sir Henry Hay Macdougal of Mackerstoun, an old baronet, with gay, lively, and highly polished manners, related in the same degree to both Gala and the Sheriff;

Sir Alexander Don, the member for Roxburghshire, whose elegant social qualities have been alluded to in the preceding chapter; and Dr. Scott of Darnlee, a modest and intelligent gentleman, who having realized a fortune in the East India Company's medical service, had settled within two or three miles of Abbotsford, and, though no longer practising his profession, had kindly employed all the resources of his skill in the endeavor to counteract his neighbor's recent liability to attacks of cramp. Our host and one or two others appeared, as was in those days a common fashion with country gentlemen, in the lieutenancy uniform of their county. How fourteen or fifteen people contrived to be seated in the then dining-room of Abbotsford I know not—for it seemed quite full enough when it contained only eight or ten; but so it was—nor, as Sir Harry Macdougal's fat valet, warned by former experience, did not join the train of attendants, was there any perceptible difficulty in the detail of the arrangements. Everything about the dinner was, as the phrase runs, in excellent style; and in particular the *potage à la Meg Merrilies*, announced as an attempt to imitate a device of the Duke of Buccleuch's celebrated cook,—by name Monsieur Florence,—seemed, to those at least who were better acquainted with the Kaim of Derncleugh than with the *cuisine* of Bowhill, a very laudable specimen of the art. The champagne circulated nimbly—and I never was present at a gayer dinner. It had advanced a little beyond the soup when it received an accompaniment which would not, perhaps, have improved the satisfaction of southern guests, had any such been present. A tall and stalwart bagpiper, in complete Highland costume, appeared pacing to and fro on the green before the house, and the window being open, it seemed as if he might as well have been straining his lungs within the parlor. At a pause of his strenuous performance, Scott took occasion to explain that *John of Skye* was a recent acquisition to the rising hamlet of Abbotstown; that the man was a capital hedger and ditcher, and only figured with the pipe and philabeg on high occasions in the after-part of the day; "but indeed," he added, laughing, "I fear John will soon be discovering that the hook and mattock are unfavorable to his chanter hand." When the cloth was drawn, and the never-failing salver of *quaighs* introduced, John of Skye, upon some well-known signal, entered the room, but *en militaire*, without removing his bonnet, and taking his station behind the landlord, received from his hand the largest of the Celtic bickers brimful of Glenlivet. The man saluted the company in his own dialect, tipped off the contents

(probably a quarter of an English pint of raw aqua vitæ) at a gulp, wheeled about as solemnly as if the whole ceremony had been a movement on parade, and forthwith recommenced his pibrochs and gatherings, which continued until long after the ladies had left the table, and the autumnal moon was streaming in upon us so brightly as to dim the candles.

I had never before seen Scott in such buoyant spirits as he showed this evening—and I never saw him in higher afterwards; and no wonder, for this was the first time that he, Lord Melville, and Adam Ferguson, daily companions at the High School of Edinburgh, and partners in many joyous scenes of the early volunteer period, had met since the commencement of what I may call the serious part of any of their lives. The great poet and novelist was receiving them under his own roof, when his fame was at its *acme*, and his fortune seemed culminating to about a corresponding height —and the generous exuberance of his hilarity might have overflowed without moving the spleen of a Cynic. Old stories of *the Yards* and *the Cross-causeway* were relieved by sketches of real warfare, such as none but Ferguson (or Charles Mathews, had he been a soldier) could ever have given; and they toasted the memory of *Green-breeks* and the health of *the Beau* with equal devotion.

When we rose from table, Scott proposed that we should all ascend his western turret, to enjoy a moonlight view of the valley. The younger part of his company were too happy to do so: some of the seniors, who had tried the thing before, found pretexts for hanging back. The stairs were dark, narrow, and steep; but the Sheriff piloted the way, and at length there were as many on the top as it could well afford footing for. Nothing could be more lovely than the panorama; all the harsher and more naked features being lost in the delicious moonlight; the Tweed and the Gala winding and sparkling beneath our feet; and the distant ruins of Melrose appearing, as if carved of alabaster, under the black mass of the Eildons. The poet, leaning on his battlement, seemed to hang over the beautiful vision as if he had never seen it before. "If I live," he exclaimed, "I will build me a higher tower, with a more spacious platform, and a staircase better fitted for an old fellow's scrambling." The piper was heard re-tuning his instrument below, and he called to him for Lochaber no More. John of Skye obeyed, and as the music rose, softened by the distance, Scott repeated in a low key the melancholy words of the song of exile.

On descending from the tower, the whole company were assembled in the new dining-room, which was still under the hands of the carpenters, but had been brilliantly illuminated for the occasion. Mr. Bruce took his station, and old and young danced reels to his melodious accompaniment until they were weary, while Scott and the Dominie looked on with gladsome faces, and beat time now and then, the one with his staff, the other with his wooden leg. A tray with mulled wine and whiskey punch was then introduced, and Lord Melville proposed a bumper, with all the honors, to the *Roof-tree*. Captain Ferguson having sung Johnnie Cope, called on the young ladies for Kenmure's On and Awa'; and our host then insisted that the whole party should join, standing in a circle hand-in-hand *more majorum*, in the hearty chorus of

> "Weel may we a' be,
> Ill may we never see,
> God bless the king and the gude companie!"

—which being duly performed, all dispersed. Such was *the handsel* (for Scott protested against its being considered as *the house-heating*) of the new Abbotsford.

When I began this chapter, I thought it would be a short one, but it is surprising how, when one digs into his memory, the smallest details of a scene that was interesting at the time, shall by degrees come to light again. I now recall, as if I had seen and heard them yesterday, the looks and words of eighteen years ago. Awakening between six and seven next morning, I heard Scott's voice close to me, and looking out of the little latticed window of the then detached cottage called *the chapel*, saw him and Tom Purdie pacing together on the green before the door, in earnest deliberation over what seemed to be a rude daub of a drawing; and every time they approached my end of their parade, I was sure to catch the words *Blue Bank*. It turned out in the course of the day, that a field of clay near Toftfield went by this name, and that the draining of it was one of the chief operations then in hand. My friend Wilson meanwhile, who lodged also in the chapel, tapped at my door, and asked me to rise and take a walk with him by the river, for he had some angling project in his head. He went out and joined in the consultation about the Blue Bank, while I was dressing; presently Scott hailed me at the casement, and said he had observed a volume of a new edition of Goethe on my table—would I lend it him for a

little? He carried off the volume accordingly, and retreated with it to his den. It contained the Faust, and, I believe, in a more complete shape than he had before seen that masterpiece of his old favorite. When we met at breakfast, a couple of hours after, he was full of the poem—dwelt with enthusiasm on the airy beauty of its lyrics, the terrible pathos of the scene before the *Mater Dolorosa*, and the deep skill shown in the various subtle shadings of character between Mephistopheles and poor Margaret. He remarked, however, of the Introduction (which I suspect was new to him), that blood would out—that, consummate artist as he was, Goethe was a German, and that nobody but a German would ever have provoked a comparison with the Book of Job, "the grandest poem that ever was written." He added, that he suspected the end of the story had been left *in obscuro*, from despair to match the closing scene of our own Marlowe's Doctor Faustus. Mr. Wilson mentioned a report that Coleridge was engaged on a translation of the Faust. "I hope it is so," said Scott; "Coleridge made Schiller's Wallenstein far finer than he found it, and so he will do by this. No man has all the resources of poetry in such profusion, but he cannot manage them so as to bring out anything of his own on a large scale at all worthy of his genius. He is like a lump of coal rich with gas, which lies expending itself in puffs and gleams, unless some shrewd body will clap it into a cast-iron box, and compel the compressed element to do itself justice. His fancy and diction would have long ago placed him above all his contemporaries, had they been under the direction of a sound judgment and a steady will. I don't now expect a great original poem from Coleridge, but he might easily make a sort of fame for himself as a poetical translator,—that would be a thing completely unique and *sui generis*."

While this criticism proceeded, Scott was cutting away at his brown loaf and a plate of kippered salmon, in a style which strongly reminded me of Dandie Dinmont's luncheon at Mump's Hall; nor was his German topic at all the predominant one. On the contrary, the sentences which have dwelt on my memory dropt from him now and then, in the pauses, as it were, of his main talk;—for though he could not help recurring, ever and anon, to the subject, it would have been quite out of his way to make any literary matter the chief theme of his conversation, when there was a single person present who was not likely to feel much interested in its discussion.—How often have I heard him quote on such occasions Mr. Vellum's advice to the

butler in Addison's excellent play of The Drummer: "Your conjuror, John, is indeed a twofold personage—but he *eats and drinks like other people*!"

I may, however, take this opportunity of observing, that nothing could have been more absurdly unfounded than the statement which I have seen repeated in various sketches of his Life and Manners, that he habitually abstained from conversation on literary topics. In point of fact, there were no topics on which he talked more openly or more earnestly; but he, when in society, lived and talked for the persons with whom he found himself surrounded, and if he did not always choose to enlarge upon the subjects which his companions for the time suggested, it was simply because he thought or fancied that these had selected, out of deference or flattery, subjects about which they really cared little more than they knew. I have already repeated, over and again, my conviction that Scott considered literature, *per se*, as a thing of far inferior importance to the high concerns of political or practical life; but it would be too ridiculous to question that literature nevertheless engrossed, at all times and seasons, the greater part of his own interest and reflection: nor can it be doubted that his general preference of the society of men engaged in the active business of the world, rather than that of, so-called, literary people, was grounded substantially on his feeling that literature, worthy of the name, was more likely to be fed and nourished by the converse of the former than by that of the latter class.

Before breakfast was over, the post-bag arrived, and its contents were so numerous, that Lord Melville asked Scott what election was on hand—not doubting that there must be some very particular reason for such a shoal of letters. He answered that it was much the same most days, and added, "though no one has kinder friends in the franking line, and though Freeling and Croker especially are always ready to stretch the point of privilege in my favor, I am nevertheless a fair contributor to the revenue, for I think my bill for letters seldom comes under £150 a year; and as to coach-parcels, they are a perfect ruination." He then told with high merriment a disaster that had lately befallen him. "One morning last spring," he said, "I opened a huge lump of a despatch, without looking how it was addressed, never doubting that it had travelled under some omnipotent frank like the First Lord of the Admiralty's, when, lo and behold, the contents proved to be a MS. play, by a young lady of New York, who kindly requested me to read and correct it, equip it with prologue and epilogue, procure for it a favorable

reception from the manager of Drury Lane, and make Murray or Constable bleed handsomely for the copyright; and on inspecting the cover, I found that I had been charged five pounds odd for the postage. This was bad enough—but there was no help, so I groaned and submitted. A fortnight or so after, another packet, of not less formidable bulk, arrived, and I was absent enough to break its seal, too, without examination. Conceive my horror when out jumped the same identical tragedy of The Cherokee Lovers, with a second epistle from the authoress, stating that, as the winds had been boisterous, she feared the vessel entrusted with her former communication might have foundered, and therefore judged it prudent to forward a duplicate."

Scott said he must retire to answer his letters, but that the sociable and the ponies would be at the door by one o'clock, when he proposed to show Melrose and Dryburgh to Lady Melville and any of the rest of the party that chose to accompany them; adding that his son Walter would lead anybody who preferred a gun to the likeliest place for a blackcock, and that Charlie Purdie (Tom's brother) would attend upon Mr. Wilson, and whoever else chose to try a cast of the salmon-rod. He withdrew when all this was arranged, and appeared at the time appointed, with perhaps a dozen letters sealed for the post, and a coach-parcel addressed to James Ballantyne, which he dropt at the turnpike-gate as we drove to Melrose. Seeing it picked up by a dirty urchin, and carried into a hedge pot-house, where half-a-dozen nondescript wayfarers were smoking and tippling, I could not but wonder that it had not been the fate of some one of those innumerable packets to fall into unscrupulous hands, and betray the grand secret. That very morning we had seen two post-chaises drawn up at his gate, and the enthusiastic travellers, seemingly decent tradesmen and their families, who must have been packed in a manner worthy of Mrs. Gilpin, lounging about to catch a glimpse of him at his going forth. But it was impossible in those days to pass between Melrose and Abbotsford without encountering some odd figure, armed with a sketch-book, evidently bent on a peep at the Great Unknown; and it must be allowed that many of these pedestrians looked as if they might have thought it very excusable to make prize, by hook or by crook, of a MS. chapter of the Tales of my Landlord.

Scott showed us the ruins of Melrose in detail; and as we proceeded to Dryburgh, descanted learnedly and sagaciously on the good effects which must have attended the erection of so many great monastic establishments

in a district so peculiarly exposed to the inroads of the English in the days of the Border wars. "They were now and then violated," he said, "as their aspect to this hour bears witness; but for once that they suffered, any lay property similarly situated must have been *harried* a dozen times. The bold Dacres, Liddells, and Howards, that could get easy absolution at York or Durham for any ordinary breach of a truce with the Scots, would have had *to dree a heavy dole* had they confessed plundering from the fat brothers, of the same order perhaps, whose lines had fallen to them on the wrong side of the Cheviot." He enlarged, too, on the heavy penalty which the Crown of Scotland had paid for its rash acquiescence in the wholesale robbery of the Church at the Reformation. "The proportion of the soil in the hands of the clergy had," he said, "been very great—too great to be continued. If we may judge by their share in the public burdens, they must have had nearly a third of the land in their possession. But this vast wealth was now distributed among a turbulent nobility, too powerful before; and the Stuarts soon found, that in the bishops and lord abbots they had lost the only means of balancing their factions, so as to turn the scale in favor of law and order; and by and by the haughty barons themselves, who had scrambled for the worldly spoil of the church, found that the spiritual influence had been concentrated in hands as haughty as their own, and connected with no feelings likely to buttress their order any more than the Crown—a new and sterner monkery, under a different name, and essentially plebeian. Presently the Scotch were on the verge of republicanism, in state as well as kirk, and I have sometimes thought it was only the accession of King Jamie to the throne of England that could have given monarchy a chance of prolonging its existence here." One of his friends asked what he supposed might have been the annual revenue of the abbey of Melrose in its best day. He answered that he suspected, if all the sources of their income were now in clever hands, the produce could hardly be under £100,000 a year; and added: "Making every allowance for modern improvements, there can be no question that the sixty brothers of Melrose divided a princely rental. The superiors were often men of very high birth, and the great majority of the rest were younger brothers of gentlemen's families. I fancy they may have been, on the whole, pretty near akin to your Fellows of All Souls—who, according to their statute, must be *bene nati, bene vestiti, et mediocriter docti*. They had a good house in Edinburgh, where, no doubt, my lord abbot and his chaplains maintained a hospitable table during the sittings of

Parliament." Some one regretted that we had no lively picture of the enormous revolution in manners that must have followed the downfall of the ancient Church in Scotland. He observed that there were, he fancied, materials enough for constructing such a one, but that they were mostly scattered in records—"of which," said he, "who knows anything to the purpose except Tom Thomson and John Riddell? It is common to laugh at such researches, but they pay the good brains that meddle with them;—and had Thomson been as diligent in setting down his discoveries as he has been in making them, he might, long before this time of day, have placed himself on a level with Ducange or Camden. The change in the country-side," he continued, "must indeed have been terrific; but it does not seem to have been felt very severely by a certain Boniface of St. Andrews, for when somebody asked him, on the subsidence of the storm, what he thought of all that had occurred,—'Why,' answered mine host, 'it comes to this, that the moder*au*tor sits in my meikle chair, where the dean sat before, and in place of calling for the third stoup of Bordeaux, bids Jenny bring ben anither bowl of toddy.'"

At Dryburgh, Scott pointed out to us the sepulchral aisle of his Haliburton ancestors, and said he hoped, in God's appointed time, to lay his bones among their dust. The spot was, even then, a sufficiently interesting and impressive one; but I shall not say more of it at present.

On returning to Abbotsford, we found Mrs. Scott and her daughters doing penance under the merciless curiosity of a couple of tourists who had arrived from Selkirk soon after we set out for Melrose. They were rich specimens—tall, lanky young men, both of them rigged out in new jackets and trousers of the Macgregor tartan; the one, as they had revealed, being a lawyer, the other a Unitarian preacher, from New England. These gentlemen, when told on their arrival that Mr. Scott was not at home, had shown such signs of impatience, that the servant took it for granted they must have serious business, and asked if they would wish to speak a word with his lady. They grasped at this, and so conducted themselves in the interview, that Mrs. Scott never doubted they had brought letters of introduction to her husband, and invited them accordingly to partake of her luncheon. They had been walking about the house and grounds with her and her daughters ever since that time, and appeared at the porch, when the Sheriff and his party returned to dinner, as if they had been already fairly enrolled on his visiting list. For the moment, he too was taken in—he

fancied that his wife must have received and opened their credentials—and shook hands with them with courteous cordiality. But Mrs. Scott, with all her overflowing good-nature, was a sharp observer; and she, before a minute had elapsed, interrupted the ecstatic compliments of the strangers, by reminding them that her husband would be glad to have the letters of the friends who had been so good as to write by them. It then turned out that there were no letters to be produced—and Scott, signifying that his hour for dinner approached, added, that as he supposed they meant to walk to Melrose, he could not trespass further on their time. The two lion-hunters seemed quite unprepared for this abrupt escape. But there was about Scott, in perfection, when he chose to exert it, the power of civil repulsion; he bowed the overwhelmed originals to his door, and on reëntering the parlor, found Mrs. Scott complaining very indignantly that they had gone so far as to pull out their note-book, and beg an exact account, not only of his age—but of her own. Scott, already half relenting, laughed heartily at this misery. He observed, however, that, "if he were to take in all the world, he had better put up a sign-post at once,—

> 'Porter, ale, and British spirits,
> Painted bright between twa trees;'

and that no traveller of respectability could ever be at a loss for such an introduction as would insure his best hospitality." Still he was not quite pleased with what had happened—and as we were about to pass, half an hour afterwards, from the drawing-room to the dining-room, he said to his wife, "Hang the Yahoos, Charlotte—but we should have bid them stay dinner." "Devil a bit," quoth Captain John Ferguson, who had again come over from Huntly Burn, and had been latterly assisting the lady to amuse her Americans, "Devil a bit, my dear,—they were quite in a mistake, I could see. The one asked Madame whether she deigned to call her new house Tully-Veolan or Tillietudlem; and the other, when Maida happened to lay his nose against the window, exclaimed *pro-di-gi-ous*! In short, they evidently meant all their humbug not for you, but for the culprit of Waverley, and the rest of that there rubbish." "Well, well, Skipper," was the reply, "for a' that, the loons would hae been nane the waur o' their kail."

From this banter it may be inferred that the younger Ferguson had not as yet been told the Waverley secret—which to any of that house could never have been any mystery. Probably this, or some similar occasion soon

afterwards, led to his formal initiation; for during the many subsequent years that the veil was kept on, I used to admire the tact with which, when in their topmost high-jinks humor, both "Captain John" and "The Auld Captain" eschewed any the most distant allusion to the affair.

And this reminds me, that at the period of which I am writing, none of Scott's own family, except of course his wife, had the advantage in that matter of the Skipper. Some of them, too, were apt, like him, so long as no regular confidence had been reposed in them, to avail themselves of the author's reserve for their own sport among friends. Thus one morning, just as Scott was opening the door of the parlor, the rest of the party being already seated at the breakfast-table, the Dominie was in the act of helping himself to an egg, marked with a peculiar hieroglyphic by Mrs. Thomas Purdie, upon which Anne Scott, then a lively rattling girl of sixteen, lisped out, "That's a mysterious-looking egg, Mr. Thomson—what if it should have been meant for *the Great Unknown*?" Ere the Dominie could reply, her father advanced to the foot of the table, and having seated himself and deposited his stick on the carpet beside him, with a sort of whispered whistle—"What's that Lady Anne's saying?" quoth he; "I thought it had been well known that the *keelavined* egg must be a soft one for *the Sherra*." And so he took his egg, and while all smiled in silence, poor Anne said gayly, in the midst of her blushes, "Upon my word, papa, I thought Mr. John Ballantyne might have been expected." This allusion to Johnny's glory in being considered as the accredited representative of Jedediah Cleishbotham produced a laugh,—at which the Sheriff frowned—and then laughed too.

I remember nothing particular about our second day's dinner, except that it was then I first met my dear and honored friend William Laidlaw. The evening passed rather more quietly than the preceding one. Instead of the dance in the new dining-room, we had a succession of old ballads sung to the harp and guitar by the young ladies of the house; and Scott, when they seemed to have done enough, found some reason for taking down a volume of Crabbe, and read us one of his favorite tales,—

> "Grave Jonas Kindred, Sibyl Kindred's sire,
> Was six feet high, and looked six inches higher," etc.

But jollity revived in full vigor when the supper-tray was introduced; and to cap all merriment, Captain Ferguson dismissed us with The Laird of Cockpen. Lord and Lady Melville were to return to Melville Castle next

morning, and Mr. Wilson and I happened to mention that we were engaged to dine and sleep at the seat of my friend and relation, Mr. Pringle of Torwoodlee, on our way to Edinburgh. Scott immediately said that he would send word in the morning to the Laird, that he and Adam Ferguson meant to accompany us—such being the unceremonious style in which country neighbors in Scotland visit each other. Next day, accordingly, we all rode over together to Mr. Pringle's beautiful seat—the "distant Torwoodlee" of The Lay of the Last Minstrel, but distant not above five or six miles from Abbotsford—coursing hares as we proceeded, but inspecting the antiquities of the *Catrail* to the interruption of our sport. We had another joyous evening at Torwoodlee. Scott and Ferguson returned home at night, and the morning after, as Wilson and I mounted for Edinburgh, our kind old host, his sides still sore with laughter, remarked that "the Sheriff and the Captain together were too much for any company."

There was much talk between the Sheriff and Mr. Pringle about the Selkirkshire Yeomanry Cavalry, of which the latter had been the original commandant. Young Walter Scott had been for a year or more Cornet in the corps, and his father was consulting Torwoodlee about an entertainment which he meant to give them on his son's approaching birthday. It was then that the new dining-room was to be first *heated* in good earnest; and Scott very kindly pressed Wilson and myself, at parting, to return for the occasion —which, however, we found it impossible to do. The reader must therefore be satisfied with what is said about it in one of the following letters:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., ROKEBY.

Abbotsford, 5th November, 1818.

My Dear Morritt,—Many thanks for your kind letter of 29th October. The matter of the colts being as you state, I shall let it lie over until next year, and then avail myself of your being in the neighborhood to get a good pair of four-year-olds, since it would be unnecessary to buy them a year younger, and incur all the risks of disease and accident, unless they could have been had at a proportional under-value.

* * * * * * leaves us this morning after a visit of about a week. He improves on acquaintance, and especially seems so pleased with everything, that it would be very hard to quarrel with him. Certainly, as the Frenchman said, *il*

a un grand talent pour le silence. I take the opportunity of his servant going direct to Rokeby to charge him with this letter, and a plaid which my daughters entreat you to accept of as a token of their *warm* good wishes. Seriously you will find it a good bosom friend in an easterly wind, a black frost, or when your country avocations lead you to face a *dry wap of snow*. I find it by far the lightest and most comfortable integument which I can use upon such occasions.

We had a grand jollification here last week;—the whole troop of Forest Yeomanry dining with us. I assure you the scene was gay and even grand, with glittering sabres, waving standards, and screaming bagpipes; and that it might not lack spectators of taste, who should arrive in the midst of the hurricane, but Lord and Lady Compton, whose presence gave a great zest to the whole affair. Everything went off very well, and as cavalry have the great advantage over infantry, that their *legs* never get drunk, they retired in decent disorder about ten o'clock. I was glad to see Lord and Lady Compton so very comfortable, and surrounded with so fine a family, the natural bond of mutual regard and affection. She has got very jolly, but otherwise has improved on her travels. I had a long chat with her, and was happy to find her quite contented and pleased with the lot she has drawn in life. It is a brilliant one in many respects, to be sure; but still I have seen the story of the poor woman, who, after all rational subjects of distress had been successively remedied, tormented herself about the screaming of a neighbor's peacock—I say, I have seen this so often realized in actual life, that I am more afraid of my friends making themselves uncomfortable, who have only imaginary evils to indulge, than I am for the peace of those who, battling magnanimously with real inconvenience and danger, find a remedy in the very force of the exertions to which their lot compels them.

I sympathize with you for the *dole* which you are *dreeing* under the inflictions of your honest proser. Of all the boring machines ever devised, your regular and determined story-teller is the most peremptory and powerful in his operations. This is a rainy day, and my present infliction is an idle cousin, a great amateur of the pipes, who is performing incessantly in the next room for the benefit of a probationary minstrel, whose pipes scream *à la distance*, as the young hoarse cock-chicken imitates the gallant and triumphant screech of a veteran Sir Chanticleer. Yours affectionately,

W. Scott.

Chapter XLIII

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1818-1819

I have now to introduce a melancholy subject—one of the greatest afflictions that ever Scott encountered. The health of Charles, Duke of Buccleuch was by this time beginning to give way, and Scott thought it his duty to intimate his very serious apprehensions to his noble friend's brother.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD MONTAGU, DITTON PARK, WINDSOR.

Edinburgh, 12th November, 1818.

My dear Lord,—I am about to write to you with feelings of the deepest anxiety. I have hesitated for two or three days whether I should communicate to your Lordship the sincere alarm which I entertain on account of the Duke's present state of health, but I have come to persuade myself, that it will be discharging a part of the duty which I owe to him, to mention my own most distressing apprehensions. I was at the cattle-show on the 6th, and executed the delegated task of toast-master, and so forth. I was told by **** that the Duke is under the influence of the muriatic bath, which occasions a good deal of uneasiness when the medicine is in possession of the system. The Duke observed the strictest diet,

and remained only a short time at table, leaving me to do the honors, which I did with a sorrowful heart, endeavoring, however, to persuade myself that ****'s account, and the natural depression of spirits incidental to his finding himself unable for the time to discharge the duty to his guests, which no man could do with so much grace and kindness, were sufficient to account for the alteration of his manner and appearance. I spent Monday with him quietly and alone, and I must say that all I saw and heard was calculated to give me the greatest pain. His strength is much less, his spirits lower, and his general appearance far more unfavorable than when I left him at Drumlanrig a few weeks before. What ****, and indeed what the Duke himself, says of the medicine, may be true—but **** is very sanguine, and, like all the personal physicians attached to a person of such consequence, he is too much addicted to the *placebo*—at least I think so—too apt to fear to give offence by contradiction, or by telling that sort of truth which may controvert the wishes or habits of his patient. I feel I am communicating much pain to your Lordship, but I am sure that, excepting yourself, there is not a man in the world whose sorrow and apprehension could exceed mine in having such a task to discharge; for, as your Lordship well knows, the ties which bind me to your excellent brother are of a much stronger kind than usually connect persons so different in rank. But the alteration in voice and person, in features, and in spirits, all argue the decay of natural strength, and the increase of some internal disorder, which is gradually triumphing over the system. Much has been done in these cases by change of climate. I hinted this to the Duke at Drumlanrig, but I found his mind totally averse to it. But he made some inquiries of Harden (just returned from Italy), which seemed to imply that at least the idea of a winter in Italy or the south of France was not altogether out of his consideration. Your Lordship will consider whether he can or ought to be pressed upon this point. He is partial to Scotland, and feels the many high duties which bind him to it. But the air of this country, with its alternations of moisture and dry frost, although excellent for a healthy person, is very trying to a valetudinarian.

I should not have thought of volunteering to communicate such unpleasant news, but that the family do not seem alarmed. I am not surprised at this, because, where the decay of health is very gradual, it is more easily traced by a friend who sees the patient from interval to interval, than by the affectionate eyes which are daily beholding him.

Adieu, my dear Lord. God knows you will scarce read this letter with more pain than I feel in writing it. But it seems indispensable to me to communicate my sentiments of the Duke's present situation to his nearest relation and dearest friend. His life is invaluable to his country and to his family, and how dear it is to his friends can only be estimated by those who know the soundness of his understanding, the uprightness and truth of his judgment, and the generosity and warmth of his feelings.

I am always, my dear Lord, most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

Scott's letters of this and the two following months are very much occupied with the painful subject of the Duke of Buccleuch's health; but those addressed to his Grace himself are, in general, in a more jocose strain than usual. His friend's spirits were sinking, and he exerted himself in this way, in the hope of amusing the hours of languor at Bowhill. These letters are headed "Edinburgh Gazette Extraordinary," No. 1, No. 2, and so on; but they deal so much in laughable gossip about persons still living, that I find it difficult to make any extracts from them. The following paragraphs, however, from the Gazette of November the 20th, give a little information as to his own minor literary labors:—

"The article on Gourgaud's Narrative *is* by a certain *Vieux Routier* of your Grace's acquaintance, who would willingly have some military hints from you for the continuation of the article, if at any time you should feel disposed to amuse yourself with looking at the General's most marvellous performance. His lies are certainly like the father who begot them. Do not think that at any time the little trumpery intelligence this place affords can interrupt my labors, while it amuses your Grace. I can scribble as fast in the Court of Session as anywhere else, without the least loss of time or hindrance of business. At the same time, I cannot help laughing at the miscellaneous trash I have been putting out of my hand, and the various

motives which made me undertake the jobs. An article for the Edinburgh Review—this for the love of Jeffrey, the editor—the first for ten years. Do., being the article *Drama* for the Encyclopædia—this for the sake of Mr. Constable, the publisher. Do. for the Blackwoodian Magazine—this for love of the cause I espoused. Do. for the Quarterly Review—this for the love of myself, I believe, or, which is the same thing, for the love of £100, which I wanted for some odd purpose. As all these folks fight like dog and cat among themselves, my situation is much like the *Suave mare magno*, and so forth....

"I hope your Grace will never think of answering the Gazettes at all, or even replying to letters of business, until you find it quite convenient and easy. The Gazette will continue to appear as materials occur. Indeed I expect, in the end of next week, to look in upon Bowhill, per the Selkirk mail, about eight at night, with the hope of spending a day there, which will be more comfortable than at Abbotsford, where I should feel like a mouse below a firlot. If I find the Court can spare so important a person for one day, I shall order my pony up to meet me at Bowhill, and, supposing me to come on Friday night, I can easily return by the Blucher on Monday, dining and sleeping at Huntly Burn on the Sunday. So I shall receive all necessary reply in person."

Good Queen Charlotte died on the 17th of this month; and in writing to Mr. Morritt on the 21st, Scott thus expresses what was, I believe, the universal feeling at the moment:—

"So we have lost the old Queen. She has only had the sad prerogative of being kept alive by nursing for some painful weeks, whereas perhaps a subject might have closed the scene earlier. I fear the effect of this event on public manners—were there but a weight at the back of the drawing-room door, which would slam it in the face of w——s, its fall ought to be lamented; and I believe that poor Charlotte really adopted her rules of etiquette upon a feeling of duty. If we should suppose the Princess of Wales to have been at the head of the matronage of the land for these last ten years, what would have been the difference on public opinion! No man of experience will ever expect the breath of a court to be favorable to correct morals—*sed si non caste caute tamen*. One half of the mischief is done by the publicity of the evil, which corrupts those which are near its influence, and fills with disgust and apprehension those to whom it does not directly

extend. Honest old Evelyn's account of Charles the Second's court presses on one's recollection, and prepares the mind for anxious apprehensions."

Towards the end of this month Scott received from his kind friend Lord Sidmouth, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, the formal announcement of the Prince Regent's desire (which had been privately communicated some months earlier through the Lord Chief Commissioner Adam) to confer on him the rank of Baronet. When Scott first heard of the Regent's gracious intention, he had signified considerable hesitation about the prudence of his accepting any such accession of rank; for it had not escaped his observation, that such airy sounds, however modestly people may be disposed to estimate them, are apt to entail in the upshot additional cost upon their way of living, and to affect accordingly the plastic fancies, feelings, and habits of their children. But Lord Sidmouth's letter happened to reach him a few days after he had heard of the sudden death of his wife's brother, Charles Carpenter, who had bequeathed the reversion of his fortune to his sister's family; and this circumstance disposed Scott to waive his scruples, chiefly with a view to the professional advantage of his eldest son, who had by this time fixed on the life of a soldier. As is usually the case, the estimate of Mr. Carpenter's property transmitted at the time to England proved to have been an exaggerated one; as nearly as my present information goes, the amount was doubled. But as to the only question of any interest, to wit, how Scott himself felt on all these matters at the moment, the following letter to one whom he had long leaned to as a brother, will be more satisfactory than anything else it is in my power to quote:—

TO J. B. S. MORRITT, ESQ., M. P., ROKEBY.

Edinburgh, 7th December, 1818.

My dear Morritt,—I know you are indifferent to nothing that concerns us, and therefore I take an early opportunity to acquaint you with the mixture of evil and good which has very lately befallen us. On Saturday last we had the advice of the death of my wife's brother, Charles Carpenter, commercial resident at Salem, in the Madras Establishment. This event has given her great distress. She has not, that we know of, a single blood-relation left in the world, for her uncle, the Chevalier de la Volere,

colonel of a Russian regiment, is believed to have been killed in the campaign of 1813. My wife has been very unwell for two days, and is only now sitting up and mixing with us. She has that sympathy which we are all bound to pay, but feels she wants that personal interest in her sorrow which could only be grounded on a personal acquaintance with the deceased.

Mr. Carpenter has, with great propriety, left his property in life-rent to his wife—the capital to my children. It seems to amount to about £40,000. Upwards of £30,000 is in the British funds; the rest, to an uncertain value, in India. I hope this prospect of independence will not make my children different from that which they have usually been—docile, dutiful, and affectionate. I trust it will not. At least, the first expression of their feelings was honorable, for it was a unanimous wish to give up all to their mother. This I explained to them was out of the question; but that, if they should be in possession at any time of this property, they ought, among them, to settle an income of £400 or £500 on their mother for her life, to supply her with a fund at her own uncontrolled disposal, for any indulgence or useful purpose that might be required. Mrs. Scott will stand in no need of this; but it is a pity to let kind affections run to waste; and if they never have it in their power to pay such a debt, their willingness to have done so will be a pleasant reflection. I am Scotchman enough to hate the breaking up of family ties, and the too close adherence to personal property. For myself, this event makes me neither richer nor poorer *directly*; but indirectly it will permit me to do something for my poor brother Tom's family, besides pleasing myself in "*plantings*, and *policies*, and *biggings*," with a safe conscience.

There is another thing I have to whisper to your faithful ear. Our fat friend, being desirous to honor Literature in my unworthy person, has intimated to me, by his organ the Doctor, that, with consent ample and unanimous of all the potential voices of all his ministers, each more happy than another of course on so joyful an occasion, he proposes to dub me Baronet. It would be easy saying a parcel of fine things about my contempt of rank, and so forth; but although I would not have gone a step out of my way to have

asked, or bought, or begged or borrowed a distinction, which to me personally will rather be inconvenient than otherwise, yet, coming as it does directly from the source of feudal honors, and as an honor, I am really gratified with it;—especially as it is intimated that it is his Royal Highness's pleasure to heat the oven for me expressly, without waiting till he has some new *batch* of Baronets ready in dough. In plain English, I am to be gazetted *per se*. My poor friend Carpenter's bequest to my family has taken away a certain degree of *impecuniosity*, a necessity of saving cheese-parings and candle-ends, which always looks inconsistent with any little pretension to rank. But as things now stand, Advance banners in the name of God and Saint Andrew. Remember, I anticipate the jest, "I like not such grinning honor as Sir Walter hath." After all, if one must speak for himself, I have my quarters and emblazonments, free of all stain but Border theft and High Treason, which I hope are gentlemanlike crimes; and I hope Sir Walter Scott will not sound worse than Sir Humphry Davy, though my merits are as much under his, in point of utility, as can well be imagined. But a name is something, and mine is the better of the two. Set down this flourish to the account of national and provincial pride, for you must know we have more Messieurs de Sotenville in our Border counties than anywhere else in the Lowlands—I cannot say for the Highlands. The Duke of Buccleuch, greatly to my joy, resolves to go to France for a season. Adam Ferguson goes with him, to glad him by the way. Charlotte and the young folks join in kind compliments.

Most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

A few additional circumstances are given in a letter of the same week to Joanna Baillie. To her, after mentioning the testamentary provisions of Mr. Carpenter, Scott says:—

My dear Friend,—I am going to tell you a little secret. I have changed my mind, or rather existing circumstances have led to my altering my opinions in a case of sublunary honor. I have now before me Lord Sidmouth's letter, containing the Prince's gracious

and unsolicited intention to give me a Baronetcy. It will neither make me better nor worse than I feel myself—in fact it will be an incumbrance rather than otherwise; but it may be of consequence to Walter, for the title is worth something in the army, although not in a learned profession. The Duke of Buccleuch and Scott of Harden, who, as the heads of my clan and the sources of my gentry, are good judges of what I ought to do, have both given me their earnest opinion to accept of an honor directly derived from the source of honor, and neither begged nor bought, as is the usual fashion. Several of my ancestors bore the title in the seventeenth century; and were it of consequence, I have no reason to be ashamed of the decent and respectable persons who connect me with that period when they carried into the field, like Madoc—

> "The crescent, at whose gleam the *Cambrian* oft,
> Cursing his perilous tenure, wound his horn"—

so that, as a gentleman, I may stand on as good a footing as other new creations. Respecting the reasons peculiar to myself which have made the Prince show his respect for general literature in my person, I cannot be a good judge, and your friendly zeal will make you a partial one: the purpose is fair, honorable, and creditable to the Sovereign, even though it should number him among the monarchs who made blunders in literary patronage. You know Pope says:—

> "The Hero William, and the Martyr Charles,
> One knighted Blackmore, and one pensioned
> Quarles."

So let the intention sanctify the error, if there should be one on this great occasion. The time of this grand affair is uncertain: it is coupled with an invitation to London, which it would be inconvenient to me to accept, unless it should happen that I am called to come up by the affairs of poor Carpenter's estate. Indeed, the prospects of my children form the principal reason for a change of sentiments upon this flattering offer, joined to my belief

that, though I may still be a scribbler from inveterate habit, I shall hardly engage again in any work of consequence.

We had a delightful visit from the Richardsons, only rather too short. He will give you a picture of Abbotsford, but not as it exists in my mind's eye, waving with all its future honors. The pinasters are thriving very well, and in a year or two more Joanna's Bower will be worthy of the name. At present it is like Sir Roger de Coverley's portrait, which hovered between its resemblance to the good knight and to a Saracen. Now the said bower has still such a resemblance to its original character of a gravel pit, that it is not fit to be shown to "bairns and fools," who, according to our old canny proverb, should never see half-done work; but Nature, if she works slowly, works surely, and your laurels at Abbotsford will soon flourish as fair as those you have won on Parnassus. I rather fear that a quantity of game, which was shipped awhile ago at Inverness for the Doctor, never reached him: it is rather a transitory commodity in London; there were ptarmigan, grouse, and black game. I shall be grieved if they have miscarried.—My health, thank God, continues as strong as at any period in my life; only I think of rule and diet more than I used to do, and observe as much as in me lies the advice of my friendly physician, who took such kind care of me: my best respects attend him, Mrs. Baillie, and Mrs. Agnes. Ever, my dear friend, most faithfully yours,

W. S.

In the next of these letters Scott alludes, among other things, to a scene of innocent pleasure which I often witnessed afterwards. The whole of the ancient ceremonial of the *daft days*, as they are called in Scotland, obtained respect at Abbotsford. He said it was *uncanny*, and would certainly have felt it very uncomfortable, not to welcome the new year in the midst of his family and a few old friends, with the immemorial libation of a *het pint*; but of all the consecrated ceremonies of the time, none gave him such delight as the visit which he received as *Laird* from all the children on his estate, on the last morning of every December—when, in the words of an obscure poet often quoted by him,

"The cottage bairns sing blithe and gay,
At the ha' door for *hogmanay*."

TO MISS JOANNA BAILLIE, HAMPSTEAD.

Abbotsford, 1st January, 1819.

My dear Friend,—Many thanks for your kind letter. Ten brace of ptarmigan sailed from Inverness about the 24th, directed for Dr. Baillie;—if they should have reached, I hope you would seize some for yourself and friends, as I learn the Doctor is on duty at Windsor. I do not know the name of the vessel, but they were addressed to Dr. Baillie, London, which I trust was enough, for there are not *two*. The Doctor has been exercising his skill upon my dear friend and chief, the Duke of Buccleuch, to whom I am more attached than to any person beyond the reach of my own family, and has advised him to do what, by my earnest advice, he ought to have done three years ago—namely, to go to Lisbon: he left this vicinity with much reluctance to go to Toulouse, but if he will be advised, should not stop save in Portugal or the south of Spain. The Duke is one of those retired and high-spirited men who will never be known until the world asks what became of the huge oak that grew on the brow of the hill, and sheltered such an extent of ground. During the late distress, though his own immense rents remained in arrears, and though I know he was pinched for money, as all men were, but more especially the possessors of entailed estates, he absented himself from London in order to pay with ease to himself the laborers employed on his various estates. These amounted (for I have often seen the roll and helped to check it) to nine hundred and fifty men, working at day wages, each of whom on a moderate average might maintain three persons, since the single men have mothers, sisters, and aged or very young relations to protect and assist. Indeed it is wonderful how much even a small sum, comparatively, will do in supporting the Scottish laborer, who is in his natural state perhaps one of the best, most intelligent, and kind-hearted of human beings; and in truth I have limited my other habits of expense very much since I fell into the habit of employing mine honest people. I wish you

could have seen about a hundred children, being almost entirely supported by their fathers' or brothers' labor, come down yesterday to dance to the pipes, and get a piece of cake and bannock, and pence apiece (no very deadly largess) in honor of *hogmanay*. I declare to you, my dear friend, that when I thought the poor fellows who kept these children so neat, and well taught, and well behaved, were slaving the whole day for eighteen-pence or twenty-pence at the most, I was ashamed of their gratitude, and of their becks and bows. But, after all, one does what one can, and it is better twenty families should be comfortable according to their wishes and habits, than half that number should be raised above their situation. Besides, like Fortunio in the fairy tale, I have my gifted men—the best wrestler and cudgel-player—the best runner and leaper—the best shot in the little district; and as I am partial to all manly and athletic exercises, these are great favorites, being otherwise decent persons, and bearing their faculties meekly. All this smells of sad egotism, but what can I write to you about, save what is uppermost in my own thoughts: and here am I, thinning old plantations and planting new ones; now undoing what has been done, and now doing what I suppose no one would do but myself, and accomplishing all my magical transformations by the arms and legs of the aforesaid genii, conjured up to my aid at eighteen-pence a day. There is no one with me but my wife, to whom the change of scene and air, with the facility of easy and uninterrupted exercise, is of service. The young people remain in Edinburgh to look after their lessons, and Walter, though passionately fond of shooting, only stayed three days with us, his mind running entirely on mathematics and fortification, French and German. One of the excellencies of Abbotsford is very bad pens and ink; and besides, this being New Year's Day, and my writing-room above the servants' hall, the progress of my correspondence is a little interrupted by the Piper singing Gaelic songs to the servants, and their applause in consequence. Adieu, my good and indulgent friend: the best influences of the New Year attend you and yours, who so well deserve all that they can bring. Most affectionately yours,

Walter Scott.

Before quitting the year 1818, I ought to have mentioned that among Scott's miscellaneous occupations in its autumn, he found time to contribute some curious materials toward a new edition of Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland, which had been undertaken by his old acquaintance, Mr. Robert Jameson. During the winter session he appears to have made little progress with his novel; his painful seizures of cramp were again recurring frequently, and he probably thought it better to allow the story of Lammermoor to lie over until his health should be reëstablished. In the mean time he drew up a set of topographical and historical essays, which originally appeared in the successive numbers of the splendidly illustrated work, entitled Provincial Antiquities of Scotland. But he did this merely to gratify his own love of the subject, and because, well or ill, he must be doing something. He declined all pecuniary recompense; but afterwards, when the success of the publication was secure, accepted from the proprietors some of the beautiful drawings by Turner, Thomson, and other artists, which had been prepared to accompany his text. These drawings are now in the little breakfast-room at Abbotsford—the same which had been constructed for his own den, and which I found him occupying as such in the spring of 1819.

In the course of December, 1818, he also opened an important negotiation with Messrs. Constable, which was completed early in the ensuing year. The cost of his building had, as is usual, exceeded his calculation; and he had both a large addition to it, and some new purchases of land, in view. Moreover, his eldest son had now fixed on the cavalry, in which service every step infers very considerable expense. The details of this negotiation are remarkable;—Scott considered himself as a very fortunate man when Constable, who at first offered £10,000 for all his then existing copyrights, agreed to give for them £12,000. Meeting a friend in the street, just after the deed had been executed, he said he wagered no man could guess at how large a price Constable had estimated his "eild kye" (cows barren from age). The copyrights thus transferred were, as specified in the instrument:—

> "The said Walter Scott, Esq.'s present share, being the entire copyright, of Waverley.
>
> Do. do Guy Mannering.

Do.	do	Antiquary.	
Do.	do	Rob Roy.	
Do.	do	Tales of My Landlord,	1st Series.
Do.	do	do.	2d Series.
Do.	do	do.	3d Series.
Do.	do	Bridal of Triermain.	
Do.	do	Harold the Dauntless.	
Do.	do	Sir Tristrem.	
Do.	do	Roderick Collection,	
Do.	do	Paul's Letters.	
Do.	being one eighth of	The Lay of the Last Minstrel.	
Do.	being one half of	The Lady of the Lake.	
Do.	being one half of	Rokeby.	
Do.	being one half of	The Lord of the Isles."	

The instrument contained a clause binding Messrs. Constable never to divulge the name of the Author of Waverley during his life, under a penalty of £2000.

I may observe, that had these booksellers fulfilled their part of this agreement, by paying off, prior to their insolvency in 1826, the whole bonds for £12,000, which they signed on the 2d of February, 1819, no interest in the copyrights above specified could have been expected to revert to the Author of Waverley: but more of this in due season.

He alludes to the progress of the treaty in the following letter to Captain Adam Ferguson, who had, as has already appeared, left Scotland with the Duke of Buccleuch. His Grace hearing, when in London, that one of the Barons of Exchequer at Edinburgh meant speedily to resign, the Captain had, by his desire, written to urge on Scott the propriety of renewing his application for a seat on that bench; which, however, Scott at once refused to do. There were several reasons for this abstinence; among others, he thought such a promotion at this time would interfere with a project which

he had formed of joining "the Chief and the Aide-de-Camp" in the course of the spring, and accomplishing in their society the tour of Portugal and Spain—perhaps of Italy also. Some such excursion had been strongly recommended to him by his own physicians, as the likeliest means of interrupting those habits of sedulous exertion at the desk, which they all regarded as the true source of his recent ailments, and the only serious obstacle to his cure; and his standing as a Clerk of Session, considering how largely he had labored in that capacity for infirm brethren, would have easily secured him a twelve-month's leave of absence from the Judges of his Court. But the principal motive was, as we shall see, his reluctance to interfere with the claims of the then Sheriff of Mid-Lothian, his own and Ferguson's old friend and schoolfellow, Sir William Rae—who, however, accepted the more ambitious post of Lord Advocate, in the course of the ensuing summer.

TO CAPTAIN ADAM FERGUSON, DITTON PARK, WINDSOR.

15th January, 1819.

Dear Adam,—Many thanks for your kind letter, this moment received. I would not for the world stand in Jackie (I beg his pardon, Sir John) Peartree's way. He has merited the cushion *en haut*, and besides he needs it. To me it would make little difference in point of income. The *otium cum dignitate*, if it ever come, will come as well years after this as now. Besides, I am afraid the opening will be soon made, through the death of our dear friend the Chief Baron, of whose health the accounts are unfavorable. Immediate promotion would be inconvenient to me, rather than otherwise, because I have the desire, like an old fool as I am, *courir un peu le monde*. I am beginning to draw out from my literary commerce. Constable has offered me £10,000 for the copyrights of published works which have already produced more than twice the sum. I stand out for £12,000. Tell this to the Duke; he knows how I managed to keep the hen till the rainy day was past. I will write two lines to Lord Melville, just to make my bow for the present, resigning any claims I have through the patronage of my kindest and best friend, for I have no other, till the next

opportunity. I should have been truly vexed if the Duke had thought of writing about this. I don't wish to hear from him till I can have his account of the lines of Torres Vedras. I care so little how or where I travel, that I am not sure at all whether I shall not come to Lisbon and surprise you, instead of going to Italy by Switzerland; that is, providing the state of Spain will allow me, without any unreasonable danger of my throat, to get from Lisbon to Madrid, and thence to Gibraltar. I am determined to roll a little about, for I have lost much of my usual views of summer pleasure here. But I trust we shall have one day the Maid of Lorn (recovered of her lameness), and Charlie Stuart (reconciled to bogs), and Sibyl Grey (no longer retrograde), and the Duke set up by a southern climate, and his military and civil aides-de-camp, with all the rout of younkers and dogs, and a brown hillside, introductory to a good dinner at Bowhill or Drumlanrig, and a merry evening. Amen, and God send it. As to my mouth being stopped with the froth of the title, that is, as the learned Partridge says, a *non sequitur*. You know the schoolboy's expedient of first asking mustard for his beef, and then beef for his mustard. Now, as they put the mustard on my plate, without my asking it, I shall consider myself, time and place serving, as entitled to ask a slice of beef; that is to say, I would do so if I cared much about it; but as it is, I trust it to time and chance, which, as you, dear Adam, know, have (added to the exertions of kind friends) been wonderful allies of mine. People usually wish their letters to come to hand, but I hope you will not receive this in Britain. I am impatient to hear you have sailed. All here are well and hearty. The Baronet and I propose to go up to the Castle to-morrow to fix on the most convenient floor of the Crown House for your mansion, in hopes you will stand treat for gin-grog and Cheshire cheese on your return, to reward our labor. The whole expense will fall within the Treasury order, and it is important to see things made convenient. I will write a long letter to the Duke to Lisbon. Yours ever,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—No news here, but that the goodly hulk of conceit and tallow, which was called Macculloch, of the Royal Hotel, Prince's Street, was put to bed dead-drunk on Wednesday night, and taken out the next morning dead-by-itself-dead. Mair skaith at Sheriffmuir.

TO J. RICHARDSON, ESQ., FLUDYER STREET, WESTMINSTER.

Edinburgh, 18th January, 1819.

My dear Richardson,—Many thanks for your kind letter. I own I did mystify Mrs. **** a little about the report you mention; and I am glad to hear the finesse succeeded. She came up to me with a great overflow of gratitude for the delight and pleasure, and so forth, which she owed to me on account of these books. Now, as she knew very well that I had never owned myself the author, this was not *polite* politeness, and she had no right to force me up into a corner and compel me to tell her a word more than I chose, upon a subject which concerned no one but myself—and I have no notion of being pumped by any old dowager Lady of Session, male or female. So I gave in dilatory defences, under protestation to add and eik; for I trust, in learning a new slang, you have not forgot the old. In plain words, I denied the charge, and as she insisted to know who else *could* write these novels, I suggested Adam Ferguson as a person having all the information and capacity necessary for that purpose. But the inference that he *was* the author was of her own deducing; and thus ended her attempt, notwithstanding her having primed the pump with a good dose of flattery. It is remarkable, that among all my real friends to whom I did not choose to communicate this matter, not one ever thought it proper or delicate to tease me about it. Respecting the knighthood, I can only say, that coming as it does, and I finding myself and my family in circumstances which will not render the *petit titre* ridiculous, I think there would be more vanity in declining than in accepting what is offered to me by the express wish of the Sovereign as a mark of favor and distinction. Will you be so kind as to inquire and let me know what the fees, etc., of a

baronetcy amount to—for I must provide myself accordingly, not knowing exactly when this same title may descend upon me. I am afraid the sauce is rather smart. I should like also to know what is to be done respecting registration of arms and so forth. Will you make these inquiries for me *sotto voce*? I should not suppose, from the persons who sometimes receive this honor, that there is any inquiry about descent or genealogy; mine were decent enough folks, and enjoyed the honor in the seventeenth century, so I shall not be first of the title; and it will sound like that of a Christian knight, as Sir Sidney Smith said.

I had a letter from our immortal Joanna some fortnight since, when I was enjoying myself at Abbotsford. Never was there such a season, flowers springing, birds singing, grubs eating the wheat —as if it was the end of May. After all, nature had a grotesque and inconsistent appearance, and I could not help thinking she resembled a withered beauty who persists in looking youthy, and dressing conform thereto. I thought the loch should have had its blue frozen surface, and russet all about it, instead of an unnatural gayety of green. So much are we the children of habit, that we cannot always enjoy thoroughly the alterations which are most for our advantage.—They have filled up the historical chair here. I own I wish it had been with our friend Campbell, whose genius is such an honor to his country. But he has cast anchor I suppose in the south. Your friend, Mrs. Scott, was much cast down with her brother's death. His bequest to my family leaves my own property much at my own disposal, which is pleasant enough. I was foolish enough sometimes to be vexed at the prospect of my library being sold *sub hasta*, which is now less likely to happen. I always am, most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

On the 15th of February, 1819, Scott witnessed the first representation, on the Edinburgh boards, of the most meritorious and successful of all the *Terryfications*, though Terry himself was not the manufacturer. The drama of Rob Roy will never again be got up so well, in all its parts, as it then was by William Murray's company; the manager's own *Captain Thornton* was excellent—and so was the *Dugald Creature* of a Mr. Duff—there was also a

good *Mattie*—(about whose equipment, by the bye, Scott felt such interest that he left his box between the acts to remind Mr. Murray that she "must have a mantle with her lanthorn;")—but the great and unrivalled attraction was the personification of *Bailie Jarvie*, by Charles Mackay, who, being himself a native of Glasgow, entered into the minutest peculiarities of the character with high *gusto*, and gave the west-country dialect in its most racy perfection. It was extremely diverting to watch the play of Scott's features during this admirable realization of his conception; and I must add, that the behavior of the Edinburgh audience on all such occasions, while the secret of the novels was preserved, reflected great honor on their good taste and delicacy of feeling. He seldom, in those days, entered his box without receiving some mark of general respect and admiration; but I never heard of any pretext being laid hold of to connect these demonstrations with the piece he had come to witness, or, in short, to do or say anything likely to interrupt his quiet enjoyment of the evening in the midst of his family and friends. The Rob Roy had a continued run of forty-one nights, during February and March; and it was played once a week, at least, for many years afterwards. Mackay, of course, always selected it for his benefit;—and I now print from Scott's MS. a letter, which, no doubt, reached the mimic Bailie in the handwriting of one of the Ballantynes, on the first of these occurrences:—

TO MR. CHARLES MACKAY, THEATRE-ROYAL,
EDIN^{R}.

(*Private.*)

> Friend Mackay,—My lawful occasions having brought me from my residence at Gandercleuch to this great city, it was my lot to fall into company with certain friends, who impetrated from me a consent to behold the stage-play, which hath been framed forth of an history entitled Rob (*seu potius* Robert) Roy; which history, although it existeth not in mine erudite work, entitled Tales of my Landlord, hath nathless a near relation in style and structure to those pleasant narrations. Wherefore, having surmounted those arguments whilk were founded upon the unseemliness of a personage in my place and profession appearing in an open stage-play house, and having buttoned the terminations of my cravat

into my bosom, in order to preserve mine incognito, and indued an outer coat over mine usual garments, so that the hue thereof might not betray my calling, I did place myself (much elbowed by those who little knew whom they did incommode) in that place of the Theatre called the two-shilling gallery, and beheld the show with great delectation, even from the rising of the curtain to the fall thereof.

Chiefly, my facetious friend, was I enamored of the very lively representation of Bailie Nicol Jarvie, in so much that I became desirous to communicate to thee my great admiration thereof, nothing doubting that it will give thee satisfaction to be apprised of the same. Yet further, in case thou shouldst be of that numerous class of persons who set less store by good words than good deeds, and understanding that there is assigned unto each stage-player a special night, called a benefit (it will do thee no harm to know that the phrase cometh from two Latin words, *bene* and *facio*), on which their friends and patrons show forth their benevolence, I now send thee mine in the form of a five-ell web (*hoc jocose*, to express a note for £5), as a meet present for the Bailie, himself a weaver, and the son of a worthy deacon of that craft. The which propine I send thee in token that it is my purpose, business and health permitting, to occupy the central place of the pit on the night of thy said beneficiary or benefit.

Friend Mackay! from one, whose profession it is to teach others, thou must excuse the freedom of a caution. I trust thou wilt remember that, as excellence in thine art cannot be attained without much labor, so neither can it be extended, or even maintained, without constant and unremitted exertion; and further, that the decorum of a performer's private character (and it gladdeth me to hear that thine is respectable) addeth not a little to the value of his public exertions.

Finally, in respect there is nothing perfect in this world,—at least I have never received a wholly faultless version from the very best of my pupils—I pray thee not to let Rob Roy twirl thee around in the ecstasy of thy joy, in regard it oversteps the limits of nature, which otherwise thou so sedulously preservest in thine

admirable national portraiture of Bailie Nicol Jarvie.—I remain thy sincere friend and well-wisher,

Jedediah Cleishbotham.

Chapter XLIV

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1819

It had been Scott's purpose to spend the Easter vacation in London, and receive his baronetcy; but this was prevented by the serious recurrence of the malady which so much alarmed his friends in the early part of the year 1817, and which had continued ever since to torment him at intervals. The subsequent correspondence will show that afflictions of various sorts were accumulated on his head at the same period:—

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, DITTON PARK, WINDSOR.

Edinburgh, 4th March, 1819.

My dear Lord,—The Lord President tells me he has a letter from his son, Captain Charles Hope, R. N., who had just taken leave of our High Chief, upon the deck of the Liffey. He had not seen the Duke for a fortnight, and was pleasingly surprised to find his health and general appearance so very much improved. For my part, having watched him with such unremitting attention, I feel very confident in the effect of a change of air and of climate. It is with great pleasure that I find the Duke has received an answer from me respecting a matter about which he was anxious, and on which I could make his mind quite easy. His Grace wished Adam Ferguson to assist him as his confidential secretary; and with all the scrupulous delicacy that belongs to his character, he did not like to propose this, except through my medium as a common

friend. Now, I can answer for Adam, as I can for myself, that he will have the highest pleasure in giving assistance in every possible way the Duke can desire; and if forty years' intimacy can entitle one man to speak for another, I believe the Duke can find nowhere a person so highly qualified for such a confidential situation. He was educated for business, understands it well, and was long a military secretary;—his temper and manners your Lordship can judge as well as I can, and his worth and honor are of the very first water. I confess I should not be surprised if the Duke should wish to continue the connection even afterwards, for I have often thought that two hours' letter-writing, which is his Grace's daily allowance, is rather worse than the duty of a Clerk of Session, because there is no vacation. Much of this might surely be saved by an intelligent friend, on whose style of expression, prudence, and secrecy, his Grace could put perfect reliance. Two words marked on any letter by his own hand would enable such a person to refuse more or less positively—to grant directly or conditionally—or, in short, to maintain the exterior forms of the very troublesome and extensive correspondence which his Grace's high situation entails upon him. I think it is Monsieur le Duc de Saint-Simon who tells us of one of Louis XIV.'s ministers *qu'il avoit la plume*—which he explains by saying that it was his duty to imitate the King's handwriting so closely, as to be almost undistinguishable, and make him on all occasions *parler très noblement*. I wonder how the Duke gets on without such a friend. In the mean time, however, I am glad I can assure him of Ferguson's willing and ready assistance while abroad; and I am happy to find still further that he had got that assurance before they sailed, for tedious hours occur on board of ship, when it will serve as a relief to talk over any of the private affairs which the Duke wishes to entrust to him.

I have been very unwell from a visitation of my old enemy, the cramp in my stomach, which much resembles, as I conceive, the process by which *the deil* would make one's *king's-hood* into a *spleuchan*, according to the anathema of Burns. Unfortunately, the opiates which the medical people think indispensable to relieve spasms, bring on a habit of body which has to be

counteracted by medicines of a different tendency, so as to produce a most disagreeable see-saw—a kind of pull-devil, pull-baker contention, the field of battle being my unfortunate *præcordia*. I am better to-day, and I trust shall be able to dispense with these alternations. I still hope to be in London in April.

I will write to the Duke regularly, for distance of place acts in a contrary ratio on the mind and on the eye: trifles, instead of being diminished, as in prospect, become important and interesting, and therefore he shall have a budget of them. Hogg is here busy with his Jacobite songs. I wish he may get handsomely through, for he is profoundly ignorant of history, and it is an awkward thing to read in order that you may write. I give him all the help I can, but he sometimes poses me. For instance, he came yesterday, open mouth, inquiring what great dignified clergyman had distinguished himself at Killiecrankie—not exactly the scene where one would have expected a churchman to shine—and I found, with some difficulty, that he had mistaken Major-General Canon, called, in Kennedy's Latin Song, *Canonicus Gallovidiensis*, for the canon of a cathedral. *Ex ungue leonem.* Ever, my dear Lord, your truly obliged and faithful

Walter Scott.

Before this letter reached Lord Montagu, his brother had sailed for Lisbon. The Duke of Wellington had placed his house in that capital (the Palace *das Necessidades*) at the Duke of Buccleuch's disposal; and in the affectionate care and cheerful society of Captain Ferguson, the invalid had every additional source of comfort that his friends could have wished for him. But the malady had gone too far to be arrested by a change of climate; and the letter which he had addressed to Scott, when about to embark at Portsmouth, is endorsed with these words: "*The last I ever received from my dear friend the Duke of Buccleuch.—Alas! alas!*" The principal object of this letter was to remind Scott of his promise to sit to Raeburn for a portrait, to be hung up in that favorite residence where the Duke had enjoyed most of his society. "My prodigious undertaking," writes his Grace, "of a west wing at Bowhill, is begun. A library of forty-one feet by twenty-one is to be added to the present drawing-room. A space for one picture is reserved over the fireplace, and in this warm situation I intend to place the Guardian of

Literature. I should be happy to have my friend Maida appear. It is now almost proverbial, 'Walter Scott and his Dog.' Raeburn should be warned that I am as well acquainted with my friend's hands and arms as with his nose—and Vandyke was of my opinion. Many of R.'s works are shamefully finished—the face studied, but everything else neglected. This is a fair opportunity of producing something really worthy of his skill."

I shall insert by and by Scott's answer—which never reached the Duke's hand—with another letter of the same date to Captain Ferguson; but I must first introduce one, addressed a fortnight earlier to Mr. Southey, who had been distressed by the accounts he received of Scott's health from an American traveller, Mr. George Ticknor of Boston—a friend, and worthy to be such, of Mr. Washington Irving. The Poet Laureate, by the way, had adverted also to an impudent trick of a London bookseller, who shortly before this time announced certain volumes of Grub Street manufacture, as "A New Series of the Tales of my Landlord," and who, when John Ballantyne, as the "agent for the Author of Waverley," published a declaration that the volumes thus advertised were not from that writer's pen, met John's declaration by an audacious rejoinder—impeaching his authority, and asserting that nothing but the personal appearance in the field of the gentleman for whom Ballantyne pretended to act, could shake his belief that he was himself in the confidence of the true Simon Pure. This affair gave considerable uneasiness at the time, and for a moment the dropping of Scott's mask seems to have been pronounced advisable by both Ballantyne and Constable. But he was not to be worked upon by such means as these. He calmly replied, "The author who lends himself to such a trick must be a blockhead—let them publish, and that will serve our purpose better than anything we ourselves could do." I have forgotten the names of the "tales," which, being published accordingly, fell still-born from the press. Mr. Southey had likewise dropped some allusions to another newspaper story of Scott's being seriously engaged in a dramatic work—a rumor which probably originated in the assistance he had lent to Terry in some of the recent highly popular adaptations of his novels to the purposes of the stage; though it is not impossible that some hint of the *Devorgoil* matter may have transpired. "It is reported," said the Laureate, "that you are about to bring forth a play, and I am greatly in hopes it may be true; for I am verily persuaded that in this course you might run as brilliant a career as you have already done in narrative—both in prose and rhyme;—for as for

believing that you have a double in the field—not I! Those same powers would be equally certain of success in the drama, and were you to give them a dramatic direction, and reign for a third seven years upon the stage, you would stand alone in literary history. Indeed already I believe that no man ever afforded so much delight to so great a number of his contemporaries in this or in any other country. God bless you, my dear Scott, and believe me ever yours affectionately, R. S." Mr. Southey's letter had further announced his wife's safe delivery of a son; the approach of the conclusion of his History of Brazil; and his undertaking of the Life of Wesley.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., KESWICK.

Abbotsford, 4th April, 1819.

My dear Southey,—Tidings from you must be always acceptable, even were the bowl in the act of breaking at the fountain—and my health is at present very *totterish*. I have gone through a cruel succession of spasms and sickness, which have terminated in a special fit of the jaundice, so that I might sit for the image of Plutus, the god of specie, so far as complexion goes. I shall like our American acquaintance the better that he has sharpened your remembrance of me, but he is also a wondrous fellow for romantic lore and antiquarian research, considering his country. I have now seen four or five well-lettered Americans, ardent in pursuit of knowledge, and free from the ignorance and forward presumption which distinguish many of their countrymen. I hope they will inoculate their country with a love of letters, so nearly allied to a desire of peace and a sense of public justice—virtues to which the great Transatlantic community is more strange than could be wished. Accept my best and most sincere wishes for the health and strength of your latest pledge of affection. When I think what you have already suffered, I can imagine with what mixture of feelings this event must necessarily affect you; but you need not to be told that we are in better guidance than our own. I trust in God this late blessing will be permanent, and inherit your talents and virtues. When I look around me, and see how many men seem to make it their pride to misuse high qualifications, can

I be less interested than I truly am in the fate of one who has uniformly dedicated his splendid powers to maintaining the best interests of humanity? I am very angry at the time you are to be in London, as I must be there in about a fortnight, or so soon as I can shake off this depressing complaint, and it would add not a little that I should meet you there. My chief purpose is to put my eldest son into the army. I could have wished he had chosen another profession, but have no title to combat a choice which would have been my own had my lameness permitted. Walter has apparently the dispositions and habits fitted for the military profession, a very quiet and steady temper, an attachment to mathematics and their application, good sense, and uncommon personal strength and activity, with address in most exercises, particularly horsemanship.

—I had written thus far last week when I was interrupted, first by the arrival of our friend Ticknor with Mr. Cogswell, another well-accomplished Yankee—(by the bye, we have them of all sorts, *e. g.*, one Mr. ****, rather a fine man, whom the girls have christened, with some humor, the Yankee Doodle *Dandie*). They have had Tom Drum's entertainment, for I have been seized with one or two successive *crises* of my cruel malady, lasting in the utmost anguish from eight to ten hours. If I had not the strength of a team of horses, I could never have fought through it, and through the heavy fire of medical artillery, scarce less exhausting —for bleeding, blistering, calomel, and ipecacuanha have gone on without intermission—while, during the agony of the spasms, laudanum became necessary in the most liberal doses, though inconsistent with the general treatment. I did not lose my senses, because I resolved to keep them, but I thought once or twice they would have gone overboard, top and top-gallant. I should be a great fool, and a most ungrateful wretch, to complain of such inflictions as these. My life has been, in all its private and public relations, as fortunate perhaps as was ever lived, up to this period; and whether pain or misfortune may lie behind the dark curtain of futurity, I am already a sufficient debtor to the bounty of Providence to be resigned to it. Fear is an evil that has never mixed with my nature, nor has even unwonted good fortune

rendered my love of life tenacious; and so I can look forward to the possible conclusion of these scenes of agony with reasonable equanimity, and suffer chiefly through the sympathetic distress of my family.

—Other ten days have passed away, for I would not send this Jeremiad to tease you, while its termination seemed doubtful. For the present,

> "The game is done—I've won, I've won,
> Quoth she, and whistles thrice."

I am this day, for the first time, free from the relics of my disorder, and, except in point of weakness, perfectly well. But no broken-down hunter had ever so many sprung sinews, whelks, and bruises. I am like Sancho after the doughty affair of the Yanguesian Carriers, and all through the unnatural twisting of the muscles under the influence of that *Goule*, the cramp. I must be swathed in Goulard and Rosemary spirits—*probatum est*.

I shall not fine and renew a lease of popularity upon the theatre. To write for low, ill-informed, and conceited actors, whom you must please, for your success is necessarily at their mercy, I cannot away with. How would you, or how do you think I should relish being the object of such a letter as Kean wrote t'other day to a poor author, who, though a pedantic blockhead, had at least the right to be treated as a gentleman by a copper-laced, twopenny tearmouth, rendered mad by conceit and success? Besides, if this objection were out of the way, I do not think the character of the audience in London is such that one could have the least pleasure in pleasing them. One half come to prosecute their debaucheries, so openly that it would degrade a bagnio. Another set to snooze off their beef-steaks and port wine; a third are critics of the fourth column of the newspaper; fashion, wit, or literature, there is not; and, on the whole, I would far rather write verses for mine honest friend Punch and his audience. The only thing that could tempt me to be so silly, would be to assist a friend in such a degrading task who was to have the whole profit and shame of it.

Have you seen decidedly the most full and methodized collection of Spanish romances (ballads) published by the industry of Depping (Altenburgh and Leipsic), 1817? It is quite delightful. Ticknor had set me agog to see it, without affording me any hope it could be had in London, when by one of these fortunate chances which have often marked my life, a friend, who had been lately on the Continent, came unexpectedly to inquire for me, and plucked it forth *par manière de cadeau*. God prosper you, my dear Southey, in your labors; but do not work too hard—*experto crede*. This conclusion, as well as the confusion of my letter, like the Bishop of Grenada's sermon, savors of the apoplexy. My most respectful compliments attend Mrs. S.

Yours truly,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—I shall long to see the conclusion of the Brazil history, which, as the interest comes nearer, must rise even above the last noble volume. Wesley you alone can touch; but will you not have the hive about you? When I was about twelve years old, I heard him preach more than once, standing on a chair, in Kelso churchyard. He was a most venerable figure, but his sermons were vastly too colloquial for the taste of Saunders. He told many excellent stories. One I remember, which he said had happened to him at Edinburgh. "A drunken dragoon," said Wesley, "was commencing an assertion in military fashion, G—d eternally d—n me, just as I was passing. I touched the poor man on the shoulder, and when he turned round fiercely, said calmly, you mean *God bless you*." In the mode of telling the story he failed not to make us sensible how much his patriarchal appearance, and mild yet bold rebuke, overawed the soldier, who touched his hat, thanked him, and, I think, came to chapel that evening.

TO ROBERT SHORTREED, ESQ., SHERIFF-SUBSTITUTE, ETC., JEDBURGH.

Abbotsford, 13th April, 1819.

Dear Bob,—I am very desirous to procure, and as soon as possible, Mrs. Shortreed's excellent receipt for making yeast. The Duke of Buccleuch complains extremely of the sour yeast at Lisbon as disagreeing with his stomach, and I never tasted half such good bread as Mrs. Shortreed has baked at home. I am sure you will be as anxious as I am that the receipt should be forwarded to his Grace as soon as possible. I remember Mrs. Shortreed giving a most distinct account of the whole affair. It should be copied over in a very distinct hand, lest Monsieur Florence makes blunders.

I am recovering from my late indisposition, but as weak as water. To write these lines is a fatigue. I scarce think I can be at the circuit at all—certainly only for an hour or two. So on this occasion I will give Mrs. Shortreed's kind hospitality a little breathing time. I am tired even with writing these few lines. Yours ever,

Walter Scott.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH,
ETC., LISBON.

Abbotsford, 15th April, 1819.

My dear Lord Duke,—How very strange it seems that this should be the first letter I address to your Grace, and you so long absent from Scotland, and looking for all the news and nonsense of which I am in general such a faithful reporter. Alas, I have been ill—very—very ill—only Dr. Baillie says there is nothing of consequence about my malady *except the pain*—a pretty exception—said pain being intense enough to keep me roaring as loud as your Grace's *ci-devant* John of Lorn, and of, generally speaking, from six to eight hours' incessant duration, only varied by intervals of deadly sickness. Poor Sophia was alone with me for some time, and managed a half-distracted pack of servants with spirit, and sense, and presence of mind, far beyond her years, never suffering her terror at seeing me in a state so new to her, and so alarming, to divert her mind an instant from what was fit and proper to be done. Pardon this side compliment to your

Grace's little Jacobite, to whom you have always been so kind. If sympathy could have cured me, I should not have been long ill. Gentle and simple were all equally kind, and even old Tom Watson crept down from Falshope to see how I was coming on, and to ejaculate "if anything ailed the Shirra, it would be sair on the Duke." The only unwelcome resurrection was that of old ****, whose feud with me (or rather dryness) I had well hoped was immortal; but he came jinking over the moor with daughters and ponies, and God knows what, to look after my precious health. I cannot tolerate that man; it seems to me as if I hated him for things not only past and present, but for some future offence, which is as yet in the womb of fate.

I have had as many remedies sent me for cramp and jaundice as would set up a quack doctor: three from Mrs. Plummer, each better than the other—one at least from every gardener in the neighborhood—besides all sorts of recommendations to go to Cheltenham, to Harrowgate, to Jericho for aught I know. Now if there is one thing I detest more than another, it is a watering-place, unless a very pleasant party be previously formed, when, as Tony Lumpkin says, "a gentleman may be in a concatenation." The most extraordinary recipe was that of my Highland piper, John Bruce, who spent a whole Sunday in selecting twelve stones from twelve *south-running* streams, with the purpose that I should sleep upon them, and be whole. I caused him to be told that the recipe was infallible, but that it was absolutely necessary to success that the stones should be wrapt up in the petticoat of a widow who had never wished to marry again; upon which the piper renounced all hope of completing the charm. I had need of a softer couch than Bruce had destined me, for so general was the tension of the nerves all over the body, although the pain of the spasms in the stomach did not suffer the others to be felt, that my whole left leg was covered with swelling and inflammation, arising from the unnatural action of the muscles, and I had to be carried about like a child. My right leg escaped better, the muscles there having less irritability, owing to its lame state. Your Grace may imagine the energy of pain in the nobler parts, when cramps in the extremities, sufficient to produce such effects, were

unnoticed by me during their existence. But enough of so disagreeable a subject.

Respecting the portrait, I shall be equally proud and happy to sit for it, and hope it may be so executed as to be in some degree worthy of the preferment to which it is destined. But neither my late golden hue (for I was covered with jaundice), nor my present silver complexion (looking much more like a spectre than a man), will present any idea of my quondam beef-eating physiognomy. I must wait till the *age of brass*, the true juridical bronze of my profession, shall again appear on my frontal. I hesitate a little about Raeburn, unless your Grace is quite determined. He has very much to do; works just now chiefly for cash, poor fellow, as he can have but a few years to make money; and has twice already made a very chowder-headed person of me. I should like much (always with your approbation) to try Allan, who is a man of real genius, and has made one or two glorious portraits, though his predilection is to the historical branch of the art. We did rather a handsome thing for him, considering that in Edinburgh we are neither very wealthy nor great amateurs. A hundred persons subscribed ten guineas apiece to raffle for his fine picture of the Circassian Chief selling Slaves to the Turkish Pacha—a beautiful and highly poetical picture. There was another small picture added by way of second prize, and, what is curious enough, the only two peers on the list, Lord Wemyss and Lord Fife, both got prizes. Allan has made a sketch which I shall take to town with me when I can go, in hopes Lord Stafford, or some other picture-buyer, may fancy it, and order a picture. The subject is the murder of Archbishop Sharp on Magus Moor, prodigiously well treated. The savage ferocity of the assassins, crowding one on another to strike at the old prelate on his knees—contrasted with the old man's figure—and that of his daughter endeavoring to interpose for his protection, and withheld by a ruffian of milder mood than his fellows:—the dogged fanatical severity of Rathillet's countenance, who remained on horseback, witnessing, with stern fanaticism, the murder he did not choose to be active in, lest it should be said that he struck out of private revenge—are all amazingly well combined in the sketch. I question if the artist can

bring them out with equal spirit in the painting which he meditates. Sketches give a sort of fire to the imagination of the spectator, who is apt to fancy a great deal more for himself, than the pencil, in the finished picture, can possibly present to his eye afterwards.—Constable has offered Allan three hundred pounds to make sketches for an edition of the Tales of my Landlord, and other novels of that cycle, and says he will give him the same sum next year, so, from being pinched enough, this very deserving artist suddenly finds himself at his ease. He was long at Odessa with the Duke of Richelieu, and is a very entertaining person.

I saw with great pleasure Wilkie's sketch of your Grace, and I think when I get to town I shall coax him out of a copy, to me invaluable. I hope, however, when you return, you will sit to Lawrence. We should have at least one picture of your Grace from the real good hand. Sooth to speak, I cannot say much for the juvenile representations at Bowhill and in the library at Dalkeith. Return, however, with the original features in good health, and we shall not worry you about portraits. The library at Bowhill will be a delightful room, and will be some consolation to me who must, I fear, lose for some time the comforts of the eating-room, and substitute panada and toast and water for the bonny haunch and buxom bottle of claret. Truth is, I must make great restrictions on my creature-comforts, at least till my stomach recovers its tone and ostrich-like capacity of digestion. Our spring here is slow, but not unfavorable: the country looking very well, and my plantings for the season quite completed. I have planted quite up two little glens, leading from the Aide-de-Camp's habitation up to the little loch, and expect the blessings of posterity for the shade and shelter I shall leave, where, God knows, I found none.

It is doomed this letter is not to close without a request. I conclude your Grace has already heard from fifty applicants that the kirk of Middlebie is vacant, and I come forward as the fifty-first (always barring prior engagements and better claims) in behalf of George Thomson, a son of the minister of Melrose, being the grinder of my boys, and therefore deeply entitled to my gratitude and my good offices, as far as they can go. He is nearer

Parson Abraham Adams than any living creature I ever saw—very learned, very religious, very simple, and extremely absent. His father, till very lately, had but a sort of half stipend, during the incumbency of a certain notorious Mr. MacLagan, to whom he acted only as assistant. The poor devil was brought to the grindstone (having had the want of precaution to beget a large family), and became the very figure of a fellow who used to come upon the stage to sing "Let us all be unhappy together." This poor lad George was his saving angel, not only educating himself, but taking on him the education of two of his brothers, and maintaining them out of his own scanty pittance. He is a sensible lad, and by no means a bad preacher, a stanch Anti-Gallican, and orthodox in his principles. Should your Grace find yourself at liberty to give countenance to this very innocent and deserving creature, I need not say it will add to the many favors you have conferred on me; but I hope the parishioners will have also occasion to say, "Weel bobbit, George of Middlebie." Your Grace's Aide-de-Camp, who knows young Thomson well, will give you a better idea of him than I can do. He lost a leg by an accident in his boyhood, which spoiled as bold and fine-looking a grenadier as ever charged bayonet against a Frenchman's throat. I think your Grace will not like him the worse for having a spice of military and loyal spirit about him. If you knew the poor fellow, your Grace would take uncommon interest in him, were it but for the odd mixture of sense and simplicity, and spirit and good morals. Somewhat too much of him.

I conclude you will go to Mafra, Cintra, or some of these places, which Baretti describes so delightfully, to avoid the great heats, when the Palace de las Necessidades must become rather oppressive. By the bye, though it were only for the credit of the name, I am happy to learn it has that useful English comfort, a water-closet. I suppose the armorer of the Liffey has already put it in complete repair. Your Grace sees the most secret passages respecting great men cannot be hidden from their friends. There is but little news here but death in the clan. Harden's sister is dead—a cruel blow to Lady Die, who is upwards of eighty-five, and accustomed to no other society. Again, Mrs. Frank Scott, his

uncle's widow, is dead, unable to survive the loss of two fine young men in India, her sons, whose death closely followed each other. All this is sad work; but it is a wicked and melancholy world we live in. God bless you, my dear, dear Lord. Take great care of your health for the sake of all of us. You are the breath of our nostrils, useful to thousands, and to many of these thousands indispensable. I will write again very soon, when I can keep my breast longer to the desk without pain, for I am not yet without frequent relapses, when they souse me into scalding water without a moment's delay, where I lie, as my old *grieve* Tom Purdie said last night, being called to assist at the operation, "like a *haulded saumon*." I write a few lines to the Aide-de-Camp, but I am afraid of putting this letter beyond the bounds of Lord Montagu's frank. When I can do anything for your Grace here, you know I am most pleased and happy.—Ever respectfully and affectionately your Grace's

Walter Scott.

TO CAPTAIN ADAM FERGUSON, ETC., ETC., ETC.

Abbotsford, April 16, 1819.

My dear Adam,—Having only been able last night to finish a long letter to the Chief, I now add a few lines for the Aide-de-Camp. I have had the pleasure to hear of you regularly from Jack, who is very regular in steering this way when packets arrive; and I observe with great satisfaction that you think our good Duke's health is on the mending hand. Climate must operate as an alterative, and much cannot perhaps be expected from it at first. Besides, the great heat must be a serious drawback. But I hope you will try by and by to get away to Cintra, or some of those sequestered retreats where there are shades and cascades to cool the air. I have an idea the country there is eminently beautiful. I am afraid the Duke has not yet been able to visit Torres Vedras, but *you* must be meeting with things everywhere to put you in mind of former scenes. As for the Senhoras, I have little doubt that the difference betwixt your military hard fare and Florence's

high sauces and jellies will make them think that time has rather improved an old friend than otherwise. Apropos of these ticklish subjects. I am a suitor to the Duke, with little expectation of success (for I know his engagements), for the kirk of Middlebie to George Thomson, the very Abraham Adams of Presbytery. If the Duke mentions him to you (not otherwise) pray lend him a lift. With a kirk and a manse the poor fellow might get a good farmer's daughter, and beget grenadiers for his Majesty's service. But as I said before, I dare say all St. Hubert's black pack are in full cry upon the living, and that he has little or no chance. It is something, however, to have tabled him, as better may come of it another day.

All at Huntly Burn well and hearty, and most kind in their attentions during our late turmoils. Bauby came over to offer her services as sick-nurse, and I have drunk scarce anything but delicious ginger-beer of Miss Bell's brewing, since my troubles commenced. They have been, to say the least, damnable; and I think you would hardly know me. When I crawl out on Sibyl Grey, I am the very image of Death on the pale horse—lanthorn-jawed, decayed in flesh, stooping as if I meant to eat the pony's ears, and unable to go above a footpace. But although I have had, and must expect, frequent relapses, yet the attacks are more slight, and I trust I shall mend with the good weather. Spring sets in very pleasantly, and in a settled fashion. I have planted a number of shrubs, etc., at Huntly Burn, and am snodding up the drive of the old farmhouse, enclosing the Toftfield, and making a good road from the parish road to your gate. This I tell you to animate you to pick up a few seeds both of forest trees, shrubs, and vegetables; we will rear them in the hot-house, and divide honorably. *Avis au lecteur.* I have been a good deal entrusted to the care of Sophia, who is an admirable sick-nurse. Mamma has been called to town by two important avocations: to get a cook—no joking matter,—and to see Charles, who was but indifferent, but has recovered. You must have heard of the death of Joseph Hume, David's only son. Christ! what a calamity!—just entering life with the fairest prospects—full of talent, and the heir of an old and considerable family—a fine career before him: all this he was one day, or

rather one hour—or rather in the course of five minutes—so sudden was the death—and then—a heap of earth. His disease is unknown; something about the heart, I believe; but it had no alarming appearance, nothing worse than a cold and sore throat, when convulsions came, and death ensued. It is a complete smash to poor David, who had just begun to hold his head up after his wife's death. But he bears it stoutly, and goes about his business as usual. A woeful case. London is now out of the question with me; I have no prospect of being now able to stand the journey by sea or land; but the best is, I have no pressing business there. The Commie takes charge of Walter's matters—cannot, you know, be in better hands; and Lord Melville talks of gazetting *quam primum*. I will write a long letter very soon, but my back, fingers, and eyes ache with these three pages. All here send love and fraternity. Yours ever most truly,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—By the bye, old Kennedy, the tinker, swam for his life at Jedburgh, and was only, by the sophisticated and timid evidence of a seceding doctor, who differed from all his brethren, saved from a well-deserved gibbet. He goes to botanize for fourteen years. Pray tell this to the Duke, for he was

> "An old soldier of the Duke's,
> And the Duke's old soldier."

Six of his brethren, I am told, were in court, and kith and kin without end. I am sorry so many of the clan are left. The cause of quarrel with the murdered man was an old feud between two gypsy clans, the Kennedies and Irvings, which, about forty years since, gave rise to a desperate quarrel and battle on Hawick Green, in which the grandfathers of both Kennedy, and Irving whom he murdered, were engaged.

In the next of these letters there is allusion to a drama, on the story of The Heart of Mid-Lothian, of which Mr. Terry had transmitted the MS. to Abbotsford—and which ultimately proved very successful. Terry had,

shortly before this time, become the acting manager of the Haymarket Theatre.

TO D. TERRY, ESQ., HAYMARKET, LONDON.

Abbotsford, 18th April, 1819.

Dear Terry,—I am able (though very weak) to answer your kind inquiries. I have thought of you often, and been on the point of writing or dictating a letter, but till very lately I could have had little to tell you of but distress and agony, with constant relapses into my unhappy malady, so that for weeks I seemed to lose rather than gain ground, all food nauseating on my stomach, and my clothes hanging about me like a potato-bogle, with from five or six to ten hours of mortal pain every third day; latterly the fits have been much milder, and have at last given way to the hot bath without any use of opiates; an immense point gained, as they hurt my general health extremely. Conceive my having taken, in the course of six or seven hours, six grains of opium, three of hyoscyamus, near 200 drops of laudanum—and all without any sensible relief of the agony under which I labored. My stomach is now getting confirmed, and I have great hopes the bout is over; it has been a dreadful set-to. I am sorry to hear Mrs. Terry is complaining; you ought not to let her labor, neither at Abbotsford sketches nor at anything else, but to study to keep her mind amused as much as possible. As for Walter, he is a shoot of an *Aik*, and I have no fear of him: I hope he remembers Abbotsford and his soldier namesake.

I send the MS.—I wish you had written for it earlier. My touching, or even thinking of it, was out of the question; my corrections would have smelled as cruelly of the cramp as the Bishop of Grenada's homily did of the apoplexy. Indeed I hold myself inadequate to estimate those criticisms which rest on stage effect, having been of late very little of a play-going person. Would to Heaven these sheets could do for you what Rob Roy has done for Murray; he has absolutely netted upwards of £3000: to be sure, the man who played the Bailie made a piece of acting equal to whatever has been seen in the profession. For my own

part, I was actually electrified by the truth, spirit, and humor which he threw into the part. It was the living Nicol Jarvie: conceited, pragmatical, cautious, generous, proud of his connection with Rob Roy, frightened for him at the same time, and yet extremely desirous to interfere with him as an adviser: the tone in which he seemed to give him up for a lost man after having provoked him into some burst of Highland violence, "Ah Rab! Rab!" was quite inimitable. I do assure you I never saw a thing better played. It is like it may be his only part, for no doubt the Patavinity and knowledge of the provincial character may have aided him much; but still he must be a wonderful fellow; and the houses he drew were tremendous.

I am truly glad you are settled in London—"a rolling stone"—"the proverb is something musty:" it is always difficult to begin a new profession; I could have wished you quartered nearer us, but we shall always hear of you. The becoming stage-manager at the Haymarket I look upon as a great step: well executed, it cannot but lead to something of the same kind elsewhere. You must be aware of stumbling over a propensity which easily besets you from the habit of not having your time fully employed—I mean what the women very expressively call *dawdling*. Your motto must be *Hoc age*. Do instantly whatever is to be done, and take the hours of reflection or recreation after business, and never before it. When a regiment is under march, the rear is often thrown into confusion because the front do not move steadily and without interruption. It is the same thing with business. If that which is first in hand is not instantly, steadily, and regularly despatched, other things accumulate behind till affairs begin to press all at once, and no human brain can stand the confusion: pray mind this, it is one of your few weak points—ask Mrs. Terry else. A habit of the mind it is which is very apt to beset men of intellect and talent, especially when their time is not regularly filled up, but left at their own arrangement. But it is like the ivy round the oak, and ends by limiting, if it does not destroy, the power of manly and necessary exertion. I must love a man so well to whom I offer such a word of advice, that I will not apologize for it, but expect to hear you are become as regular as a Dutch

clock—hours, quarters, minutes, all marked and appropriated. This is a great cast in life, and must be played with all skill and caution.

We wish much to have a plan of the great bed, that we may hang up the tester. Mr. Atkinson offered to have it altered or exchanged; but with the expense of land-carriage and risk of damage, it is not to be thought of. I enclose a letter to thank him for all his kindness. I should like to have the invoice when the things are shipped. I hope they will send them to Leith, and not to Berwick. The plasterer has broke a pane in the armory. I enclose a sheet with the size, the black lines being traced within the lead; and I add a rough drawing of the arms, which are those of my mother. I should like it replaced as soon as possible, for I will set the expense against the careless rascal's account.

I have got a beautiful scarlet paper, inlaid with gold (rather crimson than scarlet) in a present from India, which will hang the parlor to a T; but we shall want some articles from town to enable us to take possession of the parlor—namely, a *carpet*—you mentioned a *wainscot pattern*, which would be delightful—item, *grates* for said parlor and armory—a plain and unexpensive pattern, resembling that in my room (which vents most admirably), and suited by half-dogs for burning wood. The sideboard and chairs you have mentioned. I see Mr. Bullock (George's brother) advertises his museum for sale. I wonder if a good set of *real tilting* armor could be got cheap there. James Ballantyne got me one very handsome bright steel cuirassier of Queen Elizabeth's time, and two less perfect, for £20—dog cheap; they make a great figure in the armory. Hangings, curtains, etc., I believe we shall get as well in Edinburgh as in London; it is in your joiner and cabinet work that your infinite superiority lies.

Write to me if I can do aught about the play—though I fear not: much will depend on Dumbiedikes, in whom Listen will be strong. Sophia has been chiefly my nurse, as an indisposition of little Charles called Charlotte to town. She returned yesterday with him. All beg kind compliments to you and Mrs. Terry and little Walter. I remain your very feeble but convalescent to command,

Walter Scott.

> P. S.—We must not forget the case for the leaves of the table while out of use; without something of the kind, I am afraid they will be liable to injury, which is a pity, as they are so very beautiful.

The accounts of Scott's condition circulated in Edinburgh in the course of this April were so alarming, that I should not have thought of accepting his invitation to revisit Abbotsford, unless John Ballantyne had given me better tidings about the end of the month. He informed me that his "illustrious friend" (for so both the Ballantynes usually spoke of him) was so much recovered as to have resumed his usual literary tasks, though with this difference, that he now, for the first time in his life, found it necessary to employ the hand of another. I have now before me a letter of the 8th April, in which Scott says to Constable: "Yesterday I began to dictate, and did it easily and with comfort. This is a great point, but I must proceed by little and little; last night I had a slight return of the enemy, but baffled him;"—and he again writes to the bookseller on the 11th, "John Ballantyne is here, and returns with copy, which my increasing strength permits me to hope I may now furnish regularly."

The *copy* (as MS. for the press is technically called) which Scott was thus dictating, was that of The Bride of Lammermoor, and his amanuenses were William Laidlaw and John Ballantyne;—of whom he preferred the latter, when he could be at Abbotsford, on account of the superior rapidity of his pen; and also because John kept his pen to the paper without interruption, and, though with many an arch twinkle in his eyes, and now and then an audible smack of his lips, had resolution to work on like a well-trained clerk; whereas good Laidlaw entered with such keen zest into the interest of the story as it flowed from the author's lips, that he could not suppress exclamations of surprise and delight—"Gude keep us a'!—the like o' that!—eh sirs! eh sirs!"—and so forth—which did not promote despatch. I have often, however, in the sequel, heard both these secretaries describe the astonishment with which they were equally affected when Scott began this experiment. The affectionate Laidlaw beseeching him to stop dictating, when his audible suffering filled every pause, "Nay, Willie," he answered, "only see that the doors are fast. I would fain keep all the cry as well as all the wool to ourselves; but as to giving over work, that can only be when I

am in woollen." John Ballantyne told me, that after the first day he always took care to have a dozen of pens made before he seated himself opposite to the sofa on which Scott lay, and that though he often turned himself on his pillow with a groan of torment, he usually continued the sentence in the same breath. But when dialogue of peculiar animation was in progress, spirit seemed to triumph altogether over matter—he arose from his couch and walked up and down the room, raising and lowering his voice, and as it were acting the parts. It was in this fashion that Scott produced the far greater portion of The Bride of Lammermoor—the whole of the Legend of Montrose—and almost the whole of Ivanhoe. Yet, when his health was fairly reëstablished, he disdained to avail himself of the power of dictation, which he had thus put to the sharpest test, but resumed, and for many years resolutely adhered to, the old plan of writing everything with his own hand. When I once, some time afterwards, expressed my surprise that he did not consult his ease, and spare his eyesight at all events, by occasionally dictating, he answered, "I should as soon think of getting into a sedan chair while I can use my legs."

On one of the envelopes in which a chapter of The Bride of Lammermoor reached the printer in the Canongate about this time (May 2, 1819), there is this note in the author's own handwriting:—

> Dear James,—These matters will need more than your usual carefulness. Look sharp—double sharp—my trust is constant in thee:—
>
> > "Tarry woo, tarry woo,
> > Tarry woo is ill to spin;
> > Card it weel, card it weel,
> > Card it weel ere ye begin.
> > When 'tis carded, row'd, and spun,
> > Then the work is hafflins done;
> > But when woven, drest, and clean,
> > It may be cleading for a queen."
>
> So be it,—W. S.

But to return: I rode out to Abbotsford with John Ballantyne towards the end of the spring vacation, and though he had warned me of a sad change in

Scott's appearance, it was far beyond what I had been led to anticipate. He had lost a great deal of flesh—his clothes hung loose about him—his countenance was meagre, haggard, and of the deadliest yellow of the jaundice—and his hair, which a few weeks before had been but slightly sprinkled with gray, was now almost literally snow-white. His eye, however, retained its fire unquenched; indeed it seemed to have gained in brilliancy from the new languor of the other features; and he received us with all the usual cordiality, and even with little perceptible diminishment in the sprightliness of his manner. He sat at the table while we dined, but partook only of some rice pudding; and after the cloth was drawn, while sipping his toast and water, pushed round the bottles in his old style, and talked with easy cheerfulness of the stout battle he had fought, and which he now seemed to consider as won.

"One day there was," he said, "when I certainly began to have great doubts whether the mischief was not getting at my mind—and I'll tell you how I tried to reassure myself on that score. I was quite unfit for anything like original composition; but I thought if I could turn an old German ballad I had been reading into decent rhymes, I might dismiss my worst apprehensions—and you shall see what came of the experiment." He then desired his daughter Sophia to fetch the MS. of The Noble Moringer, as it had been taken down from his dictation, partly by her and partly by Mr. Laidlaw, during one long and painful day while he lay in bed. He read it to us as it stood, and seeing that both Ballantyne and I were much pleased with the verses, he said he should copy them over,—make them a little "tighter about the joints,"—and give me them to be printed in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1816,—to consult him about which volume had partly been the object of my visit; and this promise he redeemed before I left him.

The reading of this long ballad, however (it consists of forty-three stanzas), seemed to have exhausted him: he retired to his bedroom; and an hour or two after, when we were about to follow his example, his family were distressed by the well-known symptoms of another sharp recurrence of his affliction. A large dose of opium and the hot bath were immediately put in requisition. His good neighbor, Dr. Scott of Darnlee, was sent for, and soon attended; and in the course of three or four hours we learned that he was once more at ease. But I can never forget the groans which, during that space, his agony extorted from him. Well knowing the iron strength of his resolution, to find him confessing its extremity, by cries audible not only all

over the house, but even to a considerable distance from it (for Ballantyne and I, after he was put into his bath, walked forth to be out of the way, and heard him distinctly at the bowling-green), it may be supposed that this was sufficiently alarming, even to my companion; how much more to me, who had never before listened to that voice, except in the gentle accents of kindness and merriment.

I told Ballantyne that I saw this was no time for my visit, and that I should start for Edinburgh again at an early hour—and begged he would make my apologies—in the propriety of which he acquiesced. But as I was dressing, about seven next morning, Scott himself tapped at my door, and entered, looking better I thought than at my arrival the day before. "Don't think of going," said he; "I feel hearty this morning, and if my devil does come back again, it won't be for three days at any rate. For the present, I want nothing to set me up except a good trot in the open air, to drive away the accursed vapors of the laudanum I was obliged to swallow last night. You have never seen Yarrow, and when I have finished a little job I have with Jocund Johnny, we shall all take horse and make a day of it." When I said something about a ride of twenty miles being rather a bold experiment after such a night, he answered that he had ridden more than forty, a week before, under similar circumstances, and felt nothing the worse. He added, that there was an election on foot, in consequence of the death of Sir John Riddell, of Riddell, Member of Parliament for the Selkirk district of Burghs, and that the bad health and absence of the Duke of Buccleuch rendered it quite necessary that he should make exertions on this occasion. "In short," said he, laughing, "I have an errand which I shall perform—and as I must pass Newark, you had better not miss the opportunity of seeing it under so excellent a cicerone as the old minstrel,

> 'Whose withered cheek and tresses grey
> Shall yet see many a better day.'"

About eleven o'clock, accordingly, he was mounted, by the help of Tom Purdie, upon a stanch, active cob, yclept Sibyl Grey,—exactly such a creature as is described in Mr. Dinmont's *Dumple*—while Ballantyne sprang into the saddle of noble *Old Mortality*, and we proceeded to the town of Selkirk, where Scott halted to do business at the Sheriff-Clerk's, and begged us to move onward at a gentle pace until he should overtake us. He came up by and by at a canter, and seemed in high glee with the tidings he had heard

about the canvass. And so we rode by Philiphaugh, Carterhaugh, Bowhill, and Newark, he pouring out all the way his picturesque anecdotes of former times—more especially of the fatal field where Montrose was finally overthrown by Leslie. He described the battle as vividly as if he had witnessed it; the passing of the Ettrick at daybreak by the Covenanting General's heavy cuirassiers, many of them old soldiers of Gustavus Adolphus, and the wild confusion of the Highland host when exposed to their charge on an extensive *haugh* as flat as a bowling-green. He drew us aside at *Slain-men's-lee*, to observe the green mound that marks the resting-place of the slaughtered royalists; and pointing to the apparently precipitous mountain, Minchmoor, over which Montrose and his few cavaliers escaped, mentioned that, rough as it seemed, his mother remembered passing it in her early days in a coach and six, on her way to a ball at Peebles—several footmen marching on either side of the carriage to prop it up, or drag it through bogs, as the case might require. He also gave us, with all the dramatic effect of one of his best chapters, the history of a worthy family who, inhabiting at the time of the battle a cottage on his own estate, had treated with particular kindness a young officer of Leslie's army quartered on them for a night or two before. When parting from them to join the troops, he took out a purse of gold, and told the good woman that he had a presentiment he should not see another sun set, and in that case would wish his money to remain in her kind hands; but, if he should survive, he had no doubt she would restore it honestly. The young man returned mortally wounded, but lingered awhile under her roof, and finally bequeathed to her and hers his purse and his blessing. "Such," he said, "was the origin of the respectable lairds of——, now my good neighbors."

The prime object of this expedition was to talk over the politics of Selkirk with one of the Duke of Buccleuch's great store-farmers, who, as the Sheriff had learned, possessed private influence with a doubtful bailie or deacon among the Souters. I forget the result, if ever I heard it. But next morning, having, as he assured us, enjoyed a good night in consequence of this ride, he invited us to accompany him on a similar errand across Bowden Moor, and up the Valley of the Ayle; and when we reached a particularly bleak and dreary point of that journey, he informed us that he perceived in the waste below a wreath of smoke, which was the appointed signal that a *wavering* Souter of some consequence had agreed to give him a personal interview where no Whiggish eyes were likely to observe them;

—and so, leaving us on the road, he proceeded to thread his way westward, across moor and bog, until we lost view of him. I think a couple of hours might have passed before he joined us again, which was, as had been arranged, not far from the village of Lilliesleaf. In that place, too, he had some negotiation of the same sort to look after; and when he had finished it, he rode with us all round the ancient woods of Riddell, but would not go near the house; I suppose lest any of the afflicted family might still be there. Many were his lamentations over the catastrophe which had just befallen them. "They are," he said, "one of the most venerable races in the south of Scotland—they were here long before these glens had ever heard the name of Soulis or of Douglas—to say nothing of Buccleuch: they can show a Pope's bull of the tenth century, authorizing the then Riddell to marry a relation within the forbidden degrees. Here they have been for a thousand years at least; and now all the inheritance is to pass away, merely because one good worthy gentleman would not be contented to enjoy his horses, his hounds, and his bottle of claret, like thirty or forty predecessors, but must needs turn scientific agriculturist, take almost all his fair estate into his own hand, superintend for himself perhaps a hundred ploughs, and try every new nostrum that has been tabled by the quackish *improvers* of the time. And what makes the thing ten times more wonderful is, that he kept day-book and ledger, and all the rest of it, as accurately as if he had been a cheesemonger in the Grassmarket." Some of the most remarkable circumstances in Scott's own subsequent life have made me often recall this conversation—with more wonder than he expressed about the ruin of the Riddells.

I remember he told us a world of stories, some tragical, some comical, about the old lairds of this time-honored lineage; and among others, that of the seven Bibles and the seven bottles of ale, which he afterwards inserted in a note to The Bride of Lammermoor. He was also full of anecdotes about a friend of his father's, a minister of Lilliesleaf, who reigned for two generations the most popular preacher in Teviotdale; but I forget the orator's name. When the original of Saunders Fairford congratulated him in his latter days on the undiminished authority he still maintained—every kirk in the neighborhood being left empty when it was known he was to mount the *tent* at any country sacrament—the shrewd divine answered: "Indeed, Mr. Walter, I sometimes think it's vera surprising. There's aye a talk of this or that wonderfully gifted young man frae the college; but whenever I'm to be

at the same *occasion* with ony o' them, I e'en mount the white horse in the Revelations, and he dings them a'."

Thus Scott amused himself and us as we jogged homewards: and it was the same the following day, when (no election matters pressing) he rode with us to the western peak of the Eildon hills, that he might show me the whole panorama of his Teviotdale, and expound the direction of the various passes by which the ancient forayers made their way into England, and tell the names and the histories of many a monastic chapel and baronial peel, now mouldering in glens and dingles that escape the eye of the traveller on the highways. Among other objects on which he descanted with particular interest, were the ruins of the earliest residence of the Kerrs of Cessford, so often opposed in arms to his own 'chieftains of Branksome, and a desolate little kirk on the adjoining moor, where the Dukes of Roxburghe are still buried in the same vault with the hero who fell at Turn-again. Turning to the northward, he showed us the crags and tower of Smailholm, and behind it the shattered fragment of Ercildoune—and repeated some pretty stanzas ascribed to the last of the real wandering minstrels of this district, by name *Burn*:—

"Sing Erceldoune, and Cowdenknowes,
Where Homes had ance commanding,
And Drygrange, wi' the milk-white ewes,
'Twixt Tweed and Leader standing.
The bird that flees through Redpath trees
And Gledswood banks each morrow,
May chaunt and sing—*sweet Leader's haughs*
And *Bonny howms of Yarrow*.

"But Minstrel Burn cannot assuage
His grief while life endureth,
To see the changes of this age
Which fleeting time procureth;
For mony a place stands in hard case,
Where blythe folks kent nae sorrow,
With Homes that dwelt on Leader side,
And Scotts that dwelt on Yarrow."

That night he had again an attack of his cramp, but not so serious as the former. Next morning he was again at work with Ballantyne at an early hour; and when I parted from him after breakfast, he spoke cheerfully of being soon in Edinburgh for the usual business of his Court. I left him, however, with dark prognostications; and the circumstances of this little visit to Abbotsford have no doubt dwelt on my mind the more distinctly, from my having observed and listened to him throughout under the painful feeling that it might very probably be my last.

On the 5th of May he received the intelligence of the death of the Duke of Buccleuch, which had occurred at Lisbon on the 20th April; and next morning he wrote as follows to his Grace's brother:—

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, DITTON PARK.

Abbotsford, 6th May, 1819.

My dear Lord,—I heard from Lord Melville, by yesterday's post, the calamitous news which your Lordship's very kind letter this moment confirmed, had it required confirmation. For this fortnight past, my hopes have been very faint indeed, and on Wednesday, when I had occasion to go to Yarrow, and my horse turned from habit to go up the avenue at Bowhill, I felt deeply impressed that it was a road I should seldom travel for a long time at least. To your Lordship—let me add, to myself—this is an irreparable loss; for such a fund of excellent sense, high principle, and perfect honor have been rarely combined in the same individual. To the country the inestimable loss will be soon felt, even by those who were insensible to his merits, or wished to detract from them, when he was amongst us. In my opinion he never recovered from his domestic calamity. He wrote to me, a few days after that cruel event, a most affectionate and remarkable letter, explaining his own feelings, and while he begged that I would come to him, assuring me that I should find him the same he would be for the future years of his life. He kept his word; but I could see a grief of that calm and concentrated kind which claims the hours of solitude and of night for its empire, and gradually wastes the springs of life.

Among the thousand painful feelings which this melancholy event had excited, I have sometimes thought of his distance from home. Yet this was done with the best intention, and upon the best advice, and was perhaps the sole chance which remained for reëstablishment. It has pleased God that it has failed; but the best means were used under the best direction, and mere mortality can do no more. I am very anxious about the dear young ladies, whose lives were so much devoted to their father, and shall be extremely desirous of knowing how they are. The Duchess has so much firmness of mind, and Lady M. so much affectionate prudence, that they will want no support that example and kindness can afford. To me the world seems a sort of waste without him. We had many joint objects, constant intercourse, and unreserved communication, so that through him and by him I took interest in many things altogether out of my own sphere, and it seems to me as if the horizon were narrowed and lowered around me. But God's will be done; it is all that brother or friend can or dare say.—I have reluctance to mention the trash which is going on here. Indeed, I think little is altered since I wrote to your Lordship fully, excepting that last night late, Chisholm arrived at Abbotsford from Lithgow, recalled by the news which had somehow reached Edinburgh,—as I suspect by some officiousness of ****. He left Lithgow in such a state that there is no doubt he will carry that burgh, unless Pringle gets Selkirk. He is gone off this morning to try the possible and impossible to get the single vote which he wants, or to prevail on one person to stand neuter. It is possible he may succeed, though this event, when it becomes generally known, will be greatly against his efforts. I should care little more about the matter, were it not for young Walter, and for the despite I feel at the success of speculations which were formed on the probability of the event which has happened. Two sons of ******* came here yesterday, and with their father's philosophical spirit of self-accommodation, established themselves for the night. Betwixt them and Chisholm's noise, my head and my stomach suffered so much (under the necessity of drowning feelings which I could not express), that I had a return of the spasms, and I felt as if a

phantasmagoria was going on around me. Quiet, and some indulgence of natural and solitary sorrow, have made me well. To-day I will ride up to Selkirk and see the magistrates, or the chief of them. It is necessary they should not think the cause deserted. If it is thought proper to suspend the works at Bowhill, perhaps the measure may be delayed till the decision of this matter.

I am sure, my dear Lord, you will command me in all I can do. I have only to regret it is so little. But to show that my gratitude has survived my benefactor, would be the pride and delight of my life. I never thought it possible that a man could have loved another so much, where the distance of rank was so very great. But why recur to things so painful? I pity poor Adam Ferguson, whose affections were so much engaged by the Duke's kindness, and who has with his gay temper a generous and feeling heart. The election we may lose, but not our own credit, and that of the family—that you may rest assured of. My best respects and warmest sympathy attend the dear young ladies, and Lady Montagu. I shall be anxious to know how the Duchess-Dowager does under this great calamity. The poor boy—what a slippery world is before him, and how early a dangerous, because a splendid, lot is presented to him! But he has your personal protection. Believe me, with a deep participation in your present distress, your Lordship's most faithfully,

Walter Scott.

Scott drew up for Ballantyne's newspaper of that week the brief character of Charles, Duke of Buccleuch, which has since been included in his Prose Miscellanies (vol. iv.); and the following letter accompanied a copy of it to Ditton Park:—

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, ETC., ETC., ETC.

My dear Lord,—I send you the newspaper article under a different cover. I have studied so much to suppress my own feelings, and so to give a just, calm, and temperate view of the excellent subject of our present sorrow, such as I conceive might be drawn by one less partially devoted to him, that it has to my

own eye a cold and lifeless resemblance of an original so dear to me. But I was writing to the public, and to a public less acquainted with him than a few years' experience would have made them. Even his own tenantry were but just arrived at the true estimation of his character. I wrote, therefore, to insure credit and belief, in a tone greatly under my own feelings. I have ordered twenty-five copies to be put in a different shape, of which I will send your Lordship twenty. It has been a painful task, but I feel it was due from me. I am just favored with your letter. I beg your Lordship will not write more frequently than you find quite convenient, for you must have now more than enough upon you. The arrangement respecting Boughton is what I expected—the lifeless remains will be laid where the living thoughts had long been. I grieve that I shall not see the last honors, yet I hardly know how I could have gone through the scene.

Nothing in the circumstances could have given me the satisfaction which I receive from your Lordship's purpose of visiting Scotland, and bringing down the dear young ladies, who unite so many and such affecting ties upon the regard and affection of every friend of the family. It will be a measure of the highest necessity for the political interest of the family, and your Lordship will have an opportunity of hearing much information of importance, which really could not be made the subject of writing. The extinction of fire on the hearths of this great house would be putting out a public light and a public beacon in the time of darkness and storms. Ever your most faithful

W. S.

On the 11th of May, Scott returned to Edinburgh, and was present next day at the opening of the Court of Session; when all who saw him were as much struck as I had been at Abbotsford with the lamentable change his illness had produced in his appearance. He was unable to persist in attendance at the Clerks' Table—for several weeks afterwards I think he seldom if ever attempted it;—and I well remember that, when the Third Series of the Tales of my Landlord at length came out (which was on the 10th of June), he was known to be confined to bed, and the book was received amidst the deep general impression that we should see no more of that parentage. On the

13th he wrote thus to Captain Ferguson, who had arrived in London with the remains of the Duke of Buccleuch:—

TO CAPTAIN ADAM FERGUSON, ETC., ETC.,
MONTAGU HOUSE, WHITEHALL.

My dear Adam,—I am sorry to say I have had another eight days' visit of my disorder, which has confined me chiefly to my bed. It is not attended with so much acute pain as in spring, but with much sickness and weakness. It will perhaps shade off into a mild chronic complaint—if it returns frequently with the same violence, I shall break up by degrees, and follow my dear Chief. I do not mean that there is the least cause for immediate apprehension, but only that the constitution must be injured at last, as well by the modes of cure, or rather of relief, as by the pain. My digestion as well as my appetite are for the present quite gone—a change from former days of Leith and Newhaven parties. I thank God I can look at this possibility without much anxiety, and without a shadow of fear.

Will you, if your time serves, undertake two little commissions for me? One respects a kind promise of Lord Montagu to put George Thomson's name on a list for kirk preferment. I don't like to trouble him with letters—he must be overwhelmed with business, and has his dear brother's punctuality in replying even to those which require none. I would fain have that Scottish Abraham Adams provided for if possible. My other request is, that you will, if you can, see Terry, and ask him what is doing about my dining-room chairs, and especially about the carpet, for I shall not without them have the use of what Slender calls "mine own great parlor" this season. I should write to him, but am really unable. I hope you will soon come down—a sight of you would do me good at the worst turn I have yet had. The Baronet is very kind, and comes and sits by me. Everybody likes the Regalia, and I have heard of no one grudging their *hog*—but you must get something better. I have been writing to the Commie about this. He has been inexpressibly kind in Walter's matter, and the Duke of York has promised an early commission. When you see our friend, you can talk over this, and may perhaps save him

> the trouble of writing particular directions what further is to be done. Iago's rule, I suppose—"put money in thy purse." I wish in passing you would ask how the ladies are in Piccadilly. Yours ever,
>
> W. Scott.

The Bride of Lammermoor, and A Legend of Montrose, would have been read with indulgence had they needed it; for the painful circumstances under which they must have been produced were known wherever an English newspaper made its way; but I believe that, except in numerous typical errors, which sprung of necessity from the author's inability to correct any proof sheets, no one ever affected to perceive in either tale the slightest symptom of his malady. Dugald Dalgetty was placed by acclamation in the same rank with Bailie Jarvie—a conception equally new, just, and humorous, and worked out in all the details, as if it had formed the luxurious entertainment of a chair as easy as was ever shaken by Rabelais; and though the character of Montrose himself seemed hardly to have been treated so fully as the subject merited, the accustomed rapidity of the novelist's execution would have been enough to account for any such defect. Of Caleb Balderstone—(the hero of one of the many ludicrous delineations which he owed to the late Lord Haddington, a man of rare pleasantry, and one of the best tellers of old Scotch stories that I ever heard)—I cannot say that the general opinion was then, nor do I believe it ever since has been, very favorable. It was pronounced at the time, by more than one critic, a mere caricature; and though Scott himself would never in after-days admit this censure to be just, he allowed that "he might have sprinkled rather too much parsley over his chicken." But even that blemish, for I grant that I think it a serious one, could not disturb the profound interest and pathos of The Bride of Lammermoor—to my fancy the most pure and powerful of all the tragedies that Scott ever penned. The reader will be well pleased, however, to have, in place of any critical observations on this work, the following particulars of its composition from the notes which its printer dictated when stretched on the bed from which he well knew he was never to rise.

> "The book" (says James Ballantyne) "was not only written, but published, before Mr. Scott was able to rise from his bed; and

> he assured me, that when it was first put into his hands in a complete shape, he did not recollect one single incident, character, or conversation it contained! He did not desire me to understand, nor did I understand, that his illness had erased from his memory the original incidents of the story, with which he had been acquainted from his boyhood. These remained rooted where they had ever been; or, to speak more explicitly, he remembered the general facts of the existence of the father and mother, of the son and daughter, of the rival lovers, of the compulsory marriage, and the attack made by the bride upon the hapless bridegroom, with the general catastrophe of the whole. All these things he recollected just as he did before he took to his bed: but he literally recollected nothing else—not a single character woven by the romancer, not one of the many scenes and points of humor, nor anything with which he was connected as the writer of the work. 'For a long time,' he said, 'I felt myself very uneasy in the course of my reading, lest I should be startled by meeting something altogether glaring and fantastic. However, I recollected that you had been the printer, and I felt sure that you would not have permitted anything of this sort to pass.' 'Well,' I said, 'upon the whole, how did you like it?' 'Why,' he said, 'as a whole, I felt it monstrous gross and grotesque; but still the worst of it made me laugh, and I trusted the good-natured public would not be less indulgent.' I do not think I ever ventured to lead to the discussion of this singular phenomenon again; but you may depend upon it, that what I have now said is as distinctly reported as if it had been taken down in short-hand at the moment; I should not otherwise have ventured to allude to the matter at all. I believe you will agree with me in thinking that the history of the human mind contains nothing more wonderful."

Soon after Scott reappeared in the Parliament House, he came down one Saturday to the vaulted chambers below, where the Advocates' Library was then kept, to attend a meeting of the Faculty, and as the assembly was breaking up, he asked me to walk home with him, taking Ballantyne's printing-office in our way. He moved languidly, and said, if he were to stay

in town many days, he must send for Sibyl Grey; but his conversation was heart-whole; and, in particular, he laughed till, despite his weakness, the stick was flourishing in his hand, over the following almost incredible specimen of that most absurd personage the late Earl of Buchan.

Hearing one morning shortly before this time, that Scott was actually *in extremis*, the Earl proceeded to Castle Street, and found the knocker tied up. He then descended to the door in the area, and was there received by honest Peter Mathieson, whose face seemed to confirm the woeful tidings, for in truth his master was ill enough. Peter told his Lordship that he had the strictest orders to admit no visitor; but the Earl would take no denial, pushed the bashful coachman aside, and elbowed his way upstairs to the door of Scott's bedchamber. He had his fingers upon the handle before Peter could give warning to Miss Scott; and when she appeared to remonstrate against such an intrusion, he patted her on the head like a child, and persisted in his purpose of entering the sickroom so strenuously, that the young lady found it necessary to bid Peter see the Earl downstairs again, at whatever damage to his dignity. Peter accordingly, after trying all his eloquence in vain, gave the tottering, bustling, old, meddlesome coxcomb a single shove,—as respectful, doubt not, as a shove can ever be,—and he accepted that hint, and made a rapid exit. Scott, meanwhile, had heard the confusion, and at length it was explained to him; when, fearing that Peter's gripe might have injured Lord Buchan's feeble person, he desired James Ballantyne, who had been sitting by his bed, to follow the old man home—make him comprehend, if he could, that the family were in such bewilderment of alarm, that the ordinary rules of civility were out of the question—and, in fine, inquire what had been the object of his Lordship's intended visit. James proceeded forthwith to the Earl's house in George Street and found him strutting about his library in a towering indignation. Ballantyne's elaborate demonstrations of respect, however, by degrees softened him, and he condescended to explain himself. "I wished," said he, "to embrace Walter Scott before he died, and inform him that I had long considered it as a satisfactory circumstance that he and I were destined to rest together in the same place of sepulture. The principal thing, however, was to relieve his mind as to the arrangements of his funeral—to show him a plan which I had prepared for the procession—and, in a word, to assure him that I took upon myself the whole conduct of the ceremonial at Dryburgh." He then exhibited to Ballantyne a formal programme, in which,

as may be supposed, the predominant feature was not Walter Scott, but David, Earl of Buchan. It had been settled, *inter alia*, that the said Earl was to pronounce an eulogium over the grave, after the fashion of French Academicians in the *Père la Chaise*.

And this silliest and vainest of busybodies was the elder brother of Thomas and Henry Erskine! But the story is well known of his boasting one day to the late Duchess of Gordon of the extraordinary talents of his family —when her unscrupulous Grace asked him, very coolly, whether the wit had not come by the mother, and been all settled on the younger branches?

Scott, as his letters to be quoted presently will show, had several more attacks of his disorder, and some very severe ones, during the autumn of 1819; nor, indeed, had it quite disappeared until about Christmas. But from the time of his return to Abbotsford in July, when he adopted the system of treatment recommended by a skilful physician (Dr. Dick), who had had large experience in maladies of this kind during his Indian life, the seizures gradually became less violent, and his confidence that he was ultimately to baffle the enemy remained unshaken.

As I had no opportunity of seeing him again until he was almost entirely reëstablished, I shall leave the progress of his restoration to be collected from his correspondence. But I must not forget to set down what his daughter Sophia afterwards told me of his conduct upon one night in June, when he really did despair of himself. He then called his children about his bed, and took leave of them with solemn tenderness. After giving them, one by one, such advice as suited their years and characters, he added: "For myself, my dears, I am unconscious of ever having done any man an injury, or omitted any fair opportunity of doing any man a benefit. I well know that no human life can appear otherwise than weak and filthy in the eyes of God: but I rely on the merits and intercession of our Redeemer." He then laid his hand on their heads, and said, "God bless you! Live so that you may all hope to meet each other in a better place hereafter. And now leave me, that I may turn my face to the wall." They obeyed him; but he presently fell into a deep sleep; and when he awoke from it after many hours, the crisis of extreme danger was felt by himself, and pronounced by his physician, to have been overcome.

Chapter XLV

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Gradual Reëstablishment of Scott's Health.—ivanhoe in Progress.—his Son Walter Joins the Eighteenth Regiment of Hussars.—scott's Correspondence With His Son.—miscellaneous Letters to Mrs. Maclean Clephane, M. W. Hartstonge, J. G. Lockhart, John Ballantyne, John Richardson, Miss Edgeworth, Lord Montagu, Etc.—abbotsford Visited by Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg.—death of Mrs. William Erskine.

1819

Before Scott left Edinburgh, on the 12th of July, he had not only concluded his bargain with Constable for another novel, but, as will appear from some of his letters, made considerable progress in the dictation of Ivanhoe.

That he already felt great confidence on the score of his health may be inferred from his allowing his son, Walter, about the middle of the month, to join the 18th regiment of Hussars in which he had, shortly before, received his commission as Cornet.

Scott's letters to his son, the first of his family that left the house, will merit henceforth a good deal of the reader's attention. Walter was, when he thus quitted Abbotsford to try his chances in the active world, only in the eighteenth year of his age; and the fashion of education in Scotland is such, that he had scarcely ever slept a night under a different roof from his parents, until this separation occurred. He had been treated from his cradle with all the indulgence that a man of sense can ever permit himself to show to any of his children; and for several years he had now been his father's daily companion in all his out-of-doors occupations and amusements. The parting was a painful one; but Scott's ambition centred in the heir of his name, and instead of fruitless pinings and lamentings, he henceforth made it his constant business to keep up such a frank correspondence with the young man as might enable himself to exert over him, when at a distance, the gentle influence of kindness, experience, and wisdom. The series of his letters to his son is, in my opinion, by far the most interesting and valuable,

as respects the personal character and temper of the writer. It will easily be supposed that, as the young officer entered fully into his father's generous views of what their correspondence ought to be, and detailed every little incident of his new career with the same easy confidence as if he had been writing to a friend or elder brother not very widely differing from himself in standing, the answers abound with opinions on subjects with which I have no right to occupy or entertain my readers: but I shall introduce in the prosecution of this work, as many specimens of Scott's paternal advice as I can hope to render generally intelligible without indelicate explanations—and more especially such as may prove serviceable to other young persons when first embarking under their own pilotage upon the sea of life. Scott's manly kindness to his boy, whether he is expressing approbation or censure of his conduct, can require no pointing out; and his practical wisdom was of that liberal order, based on such comprehensive views of man and the world, that I am persuaded it will often be found available to the circumstances of their own various cases, by young men of whatever station or profession.

I shall, nevertheless, adhere as usual to the chronological order; and one or two miscellaneous letters must accordingly precede the first article of his correspondence with the Cornet. He alludes, however, to the youth's departure in the following:—

TO MRS. MACLEAN CLEPHANE OF TORLOISK.

Abbotsford, July 15, 1819.

Dear Mrs. Clephane,—Nothing could give me more pleasure than to hear you are well, and thinking of looking this way. You will find all my things in very different order from when you were here last, and plenty of room for matron and miss, man and maid. We have no engagements, except to Newton Don about the 20th August—if we be alive—no unreasonable proviso in so long an engagement. My health, however, seems in a fair way of being perfectly restored. It is a joke to talk of any other remedy than that forceful but most unpleasant one—*calomel*. I cannot say I ever felt advantage from anything else; and I am perfectly satisfied that, used as an alterative, and taken in very small quantities for a long time, it must correct all the inaccuracies of the biliary organs. At least it has done so in my case more radically than I could have believed possible. I have intermitted the régime for some days, but begin a new course next week for precaution. Dr. Dick, of the East India Company's service, has put me on this course of cure, and says he never knew it fail unless when the liver was irreparably injured. I believe I shall go to Carlsbad next year. If I must go to a watering-place, I should like one where I might hope to see and learn something new myself, instead of being hunted down by some of the confounded lion-catchers who haunt English spas. I have not the art of being savage to those people, though few are more annoyed by them. I always think of Snug the Joiner—

> "——If I should as lion *come in strife*
> Into such place, 't were pity on my life."

I have been delayed in answering your kind letter by Walter's departure from us to join his regiment, the 18th Dragoons. He has chosen a profession for which he is well suited, being of a calm but remarkably firm temper—fond of mathematics, engineering, and all sorts of calculation—clear-headed, and good-natured. When you add to this a good person and good manners, with great

dexterity in horsemanship and all athletic exercises, and a strong constitution, one hopes you have the grounds of a good soldier. My own selfish wish would have been that he should have followed the law; but he really had no vocation that way, wanting the acuteness and liveliness of intellect indispensable to making a figure in that profession. So I am satisfied all is for the best, only I shall miss my gamekeeper and companion in my rides and walks. But so it was, is, and must be—the young must part from the nest, and learn to wing their own way against the storm.

I beg my best and kindest compliments to Lady Compton. Stooping to write hurts me, or I would have sent her a few lines. As I shall be stationary here for all this season, I shall not see her, perhaps, for long enough. Mrs. Scott and the girls join in best love, and I am ever, dear Mrs. Clephane, your faithful and most obedient servant,

Walter Scott.

I have had some hesitation about introducing the next letter—which refers to the then recent publication of a sort of mock-tour in Scotland, entitled Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk. Nobody but a very young and a very thoughtless person could have dreamt of putting forth such a book; yet the Epistles of the imaginary Dr. Morris have been so often denounced as a mere string of libels, that I think it fair to show how much more leniently Scott judged of them at the time. Moreover, his letter is a good specimen of the liberal courtesy with which, on all occasions, he treated the humblest aspirants in literature. Since I have alluded to Peter's Letters at all, I may as well take the opportunity of adding that they were not wholly the work of one hand.

TO J. G. LOCKHART, ESQ., CARNBROE HOUSE, HOLLYTOWN.

Abbotsford, July 19, 1819.

My dear Sir,—*Distinguendum est.* When I receive a book *ex dono* of the author, in the general case I offer my thanks with all haste before I cut a leaf, lest peradventure I should feel more awkward in doing so afterwards, when they must not only be tendered for

the well-printed volumes themselves, and the attention which sent them my way, but moreover for the supposed pleasure I have received from the contents. But with respect to the learned Dr. Morris, the case is totally different, and I formed the immediate resolution not to say a word about that gentleman's labors without having read them at least twice over—a pleasant task, which has been interrupted partly by my being obliged to go down the country, partly by an invasion of the Southron, in the persons of Sir John Shelley, famous on the turf, and his lady. I wish Dr. Morris had been of the party, chiefly for the benefit of a little Newmarket man, called Cousins, whose whole ideas, similes, illustrations, etc., were derived from the course and training stable. He was perfectly good-humored, and I have not laughed more this many a day.

I think the Doctor has got over his ground admirably;—only the general turn of the book is perhaps too favorable, both to the state of our public society, and of individual character:—

> "His fools have their follies so lost in a crowd
> Of virtues and feelings, that folly grows proud."

But it was, in every point of view, right to take this more favorable tone, and to throw a Claude Lorraine tint over our northern landscape. We cannot bear the actual bare truth, either in conversation, or that which approaches nearest to conversation, in a work like the Doctor's, published within the circle to which it refers.

For the rest, the Doctor has fully maintained his high character for force of expression, both serious and comic, and for acuteness of observation—*rem acu tetigit*—and his scalpel has not been idle, though his lenient hand has cut sharp and clean, and poured balm into the wound. What an acquisition it would have been to our general information to have had such a work written, I do not say fifty, but even five-and-twenty years ago; and how much of grave and gay might then have been preserved, as it were, in amber, which have now mouldered away. When I think that at an age not much younger than yours I knew Black, Ferguson, Robertson, Erskine, Adam Smith, John Home, etc.,

etc., and at least saw Burns, I can appreciate better than any one the value of a work which, like this, would have handed them down to posterity in their living colors. Dr. Morris ought, like Nourjahad, to revive every half century, to record the fleeting manners of the age, and the interesting features of those who will be only known to posterity by their works. If I am very partial to the Doctor, which I am not inclined to deny, remember I have been bribed by his kind and delicate account of his visit to Abbotsford. Like old Cumberland, or like my own gray cat, I will e'en purr and put up my back, and enjoy his kind flattery, even when I know it goes beyond my merits.

I wish you would come and spend a few days here, while this delightful weather lasts. I am now so well as quite to enjoy the society of my friends, instead of the woeful pickle in which I was in spring, when you last favored me. It was, however, *dignus vindice nodus*, for no less a deity descended to my aid than the potent Mercury himself, in the shape of calomel, which I have been obliged to take daily, though in small quantities, for these two months past. Notwithstanding the inconveniences of this remedy, I thrive upon it most marvellously, having recovered both sleep and appetite; so when you incline to come this way, you will find me looking pretty *bobbishly*. Yours very truly,

Walter Scott.

On the same day, Scott wrote as follows to John Ballantyne, who had started for London, on his route to Paris in quest of articles for next winter's auction-room—and whose good offices he was anxious to engage on behalf of the Cornet, in case they should happen to be in the metropolis at the same time:—

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE, CARE OF MESSRS. LONGMAN & CO., LONDON.

Abbotsford, July 19, 1819.

Dear John,—I have only to say, respecting matters here, that they are all going on quietly. The first volume is very nearly finished, and the whole will be out in the first or second week of

September. It will be well if you can report yourself in Britain by that time at farthest, as something must be done on the back of this same Ivanhoe.

Walter left us on Wednesday night, and will be in town by the time this reaches you, looking, I fancy, very like a cow in a fremd loaning. He will be heard of at Miss Dumergue's. Pray look after him, and help him about his purchases.

I hope you will be so successful in your foreign journey as to diddle the Edinburgh folk out of some cash this winter. But don't forget September, if you wish to partake the advantages thereof.

I wish you would see what good reprints of old books are come out this year at Triphook's, and send me a note of them.—Yours very truly,

W. Scott.

John Ballantyne found the Cornet in London, and did for him what his father had requested.

TO MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

Abbotsford, July 26, 1819.

Dear John,—I have yours with the news of Walter's rattle-traps, which are abominably extravagant. But there is no help for it but submission. The things seem all such as cannot well be wanted. How the devil they mount them to such a price, the tailors best know. They say it takes *nine* tailors to make a man—apparently, one is sufficient to ruin him. We shall rub through here well enough, though James is rather glumpy and dumpy—chiefly, I believe, because his child is unwell. If you can make any more money for me in London, good and well. I have no spare cash till Ivanhoe comes forth. Yours truly,

W. Scott.

P. S.—Enclosed are sundry letters of introduction for the *ci-devant* Laird of Gilnockie.

TO MISS EDGEWORTH OF EDGEWORTHSTOWN.

Abbotsford, July 21, 1819.

My dear Miss Edgeworth,—When this shall happen to reach your hands, it will be accompanied by a second edition of Walter Scott, a *tall* copy, as collectors say, and bound in Turkey leather, garnished with all sorts of fur and frippery—not quite so well *lettered*, however, as the old and vamped original edition. In other and more intelligible phrase, the tall Cornet of Hussars, whom this will introduce to you, is my eldest son, who is now just leaving me to join his regiment in Ireland. I have charged him, and he is himself sufficiently anxious, to avoid no opportunity of making your acquaintance, as to be known to the good and the wise is by far the best privilege he can derive from my connection with literature. I have always felt the value of having access to persons of talent and genius to be the best part of a literary man's prerogative, and you will not wonder, I am sure, that I should be desirous this youngster should have a share of the same benefit.

I have had dreadful bad health for many months past, and have endured more pain than I thought was consistent with life. But the thread, though frail in some respects, is tough in others; and here am I with renewed health, and a fair prospect of regaining my strength, much exhausted by such a train of suffering.

I do not know when this will reach you, my son's motions being uncertain. But, find you where or when it will, it comes, dear Miss Edgeworth, from the sincere admirer of your genius, and of the patriotic and excellent manner in which it has always been exerted. In which character I subscribe myself ever yours truly,

Walter Scott.

I believe, at the time when the foregoing letter was written, Scott and Miss Edgeworth had never met. The next was addressed to a gentleman whose acquaintance the poet had formed when collecting materials for his edition of Swift. On that occasion Mr. Hartstonge was of great service to Scott—and he appears to have paid him soon afterwards a visit at Abbotsford. Mr. Hartstonge was an amiable and kind-hearted man, and enthusiastically

devoted to literature; but his own poetical talents were undoubtedly of the sort that finds little favor either with gods or columns. He seems to have written shortly before this time to inquire about his old acquaintance's health.

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE, ESQ.,
MOLESWORTH STREET, DUBLIN.

Abbotsford, July 21, 1819.

My dear Sir,—... Fortunately at present my system is pretty strong. In the mean while my family are beginning to get forwards. Walter (you remember my wading into Cauldshiels Loch to save his little frigate from wreck) is now a Cornet of six feet two inches in your Irish 18th Hussars; the regiment is now at Cork, and will probably be next removed to Dublin, so you will see your old friend with a new face; be-furred, be-feathered, and be-whiskered in the highest military *ton*. I have desired him to call upon you, should he get to Dublin on leave, or come there upon duty. I miss him here very much, for he was my companion, gamekeeper, etc., etc., and when one loses one's own health and strength, there are few things so pleasant as to see a son enjoying both in the vigor of hope and promise. Think of this, my good friend, and as you have kind affections to make some good girl happy, settle yourself in life while you are young, and lay up, by so doing, a stock of domestic happiness, against age or bodily decay. There are many good things in life, whatever satirists and misanthropes may say to the contrary; but probably the best of all, next to a conscience void of offence (without which, by the bye, they can hardly exist), are the quiet exercise and enjoyment of the social feelings, in which we are at once happy ourselves, and the cause of happiness to them who are dearest to us.

I have no news to send you from hence. The addition to my house is completed with battlement and bartisan, but the old cottage remains hidden among creepers, until I shall have leisure —*i. e.*, time and money—to build the rest of my mansion—which I will not do hastily, as the present is amply sufficient for accommodation. Adieu, my dear sir; never reckon the degree of my regard by the regularity of my correspondence, for besides the

vile diseases of laziness and procrastination, which have always beset me, I have had of late both pain and languor sufficient to justify my silence. Believe me, however, always most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

The first letter the young Cornet received from his father after mounting his "rattle-traps" was the following:—

TO CORNET WALTER SCOTT, 18TH HUSSARS,
CORK.

Abbotsford, August 1, 1819.

Dear Walter,—I was glad to find you got safe to the hospitable quarters of Piccadilly, and were put on the way of achieving your business well and expeditiously. You would receive a packet of introductory letters by John Ballantyne, to whom I addressed them.

I had a very kind letter two days ago from your Colonel. Had I got it sooner it would have saved some expense in London, but there is no help for it now. As you are very fully provided with all these appointments, you must be particular in taking care of them, otherwise the expense of replacing them will be a great burden. Colonel Murray seems disposed to show you much attention. He is, I am told, rather a reserved man, which indeed is the manner of his family. You will, therefore, be the more attentive to what he says, as well as to answer all advances he may make to you with cordiality and frankness; for if you be shy on the one hand, and he reserved on the other, you cannot have the benefit of his advice, which I hope and wish you may gain. I shall be guided by his opinion respecting your allowance: he stipulates that you shall have only two horses (not to be changed without his consent), and on no account keep a gig. You know of old how I detest that mania of driving wheel-barrows up and down, when a man has a handsome horse, and can ride him. They are both foolish and expensive things, and, in my opinion, are only fit for English bagmen—therefore gig it not, I pray you.

In buying your horses you will be very cautious. I see Colonel Murray has delicacy about assisting you directly in the matter—for he says very truly that some gentlemen make a sort of traffic in horse-flesh—from which his duty and inclination equally lead him to steer clear. But he will take care that you don't buy any that are unfit for service, as in the common course they must be approved by the commandant as *chargers*. Besides which, he will probably give you some private hints, of which avail yourself, as there is every chance of your needing much advice in this business. Two things I preach on my own experience: *1st*, Never to buy an aged horse, however showy. He must have done work, and, at any rate, will be unserviceable in a few years. *2dly*, To buy rather when the horse is something low in condition, that you may the better see all his points. Six years is the oldest at which I would purchase. You will run risk of being jockeyed by knowing gentlemen of your own corps parting with their *experienced* chargers to *oblige* you. Take care of this. Any good-tempered horse learns the dragoon duty in wonderfully short time, and you are rider enough not to want one quite broke in. Look well about you, and out into the country. Excellent horses are bred all through Munster, and better have a clever young one than an old regimental brute foundered by repeated charges and bolts. If you see a brother-officer's horse that pleases you much, and seems reasonable, look particularly how he stands on his forelegs, and for that purpose see him in the stable. If he shifts and shakes a little, have nothing to say to him. This is the best I can advise, not doubting you will be handsomely excised after all. The officer who leaves his corps may be disposing of good horses, and perhaps selling reasonable. One who continues will not, at least should not, part with a good horse without some great advantage.

You will remain at Cork till you have learned your regimental duty, and then probably be despatched to some outquarter. I need not say how anxious I am that you should keep up your languages, mathematics, and other studies. To have lost that which you already in some degree possess—and that which we don't practise we soon forget—would be a subject of unceasing regret to you hereafter. You have good introductions, and don't

neglect to avail yourself of them. Something in this respect your name may do for you—a fair advantage, if used with discretion and propriety. By the way, I suspect you did not call on John Richardson.

The girls were very dull after you left us; indeed the night you went away, Anne had hysterics, which lasted some time. Charles also was down in the mouth, and papa and mamma a little grave and dejected. I would not have you think yourself of too great importance neither, for the greatest personages are not always long missed, and to make a bit of a parody,—

> "Down falls the rain, up gets the sun,
> Just as if Walter were not gone."

We comfort ourselves with the hopes that you are to be happy in the occupation you have chosen, and in your new society. Let me know if there are any well-informed men among them, though I don't expect you to find out that for some time. Be civil to all, till you can by degrees find out who are really best deserving.

I enclose a letter from Sophia, which doubtless contains all the news. St. Boswell's Fair rained miserably, and disappointed the misses. The weather has since been delightful, and harvest advances fast. All here goes its old round—the habits of age do not greatly change, though those of youth do. Mamma has been quite well, and so have I—but I still take calomel. I was obliged to drink some claret with Sir A. Don, Sir John Shelley, and a funny little Newmarket quizzy, called Cousins, whom they brought here with them the other day, but I was not the worse. I wish you had Sir J. S. at your elbow when you are buying your horses—he is a very knowing man on the turf. I like his lady very much. She is perfectly feminine in her manners, has good sense, and plays divinely on the harp; besides all which, she shoots wild boars, and is the boldest horsewoman I ever saw. I saw her at Paris ride like a lapwing, in the midst of all the aide-de-camps and suite of the Duke of Wellington.

Write what your horses come to, etc. Your outfit will be an expensive matter; but once settled, it will be fairly launching you into life in the way you wished, and I trust you will see the

necessity of prudence and a gentlemanlike economy, which consists chiefly in refusing one's self trifling indulgences until we can easily pay for them. Once more, I beg you to be attentive to Colonel Murray and to his lady. I hear of a disease among the moorfowl. I suppose they are dying for grief at your departure.

Ever, my dear boy, your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

7th August, 1819.

Dear Walter,—... I shall be curious to know how you like your brother-officers, and how you dispose of your time. The drills and riding-school will, of course, occupy much of your mornings for some time. I trust, however, you will keep in view drawing, languages, etc. It is astonishing how far even half an hour a day regularly bestowed on one object, will carry a man in making himself master of it. The habit of dawdling away time is easily acquired, and so is that of putting every moment either to use or to amusement.

You will not be hasty in forming intimacies with any of your brother-officers, until you observe which of them are most generally respected, and likely to prove most creditable friends. It is seldom that the people who put themselves hastily forward to please are those most worthy of being known. At the same time you will take care to return all civility which is offered, with readiness and frankness. The Italians have a proverb, which I hope you have not forgot poor Pierrotti's lessons so far as not to comprehend, "*Volto sciolto e pensieri stretti*." There is no occasion to let any one see what you exactly think of him; and it is the less prudent, as you will find reason, in all probability, to change your opinion more than once.

I shall be glad to hear of your being fitted with a good servant. Most of the Irish of that class are scapegraces—drink, steal, and lie like the devil. If you could pick up a canny Scot, it would be well. Let me know about your mess. To drink hard is none of your

habits; but even drinking what is called a certain quantity every day, hurts the stomach, and by hereditary descent yours is delicate. I believe the poor Duke of Buccleuch laid the foundation of that disease which occasioned his premature death in the excesses of Villars's regiment; and I am sorry and ashamed to say, for your warning, that the habit of drinking wine, so much practised when I was a young man, occasioned, I am convinced, many of my cruel stomach complaints. You had better drink a bottle of wine on any particular occasion, than sit and soak and sipple at an English pint every day.

All our bipeds are well. Hamlet had an inflammatory attack, and I began to think he was going mad, after the example of his great namesake, but Willie Laidlaw bled him, and he has recovered. Pussy is very well. Mamma, the girls, and Charlie, join in love. Yours affectionately,

W. S.

P. S.—Always mention what letters of mine you have received, and write to me whatever comes into your head. It is the privilege of great boys when distant that they cannot tire papas by any length of detail upon any subject.

TO THE SAME.

Abbotsford, 13th August, 1819.

My dearest Walter,—I am very much obliged to Colonel Murray for the trouble he has taken on your behalf. I hope he has received the letter which I wrote to him a fortnight since under Mr. Freeling's cover. It enclosed a parcel of letters to you. I took the liberty of asking his advice what allowance you should have to assist you. You know pretty well my circumstances and your own, and that I wish you to be comfortable, but not in any respect extravagant; and this for your own sake, and not for that of money, which I never valued very much, perhaps not so much as I ought to have done. I think by speaking to Colonel Murray you may get at his opinion, and I have so much trust in your honor and affection as to confide in your naming your own allowance.

Meantime, lest the horse should starve while the grass grows, I enclose a cheque upon Messrs. Coutts for £50, to accompt of your first year's allowance. Your paymaster will give you the money for it I dare say. You have to endorse the bill, *i. e.*, write your name on the back of it.

All concerned are pleased with your kind tokens of remembrance from London. Mamma and I like the caricatures very much. I think, however, scarce any of them shows the fancy and talent of old Gilray: he became insane, I suppose by racking his brain in search of extravagant ideas, and was supported in his helpless condition by the woman who keeps the great print-shop in St. James's Street, who had the generosity to remember that she had made thousands by his labor.

Everything here goes on in the old fashion, and we are all as well as possible, saving that Charles rode to Lawrence fair yesterday in a private excursion, and made himself sick with eating gingerbread, whereby he came to disgrace.

Sophia has your letter of the 4th, which she received yesterday. The enclosed will help you to set up shop and to get and pay whatever is necessary. I wish we had a touch of your hand to make the parties rise in the morning, at which they show as little alertness as usual.

I beg you will keep an account of money received and paid. Buy a little book ruled for the purpose, for pounds, shillings, and pence, and keep an account of cash received and expended. The balance ought to be cash in purse, if the book is regularly kept. But any very small expenses you can enter as "Sundries, £0: 3: 6," which saves trouble.

You will find this most satisfactory and useful. But, indeed, arithmetic is indispensable to a soldier who means to rise in his profession. All military movements depend upon calculation of time, numbers, and distance.

Dogs all well—cat sick—supposed with eating birds in their feathers. Sisters, brother, and mamma join in love to the "poor wounded hussa-a-r;"—I dare say you have heard the song; if not, we shall send it for the benefit of the mess. Yours affectionately,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—Yesterday, *the 12th*, would, I suppose, produce some longings after the Peel heights.

In the following letter to Mr. Richardson, we see Scott busied about certain little matters of heraldic importance which had to be settled before his patent of baronetcy could be properly made out. He also alludes to two little volumes, which he edited during this autumn—the Memorials of the Haliburtons, a thin quarto (never published)—and the poems of Patrick Carey, of which he had given specimens some years before in the Annual Register.

TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ., FLUDYER STREET, WESTMINSTER.

Abbotsford, 22d August, 1819.

My dear Richardson,—I am sorry Walter did not get to your kind domicile. But he stayed but about five or six days in London, and great was his haste, as you may well suppose. He had a world of trinkums to get, for you know there goes as much to the man-millinery of a young officer of hussars as to that of an heiress on her bridal day. His complete equipage, horses not included, cost about £360, and if you add a couple of blood horses, it will be £200 more, besides the price of his commission, for the privilege of getting the hardness of his skull tried by a brick-bat at the next meeting of Radical Reformers. I am not much afraid of these folks, however, because I remember 1793 and 1794, when the same ideas possessed a much more formidable class of the people, being received by a large proportion of farmers, shopkeepers, and others, possessed of substance. A mere mob will always be a fire of loose straw; but it is melancholy to think of the individual mischief that may be done. I did not find it quite advisable to take so long a journey as London this summer. I am quite recovered; but my last attack was of so dreadful a nature, that I wish to be quite insured against another—*i. e.*, as much as one can be insured against such a circumstance—before leaving home for any length of time.

To return to the vanities of this world, from what threatened to hurry me to the next: I enclose a drawing of my arms, with the supporters which the heralds here assign me. Our friend Harden seems to wish I would adopt one of his Mer-maidens, otherwise they should be both Moors, as on the left side. I have also added an impression of my seal. You can furnish Sir George Naylor with as much of my genealogy as will serve the present purpose. I shall lose no time in connecting myself by a general service with my grand-uncle, the last Haliburton of Dryburgh Abbey, or Newmains, as they call it. I spoke to the Lyon-office people in Edinburgh. I find my entry there will be an easy matter, the proofs being very pregnant and accessible. I would not stop for a trifling expense to register my pedigree in England, as far as you think may be necessary, to show that it is a decent one. My ancestors were brave and honest men, and I have no reason to be ashamed of them, though they were neither wealthy nor great.

As something of an antiquary and genealogist, I should not like there were any mistakes in this matter, so I send you a small note of my descent by my father and my paternal grandmother, with a memorandum of the proofs by which they may be supported, to which I might add a whole cloud of oral witnesses. I hate the being suspected of fishing for a pedigree, or bolstering one up with false statements. How people can bring themselves to this, I cannot conceive. I send you a copy of the Haliburton MS., of which I have printed twenty for the satisfaction of a few friends. You can have any part of them copied in London which ought to be registered. I should like if Sir George Naylor would take the trouble of looking at the proofs, which are chiefly extracts from the public records. I take this opportunity to send you also a copy of a little amateur-book—Carey's Poems—a thoroughbred Cavalier, and, I think, no bad versifier. Kind compliments to Mrs. Richardson. Yours, my dear Richardson, most truly,

Walter Scott.

TO CORNET W. SCOTT, 18TH HUSSARS, CORK.

Abbotsford, 4th September, 1819.

Dear Walter,—Your very acceptable letter of the 26th reached me to-day. I had begun to be apprehensive that the draft had fallen into the hands of the Philistines, but the very long calm must have made the packets slow in their progress, which I suppose was the occasion of the delay. Respecting the allowance, Colonel Murray informs me that from £200 to £250, in addition to the pay of a Cornet, ought to make a young man very comfortable. He adds, which I am much pleased to hear, that your officers are, many of them, men of moderate fortune, and disposed to be economical. I had thought of £200 as what would suit us both, but when I see the account which you very properly keep, I shall be better able to determine. It must be considered that any uncommon expense, as the loss of a horse or the like, may occasion an extra draft over and above the allowance. I like very much your methodical arrangement as to expenses; it is rather a tiresome thing at first to keep an accompt of pounds, shillings, and pence, but it is highly necessary, and enables one to see how the money actually goes. It is, besides, a good practical way of keeping up acquaintance with arithmetic, and you will soon find that the principles on which all military movements turn are arithmetical, and that though one may no doubt learn to do them by rote, yet to *understand* them, you must have recourse to numbers. Your adjutant will explain this to you. By the way, as he is a foreigner, you will have an opportunity to keep up a little of your French and German. Both are highly necessary to you; the knowledge of the last, with few other qualifications, made several officers' fortunes last war.

I observe with pleasure you are making acquaintances among the gentry, which I hope you will not drop for want of calling, etc. I trust you have delivered all your recommendations, for it is an affront to omit doing so, both to the person who writes them, and those for whom they are designed. On the other hand, one always holds their head a little better up in the world when they keep good society. Lord and Lady Melville are to give you recommendations when you go to Dublin. I was at Melville Castle for two days, and found them both well. I was also one day

at Langholm Lodge to meet Lord Montagu. Possibly, among your Irish friends, you may get some shooting. I shall be glad you avail yourself of any such opportunities, and also that, when you get your own horses, you hunt in the winter, if you be within the reach of hounds. Nothing confirms a man in horsemanship so well as hunting, though I do not recommend it to beginners, who are apt to learn to ride like grooms. Besides the exercise, field-sports make a young soldier acquainted with the country, and habituate him to have a good eye for distance and for taking up the *carte de pays* in general, which is essential to all, but especially to officers of light troops, who are expected to display both alertness and intelligence in reporting the nature of the country, being in fact the *eyes* of the army. In every point of view, field-sports are preferable to the indoors amusement of a billiard-table, which is too often the lounging-place for idle young officers, where there is nothing to be got but a habit of throwing away time, and an acquaintance with the very worst society—I mean at public billiard-rooms—for unquestionably the game itself is a pretty one, when practised among gentlemen, and not made a constant habit of. But public billiard-tables are almost always the resort of blacklegs and sharpers, and all that numerous class whom the French call *chevaliers d'industrie*, and we, *knights of the whipping-post*.

I am glad you go to the anatomical lectures. An acquaintance with our own very extraordinary frame is a useful branch of general knowledge, and as you have some turn for drawing, it will also enable you to judge of the proper mode of disposing the limbs and muscles of your figures, should you prosecute the art so far. In fact, there is no branch of study can come much amiss to a young man, providing he does study, and very often the precise occupation of the time must be trusted to taste and opportunity.

The White Boys made a great noise when I was a boy. But Ireland (the more is the pity) has never been without White Boys, or Right Boys, or Defenders, or Peep-of-day Boys, or some wild association or another for disturbing the peace of the country. We shall not be many degrees better if the Radical Reformers be not checked. The Manchester Yeomen behaved very well, upsetting

the most immense crowd ever was seen, and notwithstanding the lies in the papers, without any unnecessary violence. Mr. Hunt pretends to have had several blows on his head with sabres, but has no wound to show for it. I am disposed to wish he had got such a one as once on a day I could have treated him to. I am apt to think his politic pate would have broached no more sedition.

Miss Rutherford and Eliza Russell are now with us. We were also favored with a visit of the Miss ——s, who are rather empty canisters, though I dare say very good girls. Anne tired of them most inhospitably. Mrs. Maclean Clephane and her two unmarried daughters are now here; being, as we say, pears of another tree. Your sisters seem very fond of the young ladies, and I am glad of it, for they will see that a great deal of accomplishment and information may be completely reconciled with liveliness, fun, good-humor, and good-breeding.

All here send love. Dogs and cat are well. I dare say you have heard from some other correspondent that poor Lady Wallace died of an inflammation, after two days' illness. Trout has returned here several times, poor fellow, and seems to look for you; but Henry Scott is very kind to him, and he is a great favorite.

As you Hussars smoke, I will give you one of my pipes, but you must let me know how I can send it safely. It is a very handsome one, though not my best. I will keep my *Meerschaum* until I make my Continental tour, and then you shall have that also. I hope you will get leave for a few months, and go with me. Yours very affectionately,

Walter Scott.

About this time, as the succeeding letters will show, Abbotsford had the honor of a short visit from Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, now King of the Belgians. Immediately afterwards Scott heard of the death of Mrs. William Erskine, and repaired to Edinburgh to condole with his afflicted friend. His allusions, meanwhile, to views of buying more land on Tweedside, are numerous. These speculations are explained in a most characteristic style to the Cornet; and we see that one of them was cut short by the tragical death of a *bonnet-laird* already introduced to the reader's notice—namely, *Lauchie Longlegs*, the admired of Geoffrey Crayon.

TO CORNET WALTER SCOTT, 18TH HUSSARS,
CORK.

Abbotsford, 27th September, 1819.

My dear Walter,—Your letter of the 10th gave me the pleasant assurance that you are well and happy, and attending to your profession. We have been jogging on here in the old fashion, somewhat varied by an unexpected visit, on Friday last, from no less a person than Prince Leopold. I conclude you will have all the particulars of this important event from the other members of the family, so I shall only say that when I mentioned the number of your regiment, the Prince said he had several friends in the 18th, and should now think he had one more, which was very polite. By the way, I hear an excellent character of your officers for regularity and gentlemanlike manners. This report gives me great pleasure, for to live in bad society will deprave the best manners, and to live in good will improve the worst.

I am trying a sort of bargain with neighbor Nicol Milne at present. He is very desirous of parting with his estate of Faldonside, and if he will be contented with a reasonable price, I am equally desirous to be the purchaser. I conceive it will come to about £30,000 at least. I will not agree to give a penny more; and I think that sum is probably £2000 and more above its actual marketable value. But then it lies extremely convenient for us, and would, joined to Abbotsford, make a very gentlemanlike property, worth at least £1800 or £2000 a year. I can command about £10,000 of my own, and if I be spared life and health, I should not fear rubbing off the rest of the price, as Nicol is in no hurry for payment. As you will succeed me in my landed property, I think it right to communicate my views to you. I am much moved by the prospect of getting at about £2000 or £3000 worth of marle, which lies on Milne's side of the loch, but which can only be drained on my side, so that he can make no use of it. This would make the lands of Abbotsford worth 40*s.* an acre over-head, excepting the sheep farm. I am sensible I might dispose of my money to more advantage, but probably to none which, in the long run, would be better for you—certainly to none which would

be productive of so much pleasure to myself. The woods are thriving, and it would be easy, at a trifling expense, to restore Faldonside loch, and stock it with fish. In fact, it would require but a small dam-head. By means of a little judicious planting, added to what is already there, the estate might be rendered one of the most beautiful in this part of Scotland. Such are my present plans, my dear boy, having as much your future welfare and profit in view as the immediate gratification of my own wishes.

I am very sorry to tell you that poor Mrs. William Erskine is no more. She was sent by the medical people on a tour to the lakes of Cumberland, and was taken ill at Lowood, on Windermere. Nature, much exhausted by her previous indisposition, sunk under four days' illness. Her husband was with her, and two of her daughters—he is much to be pitied.

Mr. Rees, the bookseller, told me he had met you in the streets of Cork, and reported well of the growth of your *Schnurr-bart*. I hope you know what that means. Pray write often, as the post comes so slow. I keep all your letters, and am much pleased with the frankness of the style. No word of your horses yet? but it is better not to be impatient, and to wait for good ones. I have been three times on Newark, and killed six hares each time. The two young dogs are capital good.

I must not omit to tell you our old, and, I may add, our kind neighbor Lauchie, has departed, or, as Tom expresses it, has been fairly *flytten out o' the warld*. You know the old quarrel betwixt his brother and him about the wife: in an ill-fated hour Jock the brother came down to Lochbreist with a sister from Edinburgh, who was determined to have her share of the scolding-match; they attacked poor old Lauchie like mad folks, and reviled his wife in all sort of evil language. At length his passion was wrought up to a great pitch, and he answered with much emotion, that if she were the greatest —— in Edinburgh, it was not their business, and as he uttered this speech, he fell down on his back, and lay a dead man before them. There is little doubt the violence of the agitation had broke a blood-vessel in the heart or brain. A very few days since he was running up and down calling for a coffin, and wishing to God he was in one; to which Swanston,

who was present, answered, he could not apply to a better hand, and he would make him one if he had a mind. He has left a will of his own making, but from some informality I think it will be set aside. His land cannot come into the market until his girl comes of age, which, by the way, makes me more able for the other bargain.... The blackcocks are very plenty. I put up fourteen cocks and hens in walking up the Clappercleuch to look at the wood. Do you not wish you had been on the outside with your gun? Tom has kept us well supplied with game; he boasts that he shot fifteen times without a miss. I shall be glad to hear that you do the same on Mr. Newenham's grounds. Mamma, the girls, and Charles, all join in love and affection. Believe me ever, dear Walter, your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, ETC., ETC., ETC.

Abbotsford, 3d October, 1819.

My dear Lord,—I am honored with your Buxton letter.... *Anent* Prince Leopold, I only heard of his approach at eight o'clock in the morning, and he was to be at Selkirk by eleven. The magistrates sent to ask me to help them to receive him. It occurred to me he might be coming to Melrose to see the Abbey, in which case I could not avoid asking him to Abbotsford, as he must pass my very door. I mentioned this to Mrs. Scott, who was lying quietly in bed, and I wish you had heard the scream she gave on the occasion. "What have we to offer him?"—"Wine and cake," said I, thinking to make all things easy; but she ejaculated, in a tone of utter despair, "Cake!! where am I to get cake?" However, being partly consoled with the recollection that his visit was a very improbable incident, and curiosity, as usual, proving too strong for alarm, she set out with me in order not to miss a peep of the great man. James Skene and his lady were with us, and we gave our carriages such additional dignity as a pair of leaders could add, and went to meet him in full puff. The Prince very civilly told me, that, though he could not see Melrose on this

occasion, he wished to come to Abbotsford for an hour. New despair on the part of Mrs. Scott, who began to institute a domiciliary search for cold meat through the whole city of Selkirk, which produced *one shoulder of cold lamb*. In the mean while, his Royal Highness received the civic honors of the BIRSE very graciously. I had hinted to Bailie Lang, that it ought only to be licked *symbolically* on the present occasion; so he flourished it three times before his mouth, but without touching it with his lips, and the Prince followed his example as directed. Lang made an excellent speech—sensible, and feeling, and well delivered. The Prince seemed much surprised at this great propriety of expression and behavior in a magistrate, whose people seemed such a rabble, and whose whole band of music consisted in a drum and fife. He noticed to Bailie Anderson that Selkirk seemed very populous in proportion to its extent. "On an occasion like this it seems so," answered the Bailie,—neatly enough, I thought. I question if any magistrates in the kingdom, lord mayors and aldermen not excepted, could have behaved with more decent and quiet good-breeding. Prince Leopold repeatedly alluded to this during the time he was at Abbotsford. I do not know how Mrs. Scott ultimately managed; but with broiled salmon, and blackcock, and partridges, she gave him a very decent lunch; and I chanced to have some very fine old hock, which was mighty germane to the matter.

The Prince seems melancholy, whether naturally or from habit, I do not pretend to say; but I do not remember thinking him so at Paris, where I saw him frequently, then a much poorer man than myself; yet he showed some humor, for, alluding to the crowds that followed him everywhere, he mentioned some place where he had gone out to shoot, but was afraid to proceed for fear of "bagging a boy." He said he really thought of getting some shooting-place in Scotland, and promised me a longer visit on his return. If I had had a day's notice to have *warned the waters*, we could have met him with a very respectable number of the gentry; but there was no time for this, and probably he liked it better as it was. There was only young Clifton who could have come, and he was shy and cubbish, and would not, though requested by the

Selkirk people. He was perhaps ashamed to march through Coventry with them. It hung often and sadly on my mind that *he* was wanting who could and would have received him like a Prince indeed; and yet the meeting betwixt them, had they been fated to meet, would have been a very sad one. I think I have now given your Lordship a very full, true, and particular account of our royal visit, unmatched even by that of King Charles at the Castle of Tillietudlem. That we did not speak of it for more than a week after it happened, and that that emphatic monosyllable, *The Prince*, is not heard amongst us more than ten times a day, is, on the whole, to the credit of my family's understanding. The piper is the only one whose brain he seems to have endangered; for, as the Prince said he preferred him to any he had heard in the Highlands —(which, by the way, shows his Royal Highness knows nothing of the matter)—the fellow seems to have become incapable of his ordinary occupation as a forester, and has cut stick and stem without remorse to the tune of *Phail Phranse*, *i. e.*, the Prince's Welcome.

I am just going to the head-court with Donaldson, and go a day sooner to exhume certain old monuments of the Rutherfords at Jedburgh. Edgerstone is to meet me at Jedburgh for this research, and then we shall go up with him to dinner. My best respects attend Lady Montagu. I wish this letter may reach you on a more lively day than it is written in, for it requires little to add to its dulness. Tweed is coming down very fast, the first time this summer. Believe me, my dear Lord, most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

TO W. SCOTT, ESQ., 18TH HUSSARS, CORK.

Abbotsford, 14th October, 1819.

Dear Walter,—I had your last letter, and am very glad you find pleasant society. Mrs. Dundas of Arniston is so good as to send you some introductions, which you will deliver as soon as possible. You will be now in some degree accustomed to meet with strangers, and to form your estimate of their character and

manners. I hope, in the mean time, the French and German are attended to; please to mention in your next letter what you are reading, and in what languages. The hours of youth, my dear Walter, are too precious to be spent all in gayety. We must lay up in that period when our spirit is active, and our memory strong, the stores of information which are not only to facilitate our progress through life, but to amuse and interest us in our later stage of existence. I very often think what an unhappy person I should have been, if I had not done something more or less towards improving my understanding when I was at your age; and I never reflect, without severe self-condemnation, on the opportunities of acquiring knowledge which I either trifled with, or altogether neglected. I hope you will be wiser than I have been, and experience less of that self-reproach.

My last acquainted you with Mrs. Erskine's death, and I grieve to say we have just received intelligence that our kind neighbor and good friend Lord Somerville is at the very last gasp. His disease is a dysentery, and the symptoms, as his brother writes to Mr. Samuel Somerville, are mortal. He is at Vevay, upon his road, I suppose, to Italy, where he had purposed spending the winter. His death, for I understand nothing else can be expected, will be another severe loss to me; for he was a kind, good friend, and at my time of day men do not readily take to new associates. I must own this has been one of the most melancholy years I ever passed. The poor Duke, who loved me so well—Mrs. Erskine—Lord Somerville—not to mention others with whom I was less intimate, make it one year of mourning. I should not forget the Chief Baron, who, though from ill health we met of late seldom, was always my dear friend, and indeed very early benefactor. I must look forwards to seeing in your success and respectability, and in the affection and active improvement of all of you, those pleasures which are narrowed by the death of my contemporaries. Men cannot form new intimacies at my period of life, but must be happy or otherwise according to the good fortune and good conduct of those near relatives who rise around them.

I wish much to know if you are lucky in a servant. Trust him with as little cash as possible, and keep short accounts. Many a

good servant is spoiled by neglecting this simple precaution. The man is tempted to some expense of his own, gives way to it, and then has to make it up by a system of overcharge and peculation; and thus mischief begins, and the carelessness of the master makes a rogue out of an honest lad, and cheats himself into the bargain.

I have a letter from your uncle Tom, telling me his eldest daughter is to be forthwith married to a Captain Huxley of his own regiment. As he has had a full opportunity of being acquainted with the young gentleman, and approves of the match, I have to hope that it will be a happy one. I fear there is no great fortune in the case on either side, which is to be regretted.

Of domestic affairs I have little to tell you. The harvest has been excellent, the weather delightful; but this I must often have repeated. To-day I was thinning out fir-trees in the thicket, and the men were quite exhausted with the heat, and I myself, though only marking the trees, felt the exercise sufficiently warm. The wood is thriving delightfully. On the 28th we are to have a dance in honor of your birthday. I wish you could look in upon us for the day at least—only I am afraid we could not part with you when it was over, and so you would be in the guise of Cinderella, when she outstayed her time at the ball, and all her finery returned into its original base materials. Talking of balls, the girls would tell you the Melrose hop, where mamma presided, went off well.

I expect poor Erskine and his daughter next week, or the week after. I went into town to see him—and found him bearing his great loss with his natural gentleness and patience. But he was sufficiently distressed, as he has great reason to be. I also expect Lord and Lady Melville here very soon. Sir William Rae (now Lord Advocate) and his lady came to us on Saturday. On Sunday Maida walked with us, and in jumping the paling at the Greentongue park contrived to hang himself up by the hind leg. He howled at first, but seeing us making towards him he stopped crying, and waved his tail, by way of signal, it was supposed, for assistance. He sustained no material injury, though his leg was strangely twisted into the bars, and he was nearly hanging by it. He showed great gratitude, in his way, to his deliverers. This is a

long letter, and little in it; but that is nothing extraordinary. All send best love—and I am ever, dear Walter, your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

TO THOMAS SCOTT, ESQ., PAYMASTER, 70th REGIMENT, CANADA.

Abbotsford, 16th October, 1819.

Dear Tom,—I received yesterday your very acceptable letter, containing the news of Jessie's approaching marriage, in which, as a match agreeable to her mother and you, and relieving your minds from some of the anxious prospects which haunt those of parents, I take the most sincere interest. Before this reaches you the event will probably have taken place. Meantime, I enclose a letter to the bride or wife, as the case may happen to be. I have sent a small token of good-will to ballast my good wishes, which you will please to value for the young lady, that she may employ it as most convenient or agreeable to her. A little more fortune would perhaps have done the young folks no harm; but Captain Huxley, being such as you describe him, will have every chance of getting forward in his profession; and the happiest marriages are often those in which there is, at first, occasion for prudence and economy. I do certainly feel a little of the surprise which you hint at, for time flies over our heads one scarce marks how, and children become marriageable ere we consider them as out of the nursery. My eldest son, Walter, has also wedded himself—but it is to a regiment of hussars. He is at present a cornet in the 18th, and quartered in Cork barracks. He is capital at most exercises, but particularly as a horseman. I do not intend he shall remain in the cavalry, however, but shall get him into the line when he is capable of promotion. Since he has chosen this profession, I shall be desirous that he follows it out in good earnest, and that can only be done by getting into the infantry.

My late severe illness has prevented my going up to London to receive the honor which the Prince Regent has announced his

intention to inflict upon me. My present intention is, if I continue as well as I have been, to go up about Christmas to get this affair over. My health was restored (I trust permanently) by the use of calomel, a very severe and painful remedy, especially in my exhausted state of body, but it has proved a radical one. By the way, *Radical* is a word in very bad odor here, being used to denote a set of blackguards a hundred times more mischievous and absurd than our old friends in 1794 and 1795. You will learn enough of the doings of the *Radical Reformers* from the papers. In Scotland we are quiet enough, excepting in the manufacturing districts, and we are in very good hands, as Sir William Rae, our old commander, is Lord Advocate. Rae has been here two or three days, and left me yesterday; he is the old man, sensible, cool-headed, and firm, always thinking of his duty, never of himself. He inquired kindly after you, and I think will be disposed to serve you, should an opportunity offer. Poor William Erskine has lost his excellent wife, after a long and wasting illness. She died at Lowood on Windermere, he having been recommended to take her upon a tour about three weeks before her death. I own I should scarce forgive a physician who should contrive to give me this addition to family distress. I went to town last week to see him, and found him, upon the whole, much better than I expected. I saw my mother on the same occasion, admirably well indeed. She is greatly better than this time two years, when she rather quacked herself a little too much. I have sent your letter to our mother, and will not fail to transmit to our other friends the agreeable news of your daughter's settlement. Our cousin, Sir Harry Macdougal, is marrying his eldest daughter to Sir Thomas Brisbane, a very good match on both sides. I have been paying a visit on the occasion, which suspends my closing this letter. I hope to hear very soon from you. Respecting our silence, I, like a ghost, only waited to be spoken to, and you may depend on me as a regular correspondent, when you find time to be one yourself. Charlotte and the girls join in kind love to Mrs. Scott and all the family. I should like to know what you mean to do with young Walter, and whether I can assist you in that matter. Believe me, dear Tom, ever your affectionate brother,

W. Scott.

TO DANIEL TERRY, ESQ., LONDON.

Abbotsford, November 10, 1819.

My dear Terry,—I should be very sorry if you thought the interest I take in you and yours so slight as not to render your last letter extremely interesting. We have all our various combats to fight in this best of all possible worlds, and, like brave fellow-soldiers, ought to assist one another as much as possible. I have little doubt, that if God spares me till my little namesake be fit to take up his share of the burden, I may have interest enough to be of great advantage to him in the entrance of life. In the present state of your own profession, you would not willingly, I suppose, choose him to follow it; and, as it is very seductive to young people of a lively temper and good taste for the art, you should, I think, consider early how you mean to dispose of little Walter, with a view, that is, to the future line of life which you would wish him to adopt. Mrs. Terry has not the good health which all who know her amiable disposition and fine accomplishments would anxiously wish her; yet, with impaired health and the caution which it renders necessary, we have very frequently instances of the utmost verge of existence being attained, while robust strength is cut off in the middle career. So you must be of good heart, and hope the best in this as in other cases of a like affecting nature. I go to town on Monday, and will forward under Mr. Freeling's cover as much of Ivanhoe as is finished in print. It is completed, but in the hands of a very slow transcriber; when I can collect it, I will send you the MS., which you will please to keep secret from every eye. I think this will give a start, if it be worth taking, of about a month, for the work will be out on the 20th of December. It is certainly possible to adapt it to the stage, but the expense of scenery and decorations would be great, this being a tale of chivalry, not of character. There is a tale in existence, by dramatizing which, I am certain, a most powerful effect might be produced: it is called Undine, and I believe has been translated into French by Mademoiselle Montolieu, and into

English from her version: do read it, and tell me your opinion: in German the character of Undine is exquisite. The only objection is, that the catastrophe is unhappy, but this might be altered. I hope to be in London for ten days the end of next month; and so good-by for the present, being in great haste, most truly yours,

W. Scott.

I conclude this chapter with a letter written two or three days before Scott quitted Abbotsford for the winter session. It is addressed to his friend Hartstonge, who had taken the opportunity of the renewal of Scott's correspondence to solicit his opinion and assistance touching a MS. drama; and the reader will be diverted with the style in which the amiable tragedian is treated to his *quietus*:—

TO MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE, ESQ.,
DUBLIN.

Abbotsford, 11th November, 1819.

My dear Sir,—I was duly favored with your packet, containing the play, as well as your very kind letter. I will endeavor (though extremely unwilling to offer criticism on most occasions) to meet your confidence with perfect frankness. I do not consider the Tragedy as likely to make that favorable impression on the public which I would wish that the performance of a friend should effect —and I by no means recommend to you to hazard it upon the boards. In other compositions, the neglect of the world takes nothing from the merit of the author; but there is something ludicrous in being *affiché* as the author of an unsuccessful play. Besides, you entail on yourself the great and eternal plague of altering and retrenching to please the humors of performers, who are, speaking generally, extremely ignorant, and capricious in proportion. These are not vexations to be voluntarily undertaken; and the truth is, that in the present day there is only one reason which seems to me adequate for the encountering the plague of trying to please a set of conceited performers and a very motley audience,—I mean the want of money, from which, fortunately, you are exempted. It is very true that some day or other a great

dramatic genius may arise to strike out a new path; but I fear till this happens no great effect will be produced by treading in the old one. The reign of Tragedy seems to be over, and the very considerable poetical abilities which have been lately applied to it, have failed to revive it. Should the public ever be indulged with small theatres adapted to the hours of the better ranks in life, the dramatic art may recover; at present it is in abeyance—and I do therefore advise you in all sincerity to keep the Tragedy (which I return under cover) safe under your own charge. Pray think of this as one of the most unpleasant offices of friendship—and be not angry with me for having been very frank, upon an occasion when frankness may be more useful than altogether palatable.

I am much obliged to you for your kind intentions towards my young Hussar. We have not heard from him for three weeks. I believe he is making out a meditated visit to Killarney. I am just leaving the country for Edinburgh, to attend my duty in the courts; but the badness of the weather in some measure reconciles me to the unpleasant change. I have the pleasure to continue the most satisfactory accounts of my health; it is, to external appearance, as strong as in my strongest days—indeed, after I took once more to Sancho's favorite occupations of eating and sleeping, I recovered my losses wonderfully. Very truly yours,

Walter Scott.

Chapter XLVI

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1819

Towards the winter of 1819 there prevailed a spirit of alarming insubordination among the mining population of Northumberland and the weavers of the West of Scotland; and Scott was particularly gratified with finding that his own neighbors at Galashiels had escaped the contagion. There can be little doubt that this exemption was principally owing to the personal influence and authority of the Laird of Abbotsford and Sheriff of the Forest; but the people of Galashiels were also fortunate in the qualities of their own beneficent landlords, Mr. Scott of Gala, and Mr. Pringle of Torwoodlee. The progress of the western *Reformers* by degrees led even the most important Whigs in that district to exert themselves in the organization of volunteer regiments, both mounted and dismounted; and, when it became generally suspected that Glasgow and Paisley maintained a dangerous correspondence with the refractory colliers of Northumberland—Scott, and his friends the Lairds of Torwoodlee and Gala, determined to avail themselves of the loyalty and spirit of the men of Ettrick and Teviotdale, and proposed first raising a company of sharpshooters among their own immediate neighbors, and afterwards—this plan receiving every encouragement—a legion or brigade upon a large scale, to be called the Buccleuch Legion. During November and December, 1819, these matters formed the chief daily care and occupation of the author of Ivanhoe; and though he was still obliged to dictate most of the chapters of his novel, we shall see that, in case it should be necessary for the projected levy of Foresters to march upon Tynedale, he was prepared to place himself at their head.

He had again intended, as soon as he should have finished Ivanhoe, to proceed to London, and receive his baronetcy; but as that affair had been crossed at Easter by his own illness, so at Christmas it was again obliged to be put off in consequence of a heavy series of domestic afflictions. Within one week Scott lost his excellent mother, his uncle Dr. Daniel Rutherford, Professor of Botany in the University of Edinburgh—and their sister, Christian Rutherford, already often mentioned as one of the dearest and most esteemed of all his friends and connections.

The following letters require no further introduction or comment:—

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, BUXTON.

Abbotsford, 12th November, 1819.

My dear Lord,—... I wish I had any news to send your Lordship; but the best is, we are all quiet here. The Galashiels weavers, both men and masters, have made their political creed known to me, and have sworn themselves anti-radical. They came in solemn procession, with their banners, and my own piper at their head, whom they had borrowed for the nonce. But the Tweed being in flood, we could only communicate like Wallace and Bruce across the Carron. However, two deputies came through in the boat, and made me acquainted with their loyal purposes. The evening was crowned with two most distinguished actions—the weavers refusing, in the most peremptory manner, to accept of a couple of guineas to buy whiskey, and the renowned John of Skye, piper in ordinary to the Laird of Abbotsford, no less steadily refusing a very handsome collection, which they offered him for his minstrelsy. All this sounds very nonsensical, but the people must be humored and countenanced when they take the right turn, otherwise they will be sure to take the wrong. The accounts from the West sometimes make me wish our little Duke five or six years older, and able to get on horseback. It seems approaching to the old song—

"Come fill up our cup, come fill up our can,
Come saddle the horses, and call up our men,

Come open the gates, and let us go free,
And we'll show them the bonnets of bonny Dundee."

I am rather too old for that work now, and I cannot look forward to it with the sort of feeling that resembled pleasure—as I did in my younger and more healthy days. However, I have got a good following here, and will endeavor to keep them together till times mend.

My respectful compliments attend Lady Montagu, and I am always, with the greatest regard, your Lordship's very faithful

Walter Scott.

TO CORNET WALTER SCOTT, 18TH HUSSARS.

Edinburgh, 13th November, 1819.

Dear Walter,—I am much surprised and rather hurt at not hearing from you for so long a while. You ought to remember that, however pleasantly the time may be passing with you, we at home have some right to expect that a part of it (a very small part will serve the turn) should be dedicated, were it but for the sake of propriety, to let us know what you are about. I cannot say I shall be flattered by finding myself under the necessity of again complaining of neglect. To write once a week, to one or other of us, is no great sacrifice, and it is what I earnestly pray you to do.

We are to have great doings in Edinburgh this winter. No less than Prince Gustavus of Sweden is to pass the season here, and do what Princes call studying. He is but half a Prince either, for this Northern Star is somewhat shorn of his beams. His father was, you know, dethroned by Buonaparte, at least by the influence of his arms, and one of his generals, Bernadotte, made heir of the Swedish throne in his stead. But this youngster, I suppose, has his own dreams of royalty, for he is nephew to the Emperor of Russia (by the mother's side), and that is a likely connection to be of use to him, should the Swedish nobles get rid of Bernadotte, as it is said they wish to do. Lord Melville has recommended the said Prince particularly to my attention, though I do not see how I can do much for him.

I have just achieved my grand remove from Abbotsford to Edinburgh—a motion which you know I do not make with great satisfaction. We had the Abbotsford hunt last week. The company was small, as the newspapers say, but select, and we had excellent sport, killing eight hares. We coursed on Gala's ground, and he was with us. The dinner went off with its usual alacrity, but we wanted you and Sally to ride and mark for us.

I enclose another letter from Mrs. Dundas of Arniston. I am afraid you have been careless in not delivering those I formerly forwarded, because in one of them, which Mrs. Dundas got from a friend, there was enclosed a draft for some money. I beg you will be particular in delivering any letters entrusted to you, because though the good-nature of the writers may induce them to write to be of service to you, yet it is possible that they may, as in this instance, add things which are otherwise of importance to their correspondents. It is probable that you may have picked up among your military friends the idea that the mess of a regiment is all in all sufficient to itself; but when you see a little of the world you will be satisfied that none but pedants—for there is pedantry in all professions—herd exclusively together, and that those who do so are laughed at in real good company. This you may take on the authority of one who has seen more of life and society, in all its various gradations, from the highest to the lowest, than a whole hussar regimental mess, and who would be much pleased by knowing that you reap the benefit of an experience which has raised him from being a person of small consideration to the honor of being father of an officer of hussars. I therefore enclose another letter from the same kind friend, of which I pray you to avail yourself. In fact, those officers who associate entirely among themselves see and know no more of the world than their messman, and get conceited and disagreeable by neglecting the opportunities offered for enlarging their understanding. Every distinguished soldier whom I have known, and I have known many, was a man of the world, and accustomed to general society.

To sweeten my lecture, I have to inform you that, this being quarter-day, I have a remittance of £50 to send you whenever you

are pleased to let me know it will be acceptable—for, like a ghost, I will not speak again till I am spoken to.

I wish you not to avail yourself of your leave of absence this winter, because, if my health continues good, I shall endeavor to go on the Continent next summer, and should be very desirous to have you with me; therefore, I beg you to look after your French and German. We had a visit from a very fine fellow indeed at Abbotsford,—Sir Thomas Brisbane, who long commanded a brigade in the Peninsula. He is very scientific, but bores no one with it, being at the same time a well-informed man on all subjects, and particularly alert in his own profession, and willing to talk about what he has seen. Sir Harry Hay Macdougal, whose eldest daughter he is to marry, brought him to Abbotsford on a sort of wedding visit, as we are cousins according to the old fashion of country kin; Beardie, of whom Sir Harry has a beautiful picture, being a son of an Isabel Macdougal, who was, I fancy, grand-aunt to Sir Harry.

Once more, my dear Walter, write more frequently, and do not allow yourself to think that the first neglect in correspondence I have ever had to complain of has been on your part. I hope you have received the Meerschaum pipe.—I remain your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, 3d December, 1819.

My dear Walter,—I hope your servant proves careful and trusty. Pray let me know this. At any rate, do not trust him a bit further than you can help it, for in buying anything you will get it much cheaper yourself than he will. We are now settled for the winter; that is, all of them excepting myself, who must soon look southwards. On Saturday we had a grand visitor, *i. e.*, the Crown Prince of Sweden, under the name of Count Itterburg. His travelling companion or tutor is Baron de Polier, a Swiss of eminence in literature and rank. They took a long look at King

Charles XII., who, you cannot have forgotten, keeps his post over the dining-room chimney; and we were all struck with the resemblance betwixt old Ironhead, as the janissaries called him, and his descendant. The said descendant is a very fine lad, with very soft and mild manners, and we passed the day very pleasantly. They were much diverted with Captain Adam, who outdid his usual outdoings, and, like the Barber of Bagdad, danced the dance and sung the song of every person he spoke of.

I am concerned I cannot give a very pleasant account of things here. Glasgow is in a terrible state. The Radicals had a plan to seize on 1000 stand of arms, as well as a depôt of ammunition, which had been sent from Edinburgh Castle for the use of the volunteers. The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Thomas Bradford, went to Glasgow in person, and the whole city was occupied with patrols of horse and foot, to deter them from the meditated attack on the barracks. The arms were then delivered to the volunteers, who are said to be 4000 on paper; how many effective and trustworthy, I know not. But it was a new sight in Scotland on a Sunday to see all the inhabitants in arms, soldiers patrolling the streets, and the utmost precaution of military service exacted and observed in an apparently peaceful city.

The Old Blue Regiment of volunteers was again summoned together yesterday. They did not muster very numerous, and looked most of them a little *ancient*. However, they are getting recruits fast, and then the veterans may fall out of the ranks. The Commander-in-Chief has told the President that he may soon be obliged to leave the charge of the Castle to these armed citizens. This looks serious. The President made one of the most eloquent addresses that ever was heard, to the Old Blues. The Highland Chiefs have offered to raise their clans, and march them to any point in Scotland where their services shall be required. To be sure, the Glasgow folks would be a little surprised at the arrival of Dugald Dhu, "brogues an' brochan an' a'." I shall, I think, bid Ballantyne send you a copy of his weekly paper, which often contains things you would like to see, and will keep you in mind of Old Scotland.

They are embodying a troop of cavalry in Edinburgh—nice young men and good horses. They have paid me the compliment to make me an honorary member of the corps, as my days of active service have been long over. Pray take care, however, of my sabre, in case the time comes which must turn out all.

I have almost settled that, if things look moderately tranquil in Britain in spring and summer, I will go abroad, and take Charles, with the purpose of leaving him, for two or three years, at the famous institution of Fellenborg, near Berne, of which I hear very highly. Two of Fraser Tytler's sons are there, and he makes a very favorable report of the whole establishment. I think that such a residence abroad will not only make him well acquainted with French and German, as indeed he will hear nothing else, but also prevent his becoming an Edinburgh *petit-maître* of fourteen or fifteen, which he could otherwise scarce avoid. I mentioned to you that I should be particularly glad to get you leave of absence, providing it does not interfere with your duty, in order that you may go with us. If I have cash enough, I will also take your sister and mamma, and you might return home with them by Paris, in case I went on to Italy. All this is doubtful, but I think it is almost certain that Charles and I go, and hope to have you with us. This will be probably about July next, and I wish you particularly to keep it in view. If these dark prospects become darker, which God forbid! neither you nor I will have it in our power to leave the post to which duty calls us.

Mamma and the girls are quite well, and so is Master Charles, who is of course more magnificent, as being the only specimen of youthhead at home. He has got an old broadsword hanging up at his bed-head, which, to be the more ready for service, hath no sheath. To this I understand we are to trust for our defence against the Radicals. Anne (notwithstanding the assurance) is so much afraid of the disaffected, that last night, returning with Sophia from Portobello, where they had been dancing with the Scotts of Harden, she saw a Radical in every man that the carriage passed. Sophia is of course wise and philosophical, and mamma has not yet been able to conceive why we do not catch and hang the whole of them, untried and unconvicted. Amidst all their various

emotions, they join in best love to you; and I always am very truly yours,

W. Scott.

P. S.—I shall set off for London on the 25th.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, 17th December, 1819.

My dear Walter,—I have a train of most melancholy news to acquaint you with. On Saturday I saw your grandmother perfectly well, and on Sunday the girls drank tea with her, when the good old lady was more than usually in spirits; and, as if she had wished to impress many things on their memory, told over a number of her old stories with her usual alertness and vivacity. On Monday she had an indisposition, which proved to be a paralytic affection, and on Tuesday she was speechless, and had lost the power of one side, without any hope of recovery, although she may linger some days. But what is very remarkable, and no less shocking, Dr. Rutherford, who attended his sister in perfect health upon Tuesday, died himself upon the Wednesday morning. He had breakfasted without intimating the least illness, and was dressed to go out, and particularly to visit my mother, when he sunk backwards, and died in his daughter Anne's arms, almost without a groan. To add to this melancholy list, our poor friend, Miss Christie, is despaired of. She was much affected by my mother's fatal indisposition, but does not know as yet of her brother's death.

Dr. Rutherford was a very ingenious as well as an excellent man, more of a gentleman than his profession too often are, for he could not take the back-stairs mode of rising in it, otherwise he might have been much more wealthy. He ought to have had the Chemistry class, as he was one of the best chemists in Europe; but superior interest assigned it to another, who, though a neat experimentalist, is not to be compared to poor Daniel for originality of genius. Since you knew him, his health was broken and his spirits dejected, which may be traced to the loss of his

eldest son on board an East Indiaman, and also, I think, to a slight paralytic touch which he had some years ago.

To all this domestic distress I have to add the fearful and unsettled state of the country. All the regular troops are gone to Glasgow. The Mid-Lothian Yeomanry and other corps of volunteers went there on Monday, and about 5000 men occupied the town. In the mean while, we were under considerable apprehension here, the Castle being left in the charge of the city volunteers and a few veterans.

All our corner, high and low, is loyal. Torwoodlee, Gala, and I, have offered to raise a corps, to be called the Loyal Foresters, to act anywhere south of the Forth. If matters get worse, I will ask leave of absence for you from the Commander-in-Chief, because your presence will be materially useful to levy men, and you can only be idle where you are, unless Ireland should be disturbed. Your old corps of the Selkirkshire Yeomanry have been under orders, and expect to be sent either to Dumfries or Carlisle. Berwick is dismantled, and they are removing the stores, cannon, etc., from one of the strongest places here, for I defy the devil to pass the bridge at Berwick, if reasonably well kept by 100 men. But there is a spirit of consternation implied in many of the orders, which, *entre nous*, I like worse than what I see or know of the circumstances which infer real danger. For myself I am too old to fight, but nobody is too old to die, like a man of virtue and honor, in defence of the principles he has always maintained.

I would have you to keep yourself ready to return here suddenly, in case the Duke of York should permit your temporary services in your own country, which, if things grow worse, I will certainly ask. The fearful thing is the secret and steady silence observed by the Radicals in all they do. Yet, without anything like effective arms or useful discipline, without money and without a commissariat, what can they do, but, according to their favorite toast, have blood and plunder? Mamma and the girls, as well as Charles, send kind love. Your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

TO MR. WILLIAM LAIDLAW, KAESIDE.

Edinburgh, December 20, 1819.

My dear Willie,—Distress has been very busy with me since I wrote to you. I have lost, in the course of one week, my valued relations, Dr. and Miss Rutherford—happy in this, that neither knew of the other's dissolution. My dear mother has offered me deeper subject of affliction, having been struck with the palsy, and being now in such a state that I scarce hope to see her again.

But the strange times compel me, under this pressure of domestic distress, to attend to public business. I find Mr. Scott of Gala agrees with me in thinking we should appeal at this crisis to the good sense and loyalty of the lower orders, and we have resolved to break the ice, and be the first in the Lowlands, so far as I have yet heard of, to invite our laborers and those over whom circumstances and fortune give us influence, to rise with us in arms, and share our fate. You know, as well as any one, that I have always spent twice the income of my property in giving work to my neighbors, and I hope they will not be behind the Galashiels people, who are very zealous. Gala and I go hand in hand, and propose to raise at least a company each of men, to be drilled as sharpshooters or infantry, which will be a lively and interesting amusement for the young fellows. The dress we propose to be as simple, and at the same time as serviceable, as possible;—a jacket and trousers of Galashiels gray cloth, and a smart bonnet with a small feather, or, to save even that expense, a sprig of holly. And we will have shooting at the mark, and prizes, and fun, and a little whiskey, and daily pay when on duty or drill. I beg of you, dear Willie, to communicate my wish to all who have received a good turn at my hand, or may expect one, or may be desirous of doing me one—(for I should be sorry Darnick and Brigend were beat)—and to all other free and honest fellows who will take share with me on this occasion. I do not wish to take any command farther than such as shall entitle me to go with the corps, for I wish it to be distinctly understood that, in whatever capacity, *I go with them*, and take a share in good or bad as it casts up. I cannot doubt that I will have your support, and I hope you will use all your enthusiasm in our behalf. Morrison

volunteers as our engineer. Those who I think should be spoke to are the following, among the higher class:—

John Usher. He should be lieutenant, or his son ensign.

Sam Somerville. I will speak to him—he may be lieutenant, if Usher declines; but I think, in that case, Usher should give us his son.

Young Nicol Milne is rather young, but I will offer to his father to take him in.

Harper is a *sine qua non*. Tell him I depend on him for the honor of Darnick. I should propose to him to take a gallant halbert.

Adam Ferguson thinks you should be our adjutant. John Ferguson I propose for captain. He is steady, right bold, and has seen much fire. The auld captain will help us in one shape or other. For myself, I know not what they propose to make of me, but it cannot be anything very active. However, I should like to have a steady quiet horse, drilled to stand fire well, and if he has these properties, no matter how stupid, so he does not stumble. In this case the price of such a horse will be no object.

These, my dear friend, are your beating orders. I would propose to raise about sixty men, and not to take old men. John the Turk will be a capital corporal; and I hope in general that all my young fellows will go with me, leaving the older men to go through necessary labor. Sound Tom what he would like. I think, perhaps, he would prefer managing matters at home in your absence and mine at drill.

John of Skye is cock-a-hoop upon the occasion, and I suppose has made fifty blunders about it by this time. You must warn Tom Jamieson, Gordon Winness, John Swanston (who will carry off all the prizes at shooting), Davidson, and so forth.

If you think it necessary, a little handbill might be circulated. But it may be better to see if Government will accept our services; and I think, in the situation of the country, when work is scarce, and we offer pay for their playing themselves, we should have choice of men. But I would urge no one to do what he did not like.

The very precarious state of my poor mother detains me here, and makes me devolve this troublesome duty upon you. All you have to do, however, is to sound the men, and mark down those who seem zealous. They will perhaps have to fight with the pitmen and colliers of Northumberland for defence of their firesides, for these literal *blackguards* are got beyond the management of their own people. And if such is the case, better keep them from coming into Scotland, than encounter the mischief they might do there.

Yours always most truly,

Walter Scott.

TO THOMAS SCOTT, ESQ., 70th REGIMENT,
KINGSTON, CANADA.

Edinburgh, 22d December, 1819.

My dear Tom,—I wrote you about ten days since, stating that we were all well here. In that very short space a change so sudden and so universal has taken place among your friends here, that I have to communicate to you a most miserable catalogue of losses. Our dear mother was on Sunday the 12th December in all her usual strength and alertness of mind. I had seen and conversed with her on the Saturday preceding, and never saw her better in my life of late years. My two daughters drank tea with her on Sunday, when she was uncommonly lively, telling them a number of stories, and being in rather unusual spirits, probably from the degree of excitation which sometimes is remarked to precede a paralytic affection. In the course of Monday she received that fatal summons, which at first seemed slight; but in the night betwixt Monday and Tuesday our mother lost the use both of speech and of one side. Since that time she has lain in bed constantly, yet so sensible as to see me and express her earnest blessing on all of us. The power of speech is totally lost; nor is there any hope, at her advanced age, that the scene can last long. Probably a few hours will terminate it. At any rate, life is not to be wished, even for our nearest and dearest, in those

circumstances. But this heavy calamity was only the commencement of our family losses. Dr. Rutherford, who had seemed perfectly well, and had visited my mother upon Tuesday the 14th, was suddenly affected with gout in his stomach, or some disease equally rapid, on Wednesday the 15th, and, without a moment's warning or complaint, fell down a dead man, almost without a single groan. You are aware of his fondness for animals: he was just stroking his cat after eating his breakfast, as usual, when, without more warning than a half-uttered exclamation, he sunk on the ground, and died in the arms of his daughter Anne. Though the Doctor had no formed complaint, yet I have thought him looking poorly for some months; and though there was no failure whatever in intellect, or anything which approached it, yet his memory was not so good; and I thought he paused during the last time he attended me, and had difficulty in recollecting the precise terms of his recipe. Certainly there was a great decay of outward strength. We were very anxious about the effect this fatal news was likely to produce on the mind and decayed health of our aunt, Miss C. Rutherford, and resolved, as her health had been gradually falling off ever since she returned from Abbotsford, that she should never learn anything of it until it was impossible to conceal it longer. But God had so ordered it that she was never to know the loss she had sustained, and which she would have felt so deeply. On Friday the 17th December, the second day after her brother's death, she expired, without a groan and without suffering, about six in the morning. And so we lost an excellent and warm-hearted relation, one of the few women I ever knew whose strength of mental faculties enabled her, at a mature period of life, to supply the defects of an imperfect education. It is a most uncommon and afflicting circumstance, that a brother and two sisters should be taken ill the same day—that two of them should die, without any rational possibility of the survivance of the third—and that no one of the three could be affected by learning the loss of the other. The Doctor was buried on Monday the 20th, and Miss Rutherford this day (Wednesday the 22d), in the burial-place adjoining to and surrounding one of the new Episcopal chapels, where Robert Rutherford had purchased a

burial-ground of some extent, and parted with one half to the Russells. It is surrounded with a very high wall, and all the separate burial-grounds (five, I think, in number) are separated by party-walls going down to the depth of twelve feet, so as to prevent the possibility either of encroachment, or of disturbing the relics of the dead. I have purchased one half of Miss Russell's interest in this sad spot, moved by its extreme seclusion, privacy, and security. When poor Jack was buried in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, where my father and Anne lie, I thought their graves more encroached upon than I liked to witness; and in this new place I intend to lay our poor mother when the scene shall close; so that the brother and the two sisters, whose fate has been so very closely entwined in death, may not be divided in the grave, —and this I hope you will approve of.

Thursday, December 23d.—My mother still lingers this morning, and as her constitution is so excellent, she may perhaps continue to exist some time, or till another stroke. It is a great consolation that she is perfectly easy. All her affairs of every sort have been very long arranged for this great change, and with the assistance of Donaldson and Macculloch, you may depend, when the event takes place, that your interest will be attended to most pointedly.—I hope our civil tumults here are like to be ended by the measures of Parliament. I mentioned in my last that Kinloch of Kinloch was to be tried for sedition. He has forfeited his bail, and was yesterday laid under outlawry for non-appearance. Our neighbors in Northumberland are in a deplorable state; upwards of 50,000 blackguards are ready to rise between Tyne and Wear. On the other hand, the Scottish frontiers are steady and loyal, and arming fast. Scott of Gala and I have offered 200 men, all fine strapping young fellows, and good marksmen, willing to go anywhere with us. We could easily double the number. So the necessity of the times has made me get on horseback once more. Our mother has at different times been perfectly conscious of her situation, and knew every one, though totally unable to speak. She seemed to take a very affectionate farewell of me the last time I saw her, which was the day before yesterday; and as she was much agitated, Dr. Keith advised I should not see her again,

unless she seemed to desire it, which hitherto she has not done. She sleeps constantly, and will probably be so removed. Our family sends love to yours. Yours most affectionately:—

Walter Scott.

Scott's excellent mother died on the 24th December—the day after he closed the foregoing letter to his brother.

On the 18th, in the midst of these accumulated afflictions, the romance of Ivanhoe made its appearance. The date has been torn from the following letter, but it was evidently written while all these events were fresh and recent:—

TO THE LADY LOUISA STUART, DITTON PARK, WINDSOR.

Dear Lady Louisa,—I am favored with your letter from Ditton, and am glad you found anything to entertain you in Ivanhoe. Novelty is what this giddy-paced time demands imperiously, and I certainly studied as much as I could to get out of the old beaten track, leaving those who like to keep the road, which I have rutted pretty well. I have had a terrible time of it this year, with the loss of dear friends and near relations; it is almost fearful to count up my losses, as they make me bankrupt in society. My brother-in-law; our never-to-be-enough regretted Duke; Lord Chief Baron, my early, kind, and constant friend, who took me up when I was a young fellow of little mark or likelihood; the wife of my intimate friend William Erskine; the only son of my friend David Hume, a youth of great promise, and just entering into life, who had grown up under my eye from childhood; my excellent mother; and, within a few days, her surviving brother and sister. My mother was the only one of these whose death was the natural consequence of very advanced life. And our sorrows are not at an end. A sister of my mother's, Mrs. Russell of Ashestiel, long deceased, had left (besides several sons, of whom only one now survives and is in India) three daughters, who lived with her youngest sister, Miss Rutherford, and were in the closest habits of intimacy with us. The eldest of these girls, and a most excellent

creature she is, was in summer so much shocked by the sudden news of the death of one of the brothers I have mentioned, that she was deprived of the use of her limbs by an affection either nervous or paralytic. She was slowly recovering from this afflicting and helpless situation, when the sudden fate of her aunts and uncle, particularly of her who had acted as a mother to the family, brought on a new shock; and though perfectly possessed of her mind, she has never since been able to utter a word. Her youngest sister, a girl of one or two and twenty, was so much shocked by this scene of accumulated distress, that she was taken very ill, and having suppressed and concealed her disorder, relief came too late, and she has been taken from us also. She died in the arms of the elder sister, helpless as I have described her; and to separate the half dead from the actual corpse was the most melancholy thing possible. You can hardly conceive, dear Lady Louisa, the melancholy feeling of seeing the place of last repose belonging to the devoted family open four times within so short a space, and to meet the same group of sorrowing friends and relations on the same sorrowful occasion. Looking back on those whom I have lost, all well known to me excepting my brother-in-law, whom I could only judge of by the general report in his favor, I can scarce conceive a group possessing more real worth and amiable qualities, not to mention talents and accomplishments. I have never felt so truly what Johnson says so well,—

> "Condemn'd to Hope's delusive mine,
> As on we toil from day to day,
> By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
> Our social comforts drop away."

I am not sure whether it was your Ladyship, or the poor Duchess of Buccleuch, who met my mother once, and flattered me by being so much pleased with the good old lady. She had a mind peculiarly well stored with much acquired information and natural talent, and as she was very old, and had an excellent memory, she could draw without the least exaggeration or affectation the most striking pictures of the past age. If I have

been able to do anything in the way of painting the past times, it is very much from the studies with which she presented me. She connected a long period of time with the present generation, for she remembered, and had often spoken with, a person who perfectly recollected the battle of Dunbar, and Oliver Cromwell's subsequent entry into Edinburgh. She preserved her faculties to the very day before her final illness; for our friends Mr. and Mrs. Scott of Harden visited her on the Sunday; and, coming to our house after, were expressing their surprise at the alertness of her mind, and the pleasure which she had in talking over both ancient and modern events. She had told them with great accuracy the real story of the Bride of Lammermuir, and pointed out wherein it differed from the novel. She had all the names of the parties, and detailed (for she was a great genealogist) their connection with existing families. On the subsequent Monday she was struck with a paralytic affection, suffered little, and that with the utmost patience; and what was God's reward, and a great one to her innocent and benevolent life, she never knew that her brother and sister, the last thirty years younger than herself, had trodden the dark path before her. She was a strict economist, which she said enabled her to be liberal; out of her little income of about £300 a year, she bestowed at least a third in well-chosen charities, and with the rest lived like a gentlewoman, and even with hospitality more general than seemed to suit her age; yet I could never prevail on her to accept of any assistance. You cannot conceive how affecting it was to me to see the little preparations of presents which she had assorted for the New Year—for she was a great observer of the old fashions of her period—and to think that the kind heart was cold which delighted in all these acts of kindly affection. I should apologize, I believe, for troubling your ladyship with these melancholy details; but you would not thank me for a letter written with constraint, and my mind is at present very full of this sad subject, though I scarce know any one to whom I would venture to say so much. I hear no good news of Lady Anne, though Lord Montagu writes cautiously. The weather is now turning milder, and may, I hope, be favorable to her complaint. After my own family, my thought most frequently

turns to these orphans, whose parents I loved and respected so much.—I am always, dear Lady Louisa, your very respectful and obliged

Walter Scott.

There is in the library at Abbotsford a fine copy of Baskerville's folio Bible, two volumes, printed at Cambridge in 1763; and there appears on the blank leaf, in the trembling handwriting of Scott's mother, this inscription: "*To my dear son, Walter Scott, from his affectionate mother, Anne Rutherford,—January 1st, 1819.*" Under these words her son has written as follows: "This Bible was the gift of my grandfather Dr. John Rutherford, to my mother, and presented by her to me; being, alas, the last gift which I was to receive from that excellent parent, and, as I verily believe, the thing which she most loved in the world,—not only in humble veneration of the sacred contents, but as the dearest pledge of her father's affection to her. As such she gave it to me; and as such I bequeath it to those who may represent me—charging them carefully to preserve the same, in memory of those to whom it has belonged. 1820."

*

If literary success could have either filled Scott's head or hardened his heart, we should have no such letters as those of December, 1819. Ivanhoe was received throughout England with a more clamorous delight than any of the Scotch novels had been. The volumes (three in number) were now, for the first time, of the post 8vo form, with a finer paper than hitherto, the press-work much more elegant, and the price accordingly raised from eight shillings the volume to ten; yet the copies sold in this original shape were twelve thousand.

I ought to have mentioned sooner, that the original intention was to bring out Ivanhoe as the production of a new hand, and that, to assist this impression, the work was printed in a size and manner unlike the preceding ones; but Constable, when the day of publication approached, remonstrated against this experiment, and it was accordingly abandoned.

The reader has already been told that Scott dictated the greater part of this romance. The portion of the MS. which is his own, appears, however, not only as well and firmly executed as that of any of the Tales of my

Landlord, but distinguished by having still fewer erasures and interlineations, and also by being in a smaller hand. The fragment is beautiful to look at—many pages together without one alteration. It is, I suppose, superfluous to add, that in no instance did Scott rewrite his prose before sending it to the press. Whatever may have been the case with his poetry, the world uniformly received the *prima cura* of the novelist.

As a work of art, Ivanhoe is perhaps the first of all Scott's efforts, whether in prose or in verse; nor have the strength and splendor of his imagination been displayed to higher advantage than in some of the scenes of this romance. But I believe that no reader who is capable of thoroughly comprehending the author's Scotch character and Scotch dialogue will ever place even Ivanhoe, as a work of genius, on the same level with Waverley, Guy Mannering, or The Heart of Mid-Lothian.

There is, to me, something so remarkably characteristic of Scott's mind and manner in a particular passage of the Introduction, which he penned ten years afterwards for this work, that I must be pardoned for extracting it here. He says: "The character of the fair Jewess found so much favor in the eyes of some fair readers, that the writer was censured, because, when arranging the fates of the characters of the drama, he had not assigned the hand of Wilfred to Rebecca, rather than the less interesting Rowena. But, not to mention that the prejudices of the age rendered such a union almost impossible, the author may, in passing, observe that he thinks a character of a highly virtuous and lofty stamp is degraded rather than exalted by an attempt to reward virtue with temporal prosperity. Such is not the recompense which Providence has deemed worthy of suffering merit; and it is a dangerous and fatal doctrine to teach young persons, the most common readers of romance, that rectitude of conduct and of principle are either naturally allied with, or adequately rewarded by, the gratification of our passions, or attainment of our wishes. In a word, if a virtuous and self-denied character is dismissed with temporal wealth, greatness, rank, or the indulgence of such a rashly formed or ill-assorted passion as that of Rebecca for Ivanhoe, the reader will be apt to say, verily Virtue has had its reward. But a glance on the great picture of life will show that the duties of self-denial, and the sacrifice of passion to principle, are seldom thus remunerated; and that the internal consciousness of their high-minded discharge of duty produces on their own reflections a more adequate

recompense, in the form of that peace which the world cannot give or take away."

The introduction of the charming Jewess and her father originated, I find, in a conversation that Scott held with his friend Skene during the severest season of his bodily sufferings in the early part of this year. "Mr. Skene," says that gentleman's wife, "sitting by his bedside, and trying to amuse him as well as he could in the intervals of pain, happened to get on the subject of the Jews, as he had observed them when he spent some time in Germany in his youth. Their situation had naturally made a strong impression; for in those days they retained their own dress and manners entire, and were treated with considerable austerity by their Christian neighbors, being still locked up at night in their own quarter by great gates; and Mr. Skene, partly in seriousness, but partly from the mere wish to turn his mind at the moment upon something that might occupy and divert it, suggested that a group of Jews would be an interesting feature if he could contrive to bring them into his next novel." Upon the appearance of Ivanhoe, he reminded Mr. Skene of this conversation, and said, "You will find this book owes not a little to your German reminiscences." Mrs. Skene adds: "Dining with us one day, not long before Ivanhoe was begun, something that was mentioned led him to describe the sudden death of an advocate of his acquaintance, a Mr. Elphinstone, which occurred in the *Outer-house* soon after he was called to the Bar. It was, he said, no wonder that it had left a vivid impression on his mind, for it was the first sudden death he ever witnessed; and he now related it so as to make us all feel as if we had the scene passing before our eyes. In the death of the Templar in Ivanhoe, I recognized the very picture—I believe I may safely say the very words."

By the way, before Ivanhoe made its appearance, I had myself been formally admitted to the author's secret; but had he favored me with no such confidence, it would have been impossible for me to doubt that I had been present some months before at the conversation which suggested, and indeed supplied all the materials of, one of its most amusing chapters. I allude to that in which our Saxon terms for animals in the field, and our Norman equivalents for them as they appear on the table, and so on, are explained and commented on. All this Scott owed to the after-dinner talk one day in Castle Street of his old friend Mr. William Clerk,—who, among other elegant pursuits, has cultivated the science of philology very deeply.

I cannot conclude this chapter without observing that the publication of Ivanhoe marks the most brilliant epoch in Scott's history as the literary favorite of his contemporaries. With the novel which he next put forth, the immediate sale of these works began gradually to decline; and though, even when that had reached its lowest declension, it was still far above the most ambitious dreams of any other novelist, yet the publishers were afraid the announcement of anything like a falling-off might cast a damp over the spirits of the author. He was allowed to remain, for several years, under the impression that whatever novel he threw off commanded at once the old triumphant sale of ten or twelve thousand, and was afterwards, when included in the collective edition, to be circulated in that shape also as widely as Waverley or Ivanhoe. In my opinion, it would have been very unwise in the booksellers to give Scott any unfavorable tidings upon such subjects after the commencement of the malady which proved fatal to him, —for that from the first shook his mind; but I think they took a false measure of the man when they hesitated to tell him exactly how the matter stood, throughout 1820 and the three or four following years, when his intellect was as vigorous as it ever had been, and his heart as courageous; and I regret their scruples (among other reasons), because the years now mentioned were the most costly ones in his life; and for every twelvemonth in which any man allows himself, or is encouraged by others, to proceed in a course of unwise expenditure, it becomes proportionably more difficult for him to pull up when the mistake is at length detected or recognized.

Chapter XLVII

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The Visionary. — the Peel of Darnick. — Scott's Saturday Excursions to Abbotsford. — a Sunday There in February. — Constable. — John Ballantyne. — Thomas Purdie, Etc. — Prince Gustavus Vasa. — Proclamation of King George Iv. — Publication of the Monastery.

1820

In the course of December, 1819 and January, 1820, Scott drew up three essays, under the title of The Visionary, upon certain popular doctrines or delusions, the spread of which at this time filled with alarm, not only Tories like him, but many persons who had been distinguished through life for their adherence to political liberalism. These papers appeared successively in James Ballantyne's Edinburgh Weekly Journal, and their parentage being obvious, they excited much attention in Scotland. Scott collected them into a pamphlet, which had also a large circulation; and I remember his showing very particular satisfaction when he observed a mason reading it to his comrades, as they sat at their dinner, by a new house on Leith Walk. During January, however, his thoughts continued to be chiefly occupied with the details of the proposed corps of Foresters; of which, I believe it was at last settled, as far as depended on the other gentlemen concerned in it, that he should be the Major. He wrote and spoke on this subject with undiminished zeal, until the whole fell to the ground in consequence of the Government's ultimately declining to take on itself any part of the expense; a refusal which must have been fatal to any such project when the Duke of Buccleuch was a minor. He felt the disappointment keenly; but, in the mean time, the hearty alacrity with which his neighbors of all classes gave in their adhesion had afforded him much pleasure, and, as regarded his own immediate dependents, served to rivet the bonds of affection and confidence, which were to the end maintained between him and them. Darnick had been especially ardent in the cause, and he thenceforth considered its volunteers as persons whose individual fortunes closely concerned him. I could fill many a page with the letters which he wrote at

subsequent periods, with the view of promoting the success of these spirited young fellows in their various departments of industry: they were proud of their patron, as may be supposed, and he was highly gratified, as well as amused, when he learned that—while the rest of the world were talking of "The Great Unknown"—his usual *sobriquet* among these villagers was "The Duke of Darnick." Already his possessions almost encircled this picturesque and thriving hamlet; and there were few things on which he had more strongly fixed his fancy than acquiring a sort of symbol of seigniory there, by becoming the purchaser of a certain then ruinous tower that predominated, with a few coeval trees, over the farmhouses and cottages of his *ducal* vassals. A letter, previously quoted, contains an allusion to this Peelhouse of Darnick; which is moreover exactly described in the novel which he had now in hand—The Monastery. The interest Scott seemed to take in the Peel awakened, however, the pride of its hereditary proprietor: and when that worthy person, who had made some money by trade in Edinburgh, resolved on fitting it up for the evening retreat of his own life, *his Grace of Darnick* was too happy to waive his pretensions.

This was a winter of uncommon severity in Scotland; and the snow lay so deep and so long as to interrupt very seriously all Scott's country operations. I find, in his letters to Laidlaw, various paragraphs expressing the concern he took in the hardships which his poor neighbors must be suffering. Thus, on the 19th of January, he says:—

> Dear Willie,—I write by the post that you may receive the enclosed, or rather subjoined, cheque for £60, in perfect safety. This dreadful morning will probably stop Mercer. It makes me shiver in the midst of superfluous comforts to think of the distress of others. £10 of the £60 I wish you to distribute among our poorer neighbors, so as may best aid them. I mean not only the actually indigent, but those who are, in our phrase, *ill aff*. I am sure Dr. Scott will assist you with his advice in this labor of love. I think part of the wood-money, too, should be given among the Abbotstown folks if the storm keeps them off work, as is like. Yours truly,
>
> Walter Scott.

Deep, deep snow lying here. How do the goodwife and bairns? The little bodies will be half-buried in snow-drift.

And again, on the 25th, he writes thus:—

Dear Willie,—I have yours with the news of the inundation, which, it seems, has done no damage. I hope *Mai* will be taken care of. He should have a bed in the kitchen, and always be called indoors after it is dark, for all the kind are savage at night. Please cause Swanston to knock him up a box, and fill it with straw from time to time. I enclose a cheque for £50 to pay accounts, etc. Do not let the poor bodies want for a £5, or even a £10, more or less; —

"We'll get a blessing wi' the lave,
And never miss 't."

Yours,

W. S.

In the course of this month, through the kindness of Mr. Croker, Scott received from the late Earl Bathurst, then Colonial Secretary of State, the offer of an appointment in the civil service of the East India Company for his second son: and this seemed at the time too good a thing not to be gratefully accepted; though the apparently increasing prosperity of his fortunes induced him, a few years afterwards, to indulge his parental feelings by throwing it up. He thus alludes to this matter in a letter to his good old friend at Jedburgh:—

TO ROBERT SHORTREED, ESQ., SHERIFF-SUBSTITUTE OF ROXBURGHSHIRE, JEDBURGH.

Edinburgh, 19th January, 1820.

My dear Sir,—I heartily congratulate you on getting the appointment for your son William in a manner so very pleasant to your feelings, and which is, like all Whytbank does, considerate, friendly, and generous. I am not aware that I have any friends at Calcutta, but if you think letters to Sir John Malcolm and Lieut.-

Colonel Russell would serve my young friend, he shall have my best commendations to them.

It is very odd that almost the same thing has happened to me; for about a week ago I was surprised by a letter, saying that an unknown friend (who since proves to be Lord Bathurst, whom I never saw or spoke with) would give my second son a Writer's situation for India. Charles is two years too young for this appointment; but I do not think I am at liberty to decline an offer so advantageous, if it can be so arranged that, by exchange or otherwise, it can be kept open for him. Ever yours faithfully,

Walter Scott.

About the middle of February—it having been ere that time arranged that I should marry his eldest daughter in the course of the spring—I accompanied him and part of his family on one of those flying visits to Abbotsford, with which he often indulged himself on a Saturday during term. Upon such occasions Scott appeared at the usual hour in Court, but wearing, instead of the official suit of black, his country morning dress—green jacket and so forth—under the clerk's gown; a license of which many gentlemen of the long robe had been accustomed to avail themselves in the days of his youth—it being then considered as the authentic badge that they were lairds as well as lawyers—but which, to use the dialect of the place, had fallen into *desuetude* before I knew the Parliament House. He was, I think, one of the two or three, or at most the half dozen, who still adhered to this privilege of their order; and it has now, in all likelihood, become quite obsolete, like the ancient custom, a part of the same system, for all Scotch barristers to appear without gowns or wigs, and in colored clothes, when upon circuit. At noon, when the Court broke up, Peter Mathieson was sure to be in attendance in the Parliament Close, and five minutes after, the gown had been tossed off, and Scott, rubbing his hands for glee, was under weigh for Tweedside. On this occasion, he was, of course, in mourning; but I have thought it worth while to preserve the circumstance of his usual Saturday's costume. As we proceeded, he talked without reserve of the novel of The Monastery, of which he had the first volume with him; and mentioned, what he had probably forgotten when he wrote the Introduction of 1830, that a good deal of that volume had been composed before he concluded Ivanhoe.

"It was a relief," he said, "to interlay the scenery most familiar to me with the strange world for which I had to draw so much on imagination."

Next morning there appeared at breakfast John Ballantyne, who had at this time a shooting or hunting box a few miles off, in the vale of the Leader, and with him Mr. Constable, his guest; and it being a fine clear day, as soon as Scott had read the Church service and one of Jeremy Taylor's sermons, we all sallied out, before noon, on a perambulation of his upland territories; Maida and the rest of the favorites accompanying our march. At starting we were joined by the constant henchman, Tom Purdie—and I may save myself the trouble of any attempt to describe his appearance, for his master has given us an inimitably true one in introducing a certain personage of his Redgauntlet: "He was, perhaps, sixty years old; yet his brow was not much furrowed, and his jet black hair was only grizzled, not whitened, by the advance of age. All his motions spoke strength unabated; and, though rather undersized, he had very broad shoulders, was square-made, thin-flanked, and apparently combined in his frame muscular strength and activity; the last somewhat impaired, perhaps, by years, but the first remaining in full vigor. A hard and harsh countenance; eyes far sunk under projecting eyebrows, which were grizzled like his hair: a wide mouth, furnished from ear to ear with a range of unimpaired teeth of uncommon whiteness, and a size and breadth which might have become the jaws of an ogre, completed this delightful portrait." Equip this figure in Scott's cast-off green jacket, white hat and drab trousers; and imagine that years of kind treatment, comfort, and the honest consequence of a confidential *grieve*, had softened away much of the hardness and harshness originally impressed on the visage by anxious penury and the sinister habits of a *black-fisher*,—and the Tom Purdie of 1820 stands before us.

We were all delighted to see how completely Scott had recovered his bodily vigor, and none more so than Constable, who, as he puffed and panted after him up one ravine and down another, often stopped to wipe his forehead, and remarked that "it was not every author who should lead him such a dance." But Purdie's face shone with rapture as he observed how severely the swag-bellied bookseller's activity was tasked. Scott exclaiming exultingly, though perhaps for the tenth time, "This will be a glorious spring for our trees, Tom!"—"You may say that, Shirra," quoth Tom,—and then lingering a moment for Constable—"My certy," he added, scratching his head, "and I think it will be a grand season for *our buiks* too." But indeed

Tom always talked of *our buiks* as if they had been as regular products of the soil as *our aits* and *our birks*. Having threaded, first the Haxelcleugh, and then the Rhymer's Glen, we arrived at Huntly Burn, where the hospitality of the kind *Weird-Sisters*, as Scott called the Miss Fergusons, reanimated our exhausted Bibliopoles, and gave them courage to extend their walk a little further down the same famous brook. Here there was a small cottage in a very sequestered situation, by making some little additions to which Scott thought it might be converted into a suitable summer residence for his daughter and future son-in-law. The details of that plan were soon settled—it was agreed on all hands that a sweeter scene of seclusion could not be fancied. He repeated some verses of Rogers's Wish, which paint the spot:—

> "Mine be a cot beside the hill— A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
> A willowy brook that turns a mill,
> With many a fall shall linger near:" etc.

But when he came to the stanza,—

> "And Lucy at her wheel shall sing,
> In russet-gown and apron blue,"

he departed from the text, adding,—

> "But if Bluestockings here you bring,
> The Great Unknown won't dine with you."

Johnny Ballantyne, a projector to the core, was particularly zealous about this embryo establishment. Foreseeing that he should have had walking enough ere he reached Huntly Burn, his dapper little Newmarket groom had been ordered to fetch Old Mortality thither, and now, mounted on his fine hunter, he capered about us, looking pallid and emaciated as a ghost, but as gay and cheerful as ever, and would fain have been permitted to ride over hedge and ditch to mark out the proper line of the future avenue. Scott admonished him that the country-people, if they saw him at such work, would take the whole party for heathens; and clapping spurs to his horse, he left us. "The deil's in the body," quoth Tom Purdie; "he'll be ower every *yett* atween this and Turn-again, though it be the Lord's day. I wadna wonder if

he were to be *ceeted* before the Session." "Be sure, Tam," cries Constable, "that ye egg on the Dominie to blaw up his father—I wouldna grudge a hundred miles o' gait to see the ne'er-do-weel on the stool, and neither, I'll be sworn, would the Sheriff."—"Na, na," quoth the Sheriff; "we'll let sleeping dogs be, Tam."

As we walked homeward, Scott, being a little fatigued, laid his left hand on Tom's shoulder, and leaned heavily for support, chatting to his "Sunday pony," as he called the affectionate fellow, just as freely as with the rest of the party, and Tom put in his word shrewdly and manfully, and grinned and grunted whenever the joke chanced to be within his apprehension. It was easy to see that his heart swelled within him from the moment that the Sheriff got his collar in his gripe.

There arose a little dispute between them about what tree or trees ought to be cut down in a hedge-row that we passed, and Scott seemed somewhat ruffled with finding that some previous hints of his on that head had not been attended to. When we got into motion again, his hand was on Constable's shoulder—and Tom dropped a pace or two to the rear, until we approached a gate, when he jumped forward and opened it. "Give us a pinch of your snuff, Tom," quoth the Sheriff. Tom's mull was produced, and the hand resumed its position. I was much diverted with Tom's behavior when we at length reached Abbotsford. There were some garden chairs on the green in front of the cottage porch. Scott sat down on one of them to enjoy the view of his new tower as it gleamed in the sunset, and Constable and I did the like. Mr. Purdie remained lounging near us for a few minutes, and then asked the Sheriff "to speak a word." They withdrew together into the garden—and Scott presently rejoined us with a particularly comical expression of face. As soon as Tom was out of sight, he said—"Will ye guess what he has been saying, now?—Well, this is a great satisfaction! Tom assures me that he has thought the matter over, and *will take my advice* about the thinning of that clump behind Captain Ferguson's."

I must not forget that, whoever might be at Abbotsford, Tom always appeared at his master's elbow on Sunday, when dinner was over, and drank long life to the Laird and the Lady and all the good company, in a quaigh of whiskey, or a tumbler of wine, according to his fancy. I believe Scott has somewhere expressed in print his satisfaction that, among all the changes of our manners, the ancient freedom of personal intercourse may still be indulged between a master and an *out-of-doors* servant; but in truth he kept

by the old fashion even with domestic servants, to an extent which I have hardly seen practised by any other gentleman. He conversed with his coachman if he sat by him, as he often did on the box—with his footman, if he happened to be in the rumble; and when there was any very young lad in the household, he held it a point of duty to see that his employments were so arranged as to leave time for advancing his education, made him bring his copy-book once a week to the library, and examined him as to all that he was doing. Indeed he did not confine this humanity to his own people. Any steady servant of a friend of his was soon considered as a sort of friend too, and was sure to have a kind little colloquy to himself at coming and going. With all this, Scott was a very rigid enforcer of discipline—contrived to make it thoroughly understood by all about him, that they must do their part by him as he did his by them; and the result was happy. I never knew any man so well served as he was—so carefully, so respectfully, and so silently; and I cannot help doubting if, in any department of human operations, real kindness ever compromised real dignity.

In a letter, already quoted, there occurs some mention of the Prince Gustavus Vasa, who was spending this winter in Edinburgh, and his Royal Highness's accomplished attendant, the Baron Polier. I met them frequently in Castle Street, and remember as especially interesting the first evening that they dined there. The only portrait in Scott's Edinburgh dining-room was one of Charles XII. of Sweden, and he was struck, as indeed every one must have been, with the remarkable resemblance which the exiled Prince's air and features presented to the hero of his race. Young Gustavus, on his part, hung with keen and melancholy enthusiasm on Scott's anecdotes of the expedition of Charles Edward Stewart.—The Prince, accompanied by Scott and myself, witnessed the ceremonial of the proclamation of King George IV. on the 2d of February at the Cross of Edinburgh, from a window over Mr. Constable's shop in the High Street; and on that occasion, also, the air of sadness that mixed in his features with eager curiosity was very affecting. Scott explained all the details to him, not without many lamentations over the barbarity of the Auld Reekie bailies, who had removed the beautiful Gothic Cross itself, for the sake of widening the thoroughfare. The weather was fine, the sun shone bright; and the antique tabards of the heralds, the trumpet notes of *God save the King*, and the hearty cheerings of the immense uncovered multitude that filled the noble old street, produced altogether a scene of great splendor and solemnity. The

Royal Exile surveyed it with a flushed cheek and a watery eye, and Scott, observing his emotion, withdrew with me to another window, whispering: "Poor lad! poor lad! God help him." Later in the season, the Prince spent a few days at Abbotsford; but I have said enough to explain some allusions in the next letter to Lord Montagu, in which Scott also adverts to several public events of January and February, 1820,—the assassination of the Duke of Berri, the death of King George III., the general election which followed the royal demise, and its more unhappy consequence, the reagitation of the old disagreement between George IV. and his wife, who, as soon as she learned his accession to the throne, announced her resolution of returning from the Continent (where she had been leading for some years a wandering life), and asserting her rights as Queen. The Tory gentleman, in whose canvass of the Selkirk boroughs Scott was now earnestly concerned, was his worthy friend, Mr. Henry Monteith of Carstairs, who ultimately carried the election.

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, ETC., DITTON PARK.

Edinburgh, 22d February, 1820.

My dear Lord,—I have nothing to say, except that Selkirk has declared decidedly for Monteith, and that his calling and election seem to be sure. Roxburghshire is right and tight. Harden will not stir for Berwickshire. In short, within my sphere of observation, there is nothing which need make you regret your personal absence; and I hope my dear young namesake and chief will not find his influence abated while he is unable to head it himself. It is but little I can do, but it shall always be done with a good will —and merits no thanks, for I owe much more to his father's memory than ever I can pay a tittle of. I often think what he would have said or wished, and, within my limited sphere, *that* will always be a rule to me while I have the means of advancing in any respect the interest of his son;—certainly, if anything could increase this desire, it would be the banner being at present in your Lordship's hand. I can do little but look out ahead, but that is always something. When I look back on the house of Buccleuch, as I once knew it, it is a sad retrospect. But we must look forward, and hope for the young blossom of so goodly a tree. I think your

Lordship judged quite right in carrying Walter in his place to the funeral. He will long remember it, and may survive many occasions of the same kind, to all human appearance.—Here is a horrid business of the Duke de Berri. It was first told me yesterday by Count Itterburg (*i. e.*, Prince Gustavus of Sweden, son of the ex-King), who comes to see me very often. No fairy tale could match the extravagance of such a tale being told to a private Scotch gentleman by such a narrator, his own grandfather having perished in the same manner. But our age has been one of complete revolution, baffling all argument and expectation. As to the King and Queen, or, to use the abbreviation of an old Jacobite of my acquaintance, who, not loving to hear them so called at full length, and yet desirous to have the newspapers read to him, commanded these words always to be pronounced as the letters K. and Q.—I say then, as to the K. and the Q., I venture to think, that whichever strikes the first blow will lose the battle. The sound, well-judging, and well-principled body of the people will be much shocked at the stirring such a hateful and disgraceful question. If the K. urges it unprovoked, the public feeling will put him in the wrong; if he lets her alone, her own imprudence, and that of her hot-headed adviser Harry Brougham, will push on the discussion; and, take a fool's word for it, as Sancho says, the country will never bear her coming back, foul with the various kinds of infamy she has been stained with, to force herself into the throne. On the whole, it is a discussion most devoutly to be deprecated by those who wish well to the Royal family.

Now for a very different subject. I have a report that there is found on the farm of Melsington, in a bog, the limb of a bronze figure, full size, with a spur on the heel. This has been reported to Mr. Riddell, as Commissioner, and to me as Antiquary in chief, on the estate. I wish your Lordship would permit it to be sent provisionally to Abbotsford, and also allow me, if it shall seem really curious, to make search for the rest of the statue. Clarkson has sent me a curious account of it; and that a Roman statue (for such it seems) of that size should be found in so wild a place, has something very irritating to the curiosity. I do not of course desire to have anything more than the opportunity of examining the

relique. It may be the foundation of a set of bronzes, if stout Lord Walter should turn to *virtu*.

Always, my dear Lord, most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

The novel of The Monastery was published by Messrs. Longman and Company in the beginning of March. It appeared, not in the post 8vo form of Ivanhoe, but in three volumes 12mo, like the earlier works of the series. In fact, a few sheets of The Monastery had been printed before Scott agreed to let Ivanhoe have "By the Author of Waverley" on its title-page; and the different shapes of the two books belonged to the abortive scheme of passing off "Mr. Laurence Templeton" as a hitherto unheard-of candidate for literary success.

Chapter XLVIII

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Scott Revisits London. — His Portrait by Lawrence, and Bust by Chantrey. — Anecdotes by Allan Cunningham. — Letters to Mrs. Scott, Laidlaw, Etc. — His Baronetcy Gazetted. — Marriage of His Daughter Sophia. — Letter to "The Baron of Galashiels." — Visit of Prince Gustavus Vasa at Abbotsford. — Tenders of Honorary Degrees From Oxford and Cambridge. — Letter to Mr. Thomas Scott.

1820

At the rising of his Court on the 12th of March, Scott proceeded to London, for the purpose of receiving his baronetcy, which he had been prevented from doing in the spring of the preceding year by his own illness, and again at Christmas by accumulated family afflictions. On his arrival in town, his son, the Cornet, met him; and they both established themselves at Miss Dumergue's.

One of his first visitors was Sir Thomas Lawrence, who informed him that the King had resolved to adorn the great gallery, then in progress at Windsor Castle, with portraits by his hand of his Majesty's most distinguished contemporaries; all the reigning monarchs of Europe, and their chief ministers and generals, had already sat for this purpose: on the same walls the King desired to see exhibited those of his own subjects who had attained the highest honors of literature and science—and it was his pleasure that this series should commence with Walter Scott. The portrait was of course begun immediately, and the head was finished before Scott left town. Sir Thomas has caught and fixed with admirable skill one of the loftiest expressions of Scott's countenance at the proudest period of his life: to the perfect truth of the representation, every one who ever surprised him in the act of composition at his desk, will bear witness. The expression, however, was one with which many who had seen the man often were not familiar; and it was extremely unfortunate that Sir Thomas filled in the figure from a separate sketch after he had quitted London. When I first saw the head, I thought nothing could be better; but there was an evident change

for the worse when the picture appeared in its finished state—for the rest of the person had been done on a different scale, and this neglect of proportion takes considerably from the majestic effect which the head itself, and especially the mighty pile of forehead, had in nature. I hope one day to see a good engraving of the head alone, as I first saw it floating on a dark sea of canvas.

Lawrence told me, several years afterwards, that, in his opinion, the two greatest men he had painted were the Duke of Wellington and Sir Walter Scott; "and it was odd," said he, "that they both chose usually the same hour for sitting—seven in the morning. They were both as patient sitters as I ever had. Scott, however, was, in my case at least, a very difficult subject. I had selected what struck me as his noblest look; but when he was in the chair before me, he talked away on all sorts of subjects in his usual style, so that it cost me great pains to bring him back to solemnity, when I had to attend to anything beyond the outline of a subordinate feature. I soon found that the surest recipe was to say something that would lead him to recite a bit of poetry. I used to introduce, by hook or by crook, a few lines of Campbell or Byron—he was sure to take up the passage where I left it, or *cap* it by something better—and then, when he was, as Dryden says of one of his heroes,—

> 'Made up of three parts fire—so full of heaven
> It sparkled at his eyes'—

then was my time—and I made the best use I could of it. The hardest day's work I had with him was once when ***** accompanied him to my painting room. ***** was in particularly gay spirits, and nothing would serve him but keeping both artist and sitter in a perpetual state of merriment by anecdote upon anecdote about poor Sheridan. The anecdotes were mostly in themselves black enough—but the style of the *conteur* was irresistibly quaint and comical. When Scott came next, he said he was ashamed of himself for laughing so much as he listened to them; 'for truly,' quoth he, 'if the tithe was fact, ***** might have said to Sherry—as Lord Braxfield once said to an eloquent culprit at the Bar—"Ye 're a vera clever chiel', man, but ye wad be nane the waur o' a hanging."'"

It was also during this visit to London that Scott sat to Mr. (now Sir Francis) Chantrey for that bust which alone preserves for posterity the cast of expression most fondly remembered by all who ever mingled in his

domestic circle. Chantrey's request that Scott would sit to him was communicated through Mr. Allan Cunningham, then (as now) employed as Clerk of the Works in our great Sculptor's establishment. Mr. Cunningham, in his early days, when gaining his bread as a stonemason in Nithsdale, made a pilgrimage on foot into Edinburgh, for the sole purpose of seeing the author of Marmion as he passed along the street. He was now in possession of a celebrity of his own, and had mentioned to his patron his purpose of calling on Scott to thank him for some kind message he had received, through a common friend, on the subject of those Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song, which first made his poetical talents known to the public. Chantrey embraced this opportunity of conveying to Scott his own long-cherished ambition of modelling his head; and Scott at once assented to the flattering proposal. "It was about nine in the morning," says Mr. Cunningham, "that I sent in my card to him at Miss Dumergue's in Piccadilly. It had not been gone a minute, when I heard a quick heavy step coming, and in he came, holding out both hands, as was his custom, and saying, as he pressed mine, 'Allan Cunningham, I am glad to see you.' I said something," continues Mr. C., "about the pleasure I felt in touching the hand that had charmed me so much. He moved his hand, and with one of his comic smiles, said, 'Ay—and a big brown hand it is.' I was a little abashed at first: Scott saw it, and soon put me at my ease; he had the power—I had almost called it the art, but art it was not—of winning one's heart and restoring one's confidence beyond any man I ever met." Then ensued a little conversation, in which Scott complimented Allan on his ballads, and urged him to try some work of more consequence, quoting Burns's words, "for dear auld Scotland's sake;" but being engaged to breakfast in a distant part of the town, he presently dismissed his visitor, promising to appear next day at an early hour, and submit himself to Mr. Chantrey's inspection.

Chantrey's purpose had been the same as Lawrence's—to seize a poetical phasis of Scott's countenance; and he proceeded to model the head as looking upwards, gravely and solemnly. The talk that passed, meantime, had equally amused and gratified both, and fortunately, at parting, Chantrey requested that Scott would come and breakfast with him next morning before they recommenced operations in the studio. Scott accepted the invitation, and when he arrived again in Ecclestone Street, found two or three acquaintances assembled to meet him,—among others, his old friend Richard Heber. The breakfast was, as any party in Sir Francis Chantrey's

house is sure to be, a gay and joyous one, and not having seen Heber in particular for several years, Scott's spirits were unusually excited by the presence of an intimate associate of his youthful days. I transcribe what follows from Mr. Cunningham's Memorandum:—

"Heber made many inquiries about old friends in Edinburgh, and old books and old houses, and reminded the other of their early socialities. 'Ay,' said Mr. Scott, 'I remember we once dined out together, and sat so late that when we came away the night and day were so neatly balanced, that we resolved to walk about till sunrise. The moon was not down, however, and we took advantage of her Ladyship's lantern, and climbed to the top of Arthur's Seat; when we came down we had a rare appetite for breakfast.'—'I remember it well,' said Heber; 'Edinburgh was a wild place in those days,—it abounded in clubs—convivial clubs.'—'Yes,' replied Mr. Scott, 'and abounds still; but the conversation is calmer, and there are no such sallies now as might be heard in other times. One club, I remember, was infested with two Kemps, father and son; when the old man had done speaking, the young one began, —and before he grew weary, the father was refreshed, and took up the song. John Clerk, during a pause, was called on for a stave; he immediately struck up, in a psalm-singing tone, and electrified the club with a verse which sticks like a burr to my memory,—

> "Now, God Almighty judge James Kemp,
> And likewise his son John,
> And hang them over Hell in hemp,
> And burn them in brimstone.'"—

"In the midst of the mirth which this specimen of psalmody raised, John (commonly called *Jack*) Fuller, the member for Surrey, and standing jester of the House of Commons, came in. Heber, who was well acquainted with the free and joyous character of that worthy, began to lead him out by relating some festive anecdotes: Fuller growled approbation, and indulged us with some of his odd sallies; things which he assured us 'were damned good, and true too, which was better.' Mr. Scott, who was standing when Fuller came in, eyed him at first with a look grave and considerate; but as the stream of conversation flowed, his keen eye twinkled brighter and brighter; his stature increased, for he drew himself up, and seemed to take the measure of the hoary joker, body and soul. An hour or two of social chat

had meanwhile induced Mr. Chantrey to alter his views as to the bust, and when Mr. Scott left us, he said to me privately, 'This will never do—I shall never be able to please myself with a perfectly serene expression. I must try his conversational look, take him when about to break out into some sly funny old story.' As Chantrey said this, he took a string, cut off the head of the bust, put it into its present position, touched the eyes and the mouth slightly, and wrought such a transformation upon it, that when Scott came to his third sitting, he smiled and said,—'Ay, ye're mair like yoursel now!—Why, Mr. Chantrey, no witch of old ever performed such cantrips with clay as this.'"

These sittings were seven in number; but when Scott revisited London a year afterwards, he gave Chantrey several more, the bust being by that time in marble. Allan Cunningham, when he called to bid him farewell, as he was about to leave town on the present occasion, found him in court dress, preparing to kiss hands at the Levee, on being gazetted as Baronet. "He seemed anything but at his ease," says Cunningham, "in that strange attire; he was like one in armor—the stiff cut of the coat—the large shining buttons and buckles—the lace ruffles—the queue—the sword—and the cocked hat, formed a picture at which I could not forbear smiling. He surveyed himself in the glass for a moment, and burst into a hearty laugh. 'O Allan,' he said, 'O Allan, what creatures we must make of ourselves in obedience to Madam Etiquette! Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily she turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty?'"

Scott's baronetcy was conferred on him, not in consequence of any Ministerial suggestion, but by the King personally, and of his own unsolicited motion; and when the poet kissed his hand, he said to him, "I shall always reflect with pleasure on Sir Walter Scott's having been the first creation of my reign."

The Gazette announcing his new dignity was dated March 30, and published on the 2d of April, 1820; and the Baronet, as soon afterwards as he could get away from Lawrence, set out on his return to the North; for he had such respect for the ancient prejudice (a classical as well as a Scottish one) against marrying in May, that he was anxious to have the ceremony in which his daughter was concerned over before that unlucky month should commence. It is needless to say, that during this stay in London he had

again experienced, in its fullest measure, the enthusiasm of all ranks of his acquaintance; and I shall now transcribe a few paragraphs from domestic letters, which will show, among other things, how glad he was when the hour came that restored him to his ordinary course of life.

TO MRS. SCOTT, 39 CASTLE STREET,
EDINBURGH.

Piccadilly, 20th March, 1820.

My dear Charlotte,—I have got a delightful plan for the addition at Abb——, which I think will make it quite complete, and furnish me with a handsome library, and you with a drawing-room and better bedroom, with good bedrooms for company, etc. It will cost me a little hard work to meet the expense, but I have been a good while idle. I hope to leave this town early next week, and shall hasten back with great delight to my own household gods.

I hope this will find you from under Dr. Ross's charge. I expect to see you quite in beauty when I come down, for I assure you I have been coaxed by very pretty ladies here, and look for merry faces at home. My picture comes on, and will be a grand thing, but the sitting is a great bore. Chantrey's bust is one of the finest things he ever did. It is quite the fashion to go to see it—there's for you. Yours, my dearest love, with the most sincere affection,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Piccadilly, March 27.

My dear Charlotte,—I have the pleasure to say that Lord Sidmouth has promised to dismiss me in all my honors by the 30th, so that I can easily be with you by the end of April; and you and Sophia may easily select the 28th, 29th, or 30th, for the ceremony. I have been much fêted here, as usual, and had a very quiet dinner at Mr. Arbuthnot's yesterday with the Duke of

Wellington, where Walter heard the great Lord in all his glory talk of war and Waterloo. Here is a hellish—yes, literally a hellish bustle. My head turns round with it. The whole mob of the Middlesex blackguards pass through Piccadilly twice a day, and almost drive me mad with their noise and vociferation. Pray do, my dear Charlotte, write soon. You know those at a distance are always anxious to hear from home. I beg you to say what would give you pleasure that I could bring from this place, and whether you want anything from Mrs. Arthur for yourself, Sophia, or Anne; also what would please little Charles. You know you may stretch a point on this occasion. Richardson says your honors will be gazetted on Saturday; certainly very soon, as the King, I believe, has signed the warrant. When, or how I shall see him, is not determined, but I suppose I shall have to go to Brighton. My best love attends the girls, little Charles, and all the quadrupeds.

I conclude that the marriage will take place in Castle Street, and want to know where they go, etc. All this you will have to settle without my wise head; but I shall be terribly critical—so see you do all right. I am always, dearest Charlotte, most affectionately yours,

Walter Scott.

(*For the Lady Scott of Abbotsford—to be.*)

TO MR. JAMES BALLANTYNE, PRINTER, ST. JOHN'S STREET, EDINBURGH.

96 Piccadilly, 28th March.

Dear James,—I am much obliged by your attentive letter. Unquestionably Longman and Co. sell their books at subscription price, because they have the first of the market, and only one third of the books; so that, as they say with us, "let them care that come ahint." This I knew and foresaw, and the ragings of the booksellers, considerably aggravated by the displeasure of Constable and his house, are ridiculous enough; and as to their injuring the work, if it have a principle of locomotion in it, they cannot stop it—if it has not, they cannot make it move. I care not

a bent twopence about their quarrels; only I say now, as I always said, that Constable's management is best, both for himself and the author; and, had we not been controlled by the narrowness of discount, I would put nothing past him. I agree with the public in thinking the work not very interesting; but it was written with as much care as the others—that is, with no care at all; and,

"If it is na weil bobbit, we'll bobb it again."

On these points I am Atlas. I cannot write much in this bustle of engagements, with Sir Francis's mob holloing under the windows. I find that even this light composition demands a certain degree of silence, and I might as well live in a cotton-mill. Lord Sidmouth tells me I will obtain leave to quit London by the 30th, which will be delightful news, for I find I cannot bear late hours and great society so well as formerly; and yet it is a fine thing to hear politics talked of by Ministers of State, and war discussed by the Duke of Wellington.

My occasions here will require that John or you send me two notes payable at Coutts's for £300 each, at two and three months' date. I will write to Constable for one at £350, which will settle my affairs here—which, with fees and other matters, come, as you may think, pretty heavy. Let the bills be drawn payable at Coutts's, and sent without delay. I will receive them safe if sent under Mr. Freeling's cover. Mention particularly what you are doing, for now is your time to push miscellaneous work. Pray take great notice of inaccuracies in the Novels. They are very, very many—some mine, I dare say—but all such as you may and ought to correct. If you would call on William Erskine (who is your well-wisher, and a little mortified he never sees you), he would point out some of them.

Do you ever see Lockhart? You should consult him on every doubt where you would refer to me if present. Yours very truly,

W. S.

You say nothing of John, yet I am anxious about him.

TO MR. LAIDLAW, KAESIDE, MELROSE.

London, April 2, 1820.

Dear Willie,—I had the great pleasure of your letter, which carries me back to my own braes, which I love so dearly, out of this place of bustle and politics. When I can see my Master—and thank him for many acts of favor—I think I will bid adieu to London forever; for neither the hours nor the society suit me so well as a few years since. There is too much necessity for exertion, too much brilliancy and excitation from morning till night.

I am glad the sheep are away, though at a loss. I should think the weather rather too dry for planting, judging by what we have here. Do not let Tom go on sticking in plants to no purpose—better put in firs in a rainy week in August. Give my service to him. I expect to be at Edinburgh in the end of this month, and to get a week at Abbotsford before the Session sits down. I think you are right to be in no hurry to let Broomielees. There seems no complaint of wanting money here just now, so I hope things will come round.

Ever yours truly,

Walter Scott.

TO MISS SCOTT, CASTLE STREET, EDINBURGH.

London, April 3, 1820.

Dear Sophia,—I have no letter from any one at home excepting Lockhart, and he only says you are all well; and I trust it is so. I have seen most of my old friends, who are a little the worse for the wear, like myself. A five years' march down the wrong side of the hill tells more than ten on the right side. Our good friends here are kind as kind can be, and no frumps. They lecture the Cornet a little, which he takes with becoming deference and good-humor. There is a certain veil of Flanders lace floating in the wind for a certain occasion, from a certain godmother, but that is more than a dead secret.

We had a very merry day yesterday at Lord Melville's, where we found Lord Huntly and other friends, and had a bumper to the new Baronet, whose name was Gazetted that evening. Lady

Huntly plays Scotch tunes like a Highland angel. She ran a set of variations on "Kenmure's on and awa'," which I told her were enough to raise a whole country-side. I never in my life heard such fire thrown into that sort of music. I am now laying anchors to windward, as John Ferguson says, to get Walter's leave extended. We saw the Duke of York, who was very civil, but wants altogether the courtesy of the King. I have had a very gracious message from the King. He is expected up very soon, so I don't go to Brighton, which is so far good. I fear his health is not strong. Meanwhile all goes forward for the Coronation. The expense of the robes for the peers may amount to £400 apiece. All the ermine is bought up at the most extravagant prices. I hear so much of it, that I really think, like Beau Tibbs, I shall be tempted to come up and see it, if possible. Indeed, I don't see why I should not stay here, as I seem to be forgotten at home. The people here are like to smother me with kindness, so why should I be in a great hurry to leave them?

I write, wishing to know what I could bring Anne and you and mamma down, that would be acceptable; and I shall be much obliged to you to put me up to that matter. To little Charles also I promised something, and I wish to know what he would like. I hope he pays attention to Mr. Thomson, to whom remember my best compliments. I hope to get something for him soon.

To-day I go to spend my Sabbath quietly with Joanna Baillie and John Richardson, at Hampstead. The long Cornet goes with me. I have kept him amongst the seniors; nevertheless he seems pretty well amused. He is certainly one of the best-conditioned lads I ever saw, in point of temper.

I understand you and Anne have gone through the ceremony of confirmation. Pray write immediately, and let me know how you are all going on, and what you would like to have, all of you. You know how much I would like to please you.

Yours, most affectionately,

Walter Scott.

While Scott remained in London, the Professorship of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh became vacant by the death of Dr. Thomas

Brown; and among others who proposed themselves as candidates to fill it, was the author of the Isle of Palms. He was opposed in the Town Council (who are the patrons of most of the Edinburgh Chairs), on various pretences, but solely, in fact, on party grounds,—certain humorous political pieces having much exacerbated the Whigs of the North against him; and I therefore wrote to Scott, requesting him to animate the Tory Ministers in his behalf. Sir Walter did so, and Mr. Wilson's canvass was successful. The answer to my communication was in these terms:—

TO J. G. LOCKHART, ESQ., GREAT KING STREET, EDINBURGH.

London, 30th March, 1820.

Dear Lockhart,—I have yours of the Sunday morning, which has been terribly long of coming. There needed no apology for mentioning anything in which I could be of service to Wilson; and, so far as good words and good wishes *here* can do, I think he will be successful; but the battle must be fought in Edinburgh. You are aware that the only point of exception to Wilson may be, that, with the fire of genius, he has possessed some of its eccentricities; but, did he ever approach to those of Henry Brougham, who is the god of Whiggish idolatry? If the high and rare qualities with which he is invested are to be thrown aside as useless, because they may be clouded by a few grains of dust which he can blow aside at pleasure, it is less a punishment on Mr. Wilson than on the country. I have little doubt he would consider success in this weighty matter as a pledge for binding down his acute and powerful mind to more regular labor than circumstances have hitherto required of him, for indeed, without doing so, the appointment could in no point of view answer his purpose. He must stretch to the oar for his own credit, as well as that of his friends; and if he does so, there can be no doubt that his efforts will be doubly blessed, in reference both to himself and to public utility. He must make every friend he can amongst the Council. Palladio Johnstone should not be omitted. If my wife canvasses him, she may do some good.

You must, of course, recommend to Wilson great temper in his canvass—for wrath will do no good. After all, he must leave off sack, purge and live cleanly as a gentleman ought to do; otherwise people will compare his present ambition to that of Sir Terry O'Fag, when he wished to become a judge. "Our pleasant follies are made the whips to scourge us," as Lear says; for otherwise, what could possibly stand in the way of his nomination? I trust it will take place, and give him the consistence and steadiness which are all he wants to make him the first man of the age.

I am very angry with Castle Street—not a soul has written me, save yourself, since I came to London.

Yours very truly,

Walter Scott.

Sir Walter, accompanied by the Cornet, reached Edinburgh late in April, and on the 29th of that month he gave me the hand of his daughter Sophia. The wedding, *more Scotico*, took place in the evening; and adhering on all such occasions to ancient modes of observance with the same punctiliousness which he mentions as distinguishing his worthy father, he gave a jolly supper afterwards to all the friends and connections of the young couple.

His excursions to Tweedside during Term-time were, with very rare exceptions, of the sort which I have described in the preceding chapter; but he departed from his rule about this time in honor of the Swedish Prince, who had expressed a wish to see Abbotsford before leaving Scotland, and assembled a number of his friends and neighbors to meet his Royal Highness. Of the invitations which he distributed on this occasion, I insert one specimen—that addressed to Mr. Scott of Gala:—

To the Baron of Galashiels
The Knight of Abbotsford sends greeting.

Trusty and well-beloved,—Whereas Gustavus, Prince Royal of Sweden, proposeth to honor our poor house of Abbotsford with his presence on Thursday next, and to repose himself there for certain days, We do heartily pray you, out of the love and kindness which is and shall abide betwixt us, to be aiding to us at

this conjuncture, and to repair to Abbotsford with your lady, either upon Thursday or Friday, as may best suit your convenience and pleasure, looking for no denial at your hands. Which loving countenance we will, with all thankfulness, return to you at your mansion of Gala. The hour of appearance being five o'clock, we request you to be then and there present, as you love the honor of the name; and so advance banners in the name of God and St. Andrew.

Walter Scott.

Given at Edinburgh,
20th May, 1820.

The visit of Count Itterburg is alluded to in this letter to the Cornet, who had now rejoined his regiment in Ireland. It appears that on reaching headquarters he had found a charger *hors de combat*.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., 18TH HUSSARS,
CORK.

Castle Street, May 31, 1820.

Dear Walter,—I enclose the cheque for the allowance; pray take care to get good notes in exchange. You had better speak to the gentleman whom Lord Shannon introduced you to, for, when banks take a-breaking, it seldom stops with the first who go. I am very sorry for your loss. You must be economical for a while, and bring yourself round again, for at this moment I cannot so well assist as I will do by and by. So do not buy anything but what you *need*.

I was at Abbotsford for three days last week, to receive Count Itterburg, who seemed very happy while with us, and was much affected when he took his leave. I am sorry for him—his situation is a very particular one, and his feelings appear to be of the kindest order. When he took leave of me, he presented me with a beautiful seal, with all our new blazonries cut on a fine amethyst; and what I thought the prettiest part, on one side of the setting is cut my name, on the other the Prince's—*Gustaf*. He is to travel

through Ireland, and will probably be at Cork. You will, of course, ask the Count and Baron to mess, and offer all civilities in your power, in which, I dare say, Colonel Murray will readily join. They intend to inquire after you.

I have bought the land adjoining to the Burnfoot cottage, so that we now march with the Duke of Buccleuch all the way round that course. It cost me £2300—but there is a great deal of valuable fir planting, which you may remember; fine roosting for the black game. Still I think it is £200 too dear, but Mr. Laidlaw thinks it can be made worth the money, and it rounds the property off very handsomely. You cannot but remember the ground; it lies under the Eildon, east of the Chargelaw.

Mamma, Anne, and Charles are all well. Sophia has been complaining of a return of her old sprain. I told her Lockhart would return her on our hands as not being sound wind and limb.

I beg you to look at your French, and have it much at heart that you should study German. Believe me, always affectionately yours,

Walter Scott.

In May, 1820, Scott received from both the English Universities the highest compliment which it was in their power to offer him. The Vice-Chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge communicated to him, in the same week, their request that he would attend at the approaching Commemorations, and accept the honorary degree of Doctor in Civil Law. It was impossible for him to leave Scotland again that season; and on various subsequent renewals of the same flattering proposition from either body, he was prevented, by similar circumstances, from availing himself of their distinguished kindness.

In the course of a few months, Scott's family arrangements had undergone, as we have seen, considerable alteration. Meanwhile he continued anxious to be allowed to adopt, as it were, the only son of his brother Thomas; and the letter, in consequence of which that promising youth was at last committed to his charge, contains so much matter likely to interest parents and guardians, that, though long, I cannot curtail it.

TO THOMAS SCOTT, ESQ., PAYMASTER 70th REGIMENT.

Abbotsford, 23d July, 1820.

My dear Tom,—Your letter of May, this day received, made me truly happy, being the first I have received from you since our dear mother's death, and the consequent breaches which fate has made in our family. My own health continues quite firm, at no greater sacrifice than bidding adieu to our old and faithful friend John Barleycorn, whose life-blood has become a little too heavy for my stomach. I wrote to you from London concerning the very handsome manner in which the King behaved to me in conferring my *petit titre*, and also of Sophia's intended marriage, which took place in the end of April, as we intended. I got Walter's leave prolonged, that he might be present, and I assure you, that when he attended the ceremony in full regimentals, you have scarce seen a handsomer young man. He is about six feet and an inch, and perfectly well made. Lockhart seems to be everything I could wish,—and as they have enough to live easily upon for the present, and good expectations for the future, life opens well with them. They are to spend their vacations in a nice little cottage, in a glen belonging to this property, with a rivulet in front, and a grove of trees on the east side to keep away the cold wind. It is about two miles distant from this house, and a very pleasant walk reaches to it through my plantations, which now occupy several hundred acres. Thus there will be space enough betwixt the old man of letters and the young one. Charles's destination to India is adjourned till he reaches the proper age: it seems he cannot hold a Writership until he is sixteen years old, and then is admitted to study for two years at Hertford College.

After my own sons, my most earnest and anxious wish will be, of course, for yours,—and with this view I have pondered well what you say on the subject of your Walter; and whatever line of life you may design him for, it is scarce possible but that I can be of considerable use to him. Before fixing, however, on a point so very important, I would have you consult the nature of the boy himself. I do not mean by this that you should ask his

opinion, because at so early an age a well bred up child naturally takes up what is suggested to him by his parents; but I think you should consider, with as much impartiality as a parent can, his temper, disposition, and qualities of mind and body. It is not enough that you think there is an opening for him in one profession rather than another,—for it were better to sacrifice the fairest prospects of that kind than to put a boy into a line of life for which he is not calculated. If my nephew is steady, cautious, fond of a sedentary life and quiet pursuits, and at the same time a proficient in arithmetic, and with a disposition towards the prosecution of its highest branches, he cannot follow a better line than that of an accountant. It is highly respectable—and is one in which, with attention and skill, aided by such opportunities as I may be able to procure for him, he must ultimately succeed. I say ultimately—because the harvest is small and the laborers numerous in this as in other branches of our legal practice; and whoever is to dedicate himself to them, must look for a long and laborious tract of attention ere he reaches the reward of his labors. If I live, however, I will do all I can for him, and see him put under a proper person, taking his 'prentice fee, etc., upon myself. But if, which may possibly be the case, the lad has a decided turn for active life and adventure, is high-spirited, and impatient of long and dry labor, with some of those feelings not unlikely to result from having lived all his life in a camp or a barrack, do not deceive yourself, my dear brother—you will never make him an accountant; you will never be able to convert such a sword into a pruning-hook, merely because you think a pruning-hook the better thing of the two. In this supposed case, your authority and my recommendation might put him into an accountant's office; but it would be just to waste the earlier years of his life in idleness, with all the temptations to dissipation which idleness gives way to; and what sort of a place a writing-chamber is, you cannot but remember. So years might wear away, and at last the youth starts off from his profession, and becomes an adventurer too late in life, and with the disadvantage, perhaps, of offended friends and advanced age standing in the way of his future prospects.

This is what I have judged fittest in my own family, for Walter would have gone to the Bar had I liked; but I was sensible (with no small reluctance did I admit the conviction) that I should only spoil an excellent soldier to make a poor and undistinguished gownsman. On the same principle I shall send Charles to India,—not, God knows, with my will, for there is little chance of my living to see him return; but merely that, judging by his disposition, I think the voyage of his life might be otherwise lost in shallows. He has excellent parts, but they are better calculated for intercourse with the world than for hard and patient study. Having thus sent one son abroad from my family, and being about to send off the other in due time, you will not, I am sure, think that I can mean disregard to your parental feelings in stating what I can do for your Walter. Should his temper and character incline for active life, I think I can promise to get him a cadetship in the East India Company's service; so soon as he has had the necessary education, I will be at the expense of his equipment and passage-money; and when he reaches India, there he is completely provided, secure of a competence if he lives, and with great chance of a fortune if he thrives. I am aware this would be a hard pull at Mrs. Scott's feelings and yours; but recollect, your fortune is small, and the demands on it numerous, and pagodas and rupees are no bad things. I can get Walter the first introductions, and if he behaves himself as becomes your son, and my nephew, I have friends enough in India, and of the highest class, to insure his success, even his rapid success—always supposing my recommendations to be seconded by his own conduct. If, therefore, the youth has anything of your own spirit, for God's sake do not condemn him to a drudgery which he will never submit to—and remember, to sacrifice his fortune to your fondness will be sadly mistaken affection. As matters stand, unhappily you must be separated; and considering the advantages of India, the mere circumstance of distance is completely counterbalanced. Health is what will naturally occur to Mrs. Scott; but the climate of India is now well understood, and those who attend to ordinary precautions live as healthy as in Britain. And so I have said my say. Most heartily will I do my best in any

way you may ultimately decide for; and as the decision really ought to turn on the boy's temper and disposition, you must be a better judge by far than any one else. But if he should resemble his father and uncle in certain indolent habits, I fear he will make a better subject for an animating life of enterprise than for the technical labor of an accountant's desk. There is no occasion, fortunately, for forming any hasty resolution. When you send him here, I will do all that is in my power to stand in the place of a father to him, and you may fully rely on my care and tenderness. If he should ultimately stay at Edinburgh, as both my own boys leave me, I am sure I shall have great pleasure in having the nearest in blood after them with me. Pray send him as soon as you can, for at his age, and under imperfect opportunities of education, he must have a good deal to make up. I wish I could be of the same use to you which I am sure I can be to your son.

Of public news I have little to send. The papers will tell you the issue of the Radical row for the present. The yeomanry behaved most gallantly. There is in Edinburgh a squadron as fine as ours was—all young men, and zealous soldiers. They made the western campaign with the greatest spirit, and had some hard and fatiguing duty, long night-marches, surprises of the enemy, and so forth, but no fight, for the whole Radical plot went to the devil when it came to gun and sword. Scarce any blood was shed, except in a trifling skirmish at Bonnymuir, near Carron. The rebels were behind a wall, and fired on ten hussars and as many yeomen—the latter under command of a son of James Davidson, W. S. The cavalry cleared the wall, and made them prisoners to a man. The Commission of Oyer and Terminer is now busy trying them and others. The Edinburgh young men showed great spirit; all took arms, and my daughters say (I was in London at the time) that not a feasible-looking beau was to be had for love or money. Several were like old Beardie; they would not shave their moustaches till the Radicals were put down, and returned with most awful whiskers. Lockhart is one of the cavalry, and a very good trooper. It is high to hear these young fellows talk of the Raid of Airdrie, the trot of Kilmarnock, and so on, like so many moss-troopers.

The Queen is making an awful bustle, and though by all accounts her conduct has been most abandoned and beastly, she has got the whole mob for her partisans, who call her injured innocence, and what not. She has courage enough to dare the worst, and a most decided desire to be revenged of *him*, which, by the way, can scarce be wondered at. If she had as many followers of high as of low degree (in proportion), and funds to equip them, I should not be surprised to see her fat bottom in a pair of buckskins, and at the head of an army—God mend all. The things said of her are beyond all usual profligacy. Nobody of any fashion visits her. I think myself monstrously well clear of London and its intrigues, when I look round my green fields, and recollect I have little to do, but to

> ——"make my grass mow,
> And my apple-tree grow."

I beg my kind love to Mrs. Huxley. I have a very acceptable letter from her, and I trust to retain the place she promises me in her remembrance. Sophia will be happy to hear from Uncle Tom, when Uncle Tom has so much leisure. My best compliments attend your wife and daughters, not forgetting Major Huxley and Walter. My dear Tom, it will be a happy moment when circumstances shall permit us a meeting on this side Jordan, as Tabitha says, to talk over old stories, and lay new plans. So many things have fallen out which I had set my heart upon strongly, that I trust this may happen amongst others.—Believe me, yours very affectionately,

Walter Scott.

Chapter XLIX

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Autumn at Abbotsford. — Scott's Hospitality. — Visit of Sir Humphry Davy, Henry Mackenzie, Dr. Wollaston, and William Stewart Rose. — Coursing on Newark Hill. — Salmon-Fishing. — the Festival at Boldside. — the Abbotsford Hunt. — the Kirn, Etc.

1820

About the middle of August, my wife and I went to Abbotsford; and we remained there for several weeks, during which I became familiarized to Sir Walter Scott's mode of existence in the country. It was necessary to observe it, day after day, for a considerable period, before one could believe that such was, during nearly half the year, the routine of life with the most productive author of his age. The humblest person who stayed merely for a short visit, must have departed with the impression that what he witnessed was an occasional variety; that Scott's courtesy prompted him to break in upon his habits when he had a stranger to amuse; but that it was physically impossible that the man who was writing the Waverley romances at the rate of nearly twelve volumes in the year, could continue, week after week, and month after month, to devote all but a hardly perceptible fraction of his mornings to out-of-doors occupations, and the whole of his evenings to the entertainment of a constantly varying circle of guests.

The hospitality of his afternoons must alone have been enough to exhaust the energies of almost any man; for his visitors did not mean, like those of country-houses in general, to enjoy the landlord's good cheer and amuse each other; but the far greater proportion arrived from a distance, for the sole sake of the Poet and Novelist himself, whose person they had never before seen, and whose voice they might never again have any opportunity of hearing. No other villa in Europe was ever resorted to from the same motives, and to anything like the same extent, except Ferney; and Voltaire never dreamt of being visible to his *hunters*, except for a brief space of the day;—few of them even dined with him, and none of them seem to have slept under his roof. Scott's establishment, on the contrary, resembled in

every particular that of the affluent idler, who, because he has inherited, or would fain transmit, political influence in some province, keeps open house —receives as many as he has room for, and sees their apartments occupied, as soon as they vacate them, by another troop of the same description. Even on gentlemen guiltless of inkshed, the exercise of hospitality upon this sort of scale is found to impose a heavy tax; few of them, nowadays, think of maintaining it for any large portion of the year: very few indeed below the highest rank of the nobility—in whose case there is usually a staff of led-captains, led-chaplains, servile dandies, and semi-professional talkers and jokers from London, to take the chief part of the burden. Now, Scott had often in his mouth the pithy verses,—

> "Conversation is but carving:—
> Give no more to every guest,
> Than he's able to digest;
> Give him always of the prime,
> And but little at a time;
> Carve to all but just enough,
> Let them neither starve nor stuff,
> *And that you may have your due,*
> *Let your neighbors carve for you*:"—

and he, in his own familiar circle always, and in other circles where it was possible, furnished a happy exemplification of these rules and regulations of the Dean of St. Patrick's. But the same sense and benevolence which dictated adhesion to them among his old friends and acquaintance, rendered it necessary to break them when he was receiving strangers of the class I have described above at Abbotsford: he felt that their coming was the best homage they could pay to his celebrity, and that it would have been as uncourteous in him not to give them their fill of his talk, as it would be in your every-day lord of manors to make his casual guests welcome indeed to his venison, but keep his grouse-shooting for his immediate allies and dependents.

Every now and then he received some stranger who was not indisposed to take his part in the *carving*; and how good-humoredly he surrendered the lion's share to any one that seemed to covet it—with what perfect placidity he submitted to be bored even by bores of the first water, must have excited the admiration of many besides the daily observers of his proceedings. I

have heard a spruce Senior Wrangler lecture him for half an evening on the niceties of the Greek epigram; I have heard the poorest of all parliamentary blunderers try to detail to him the *pros* and *cons* of what he called the *Truck System*; and in either case the same bland eye watched the lips of the tormentor. But, with such ludicrous exceptions, Scott was the one object of the Abbotsford pilgrims; and evening followed evening only to show him exerting, for their amusement, more of animal spirits, to say nothing of intellectual vigor, than would have been considered by any other man in the company as sufficient for the whole expenditure of a week's existence. Yet this was not the chief marvel; he talked of things that interested himself, because he knew that by doing so he should give most pleasure to his guests. But how vast was the range of subjects on which he could talk with unaffected zeal; and with what admirable delicacy of instinctive politeness did he select his topic according to the peculiar history, study, pursuits, or social habits of the stranger!—How beautifully he varied his style of letter-writing, according to the character and situation of his multifarious correspondents, the reader has already been enabled to judge; but to carry the same system into practice *at sight*—to manage utter strangers, of many and widely different classes, in the same fashion, and with the same effect—called for a quickness of observation, and fertility of resource, such as no description can convey the slightest notion of to those who never witnessed the thing for themselves. And all this was done without approach to the unmanly trickery of what is called *catching the tone* of the person one converses with. Scott took the subject on which he thought such a man or woman would like best to hear him speak—but not to handle it in their way, or in any way but what was completely, and most simply his own;—not to flatter them by embellishing, with the illustration of his genius, the views and opinions which they were supposed to entertain,—but to let his genius play out its own variations, for his own delight and theirs, as freely and easily, and with as endless a multiplicity of delicious novelties, as ever the magic of Beethoven or Mozart could fling over the few primitive notes of a village air.

It is the custom in some, perhaps in many country-houses, to keep a register of the guests, and I have often regretted that nothing of the sort was ever attempted at Abbotsford. It would have been a curious record—especially if so contrived (as I have seen done) that the names of each day should, by their arrangement on the page, indicate the exact order in which

the company sat at dinner. It would hardly, I believe, be too much to affirm, that Sir Walter Scott entertained, under his roof, in the course of the seven or eight brilliant seasons when his prosperity was at its height, as many persons of distinction in rank, in politics, in art, in literature, and in science, as the most princely nobleman of his age ever did in the like space of time. —I turned over, since I wrote the preceding sentence, Mr. Lodge's compendium of the British Peerage, and on summing up the titles which suggested *to myself* some reminiscence of this kind, I found them nearly as one out of six.—I fancy it is not beyond the mark to add, that of the eminent foreigners who visited our island within this period, a moiety crossed the Channel mainly in consequence of the interest with which his writings had invested Scotland—and that the hope of beholding the man under his own roof was the crowning motive with half that moiety. As for countrymen of his own, like him ennobled, in the higher sense of that word, by the display of their intellectual energies, if any one such contemporary can be pointed out as having crossed the Tweed, and yet not spent a day at Abbotsford, I shall be surprised.

It is needless to add, that Sir Walter was familiarly known, long before the days I am speaking of, to almost all the nobility and higher gentry of Scotland; and consequently, that there seldom wanted a fair proportion of them to assist him in doing the honors of his country. It is still more superfluous to say so respecting the heads of his own profession at Edinburgh: *Sibi et amicis*—Abbotsford was their villa whenever they pleased to resort to it, and few of them were ever absent from it long. He lived meanwhile in a constant interchange of easy visits with the gentlemen's families of Teviotdale and the Forest; so that, mixed up with his superfine admirers of the Mayfair breed, his staring worshippers from foreign parts, and his quick-witted coevals of the Parliament House—there was found generally some hearty homespun laird, with his dame—the young laird, a bashful bumpkin, perhaps, whose ideas did not soar beyond his gun and pointer—or perhaps a little pseudo-dandy, for whom the Kelso race-course and the Jedburgh ball were "Life," and "the World;" and not forgetting a brace of "Miss Rawbolds," in whom, as their mamma prognosticated, some of Sir Walter's young Waverleys or Osbaldistones might peradventure discover a Flora MacIvor or a Die Vernon. To complete the *olla podrida*, we must remember that no old acquaintance, or family connections, however remote their actual station or style of manners from

his own, were forgotten or lost sight of. He had some, even near relations, who, except when they visited him, rarely, if ever, found admittance to what the haughty dialect of the upper world is pleased to designate exclusively as *society*. These were welcome guests, let who might be under that roof; and it was the same with many a worthy citizen of Edinburgh, habitually moving in the obscurest of circles, who had been in the same class with Scott at the High School, or his fellow-apprentice when he was proud of earning threepence a page by the use of his pen. To dwell on nothing else, it was surely a beautiful perfection of real universal humanity and politeness, that could enable this great and good man to blend guests so multifarious in one group, and contrive to make them all equally happy with him, with themselves, and with each other.

I remember saying to William Allan one morning as the whole party mustered before the porch after breakfast, "A faithful sketch of what you at this moment see would be more interesting a hundred years hence, than the grandest so-called historical picture that you will ever exhibit at Somerset House;" and my friend agreed with me so cordially, that I often wondered afterwards he had not attempted to realize the suggestion. The subject ought, however, to have been treated conjointly by him (or Wilkie) and Edwin Landseer. It was a clear, bright September morning, with a sharpness in the air that doubled the animating influence of the sunshine, and all was in readiness for a grand coursing-match on Newark Hill. The only guest who had chalked out other sport for himself was the stanchest of anglers, Mr. Rose;—but he, too, was there on his *shelty*, armed with his salmon-rod and landing-net, and attended by his humorous squire Hinves, and Charlie Purdie, a brother of Tom, in those days the most celebrated fisherman of the district. This little group of Waltonians, bound for Lord Somerville's preserve, remained lounging about to witness the start of the main cavalcade. Sir Walter, mounted on Sibyl, was marshalling the order of procession with a huge hunting-whip; and among a dozen frolicsome youths and maidens, who seemed disposed to laugh at all discipline, appeared, each on horseback, each as eager as the youngest sportsman in the troop, Sir Humphry Davy, Dr. Wollaston, and the patriarch of Scottish belles-lettres, Henry Mackenzie. The Man of Feeling, however, was persuaded with some difficulty to resign his steed for the present to his faithful negro follower, and to join Lady Scott in the sociable, until we should reach the ground of our *battue*. Laidlaw, on a long-tailed wiry

Highlander, yclept *Hoddin Grey*, which carried him nimbly and stoutly, although his feet almost touched the ground as he sat, was the adjutant. But the most picturesque figure was the illustrious inventor of the safety-lamp. He had come for his favorite sport of angling, and had been practising it successfully with Rose, his travelling companion, for two or three days preceding this, but he had not prepared for coursing fields, or had left Charlie Purdie's troop for Sir Walter's on a sudden thought; and his fisherman's costume—a brown hat with flexible brims, surrounded with line upon line, and innumerable fly-hooks—jack-boots worthy of a Dutch smuggler, and a fustian surtout dabbled with the blood of salmon, made a fine contrast with the smart jackets, white-cord breeches, and well-polished jockey-boots of the less distinguished cavaliers about him. Dr. Wollaston was in black, and, with his noble serene dignity of countenance, might have passed for a sporting archbishop. Mr. Mackenzie, at this time in the seventy-sixth year of his age, with a white hat turned up with green, green spectacles, green jacket, and long brown leathern gaiters buttoned upon his nether anatomy, wore a dog-whistle round his neck, and had all over the air of as resolute a devotee as the gay Captain of Huntly Burn. Tom Purdie and his subalterns had preceded us by a few hours with all the greyhounds that could be collected at Abbotsford, Darnick, and Melrose; but the giant Maida had remained as his master's orderly, and now gambolled about Sibyl Grey, barking for mere joy like a spaniel puppy.

The order of march had been all settled, and the sociable was just getting under weigh, when *the Lady Anne* broke from the line, screaming with laughter, and exclaimed, "Papa, papa, I knew you could never think of going without your pet." Scott looked round, and I rather think there was a blush as well as a smile upon his face, when he perceived a little black pig frisking about his pony, and evidently a self-elected addition to the party of the day. He tried to look stern, and cracked his whip at the creature, but was in a moment obliged to join in the general cheers. Poor piggy soon found a strap round its neck, and was dragged into the background:—Scott, watching the retreat, repeated with mock pathos the first verse of an old pastoral song,—

> "What will I do gin my hoggie die?
> My joy, my pride, my hoggie!

My only beast, I had nae mae,
And wow! but I was vogie!"

—the cheers were redoubled—and the squadron moved on.

This pig had taken—nobody could tell how—a most sentimental attachment to Scott, and was constantly urging its pretensions to be admitted a regular member of his *tail* along with the greyhounds and terriers; but, indeed, I remember him suffering another summer under the same sort of pertinacity on the part of an affectionate hen. I leave the explanation for philosophers—but such were the facts. I have too much respect for the vulgarly calumniated donkey to name him in the same category of pets with the pig and the hen; but a year or two after this time, my wife used to drive a couple of these animals in a little garden chair, and whenever her father appeared at the door of our cottage, we were sure to see Hannah More and Lady Morgan (as Anne Scott had wickedly christened them) trotting from their pasture to lay their noses over the paling, and, as Washington Irving says of the old white-haired hedger with the Parisian snuff-box, "to have a pleasant crack wi' the laird."

But to return to our *chasse*. On reaching Newark Castle, we found Lady Scott, her eldest daughter, and the venerable Mackenzie, all busily engaged in unpacking a basket that had been placed in their carriage, and arranging the luncheon it contained upon the mossy rocks overhanging the bed of the Yarrow. When such of the company as chose had partaken of this refection, the Man of Feeling resumed his pony, and all ascended the mountain, duly marshalled at proper distances, so as to beat in a broad line over the heather, Sir Walter directing the movement from the right wing—towards Blackandro. Davy, next to whom I chanced to be riding, laid his whip about the fern like an experienced hand, but cracked many a joke, too, upon his own jack-boots, and surveying the long eager battalion of bushrangers, exclaimed, "Good heavens! is it thus that I visit the scenery of The Lay of the Last Minstrel?" He then kept muttering to himself, as his glowing eye (the finest and brightest that I ever saw) ran over the landscape, some of those beautiful lines from the *Conclusion* of the Lay:—

—— "But still,
When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill,
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Waved the blue-bells on Newark heath,

When throstles sung in Hareheadshaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourished, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged harper's soul awoke," etc.

Mackenzie, spectacled though he was, saw the first sitting hare, gave the word to slip the dogs, and spurred after them like a boy. All the seniors, indeed, did well as long as the course was upwards, but when puss took down the declivity, they halted and breathed themselves upon the knoll—cheering gayly, however, the young people, who dashed at full speed past and below them. Coursing on such a mountain is not like the same sport over a set of fine English pastures. There were gulfs to be avoided and bogs enough to be threaded—many a stiff nag stuck fast—many a bold rider measured his length among the peat-hags—and another stranger to the ground besides Davy plunged neck-deep into a treacherous well-head, which, till they were floundering in it, had borne all the appearance of a piece of delicate green turf. When Sir Humphry emerged from his involuntary bath, his habiliments garnished with mud, slime, and mangled water-cresses, Sir Walter received him with a triumphant *encore!* But the philosopher had his revenge, for joining soon afterwards in a brisk gallop, Scott put Sibyl Grey to a leap beyond her prowess, and lay humbled in the ditch, while Davy, who was better mounted, cleared it and him at a bound. Happily there was little damage done—but no one was sorry that the sociable had been detained at the foot of the hill.

I have seen Sir Humphry in many places, and in company of many different descriptions; but never to such advantage as at Abbotsford. His host and he delighted in each other, and the modesty of their mutual admiration was a memorable spectacle. Davy was by nature a poet—and Scott, though anything but a philosopher in the modern sense of that term, might, I think it very likely, have pursued the study of physical science with zeal and success, had he happened to fall in with such an instructor as Sir Humphry would have been to him, in his early life. Each strove to make the other talk—and they did so in turn more charmingly than I ever heard either on any other occasion whatsoever. Scott in his romantic narratives touched a deeper chord of feeling than usual, when he had such a listener as Davy; and Davy, when induced to open his views upon any question of scientific interest in Scott's presence, did so with a degree of clear energetic

eloquence, and with a flow of imagery and illustration, of which neither his habitual tone of table-talk (least of all in London), nor any of his prose writings (except, indeed, the posthumous Consolations of Travel) could suggest an adequate notion. I say his prose writings—for who that has read his sublime quatrains on the doctrine of Spinoza can doubt that he might have united, if he had pleased, in some great didactic poem, the vigorous ratiocination of Dryden and the moral majesty of Wordsworth? I remember William Laidlaw whispering to me, one night, when their "rapt talk" had kept the circle round the fire until long after the usual bedtime of Abbotsford: "Gude preserve us! this is a very superior occasion! Eh, sirs!" he added, cocking his eye like a bird, "I wonder if Shakespeare and Bacon ever met to screw ilk other up?"

Since I have touched on the subject of Sir Walter's autumnal diversions in these his later years, I may as well notice here two annual festivals, when sport was made his pretext for assembling his rural neighbors about him—days eagerly anticipated, and fondly remembered by many. One was a solemn bout of salmon-fishing for the neighboring gentry and their families, instituted originally, I believe, by Lord Somerville, but now, in his absence, conducted and presided over by the Sheriff. Charles Purdie, already mentioned, had charge (partly as lessee) of the salmon-fisheries for three or four miles of the Tweed, including all the water attached to the lands of Abbotsford, Gala, and Allwyn; and this festival had been established with a view, besides other considerations, of recompensing him for the attention he always bestowed on any of the lairds or their visitors that chose to fish, either from the banks or the boat, within his jurisdiction. His selection of the day, and other precautions, generally secured an abundance of sport for the great anniversary; and then the whole party assembled to regale on the newly caught prey, boiled, grilled, and roasted in every variety of preparation, beneath a grand old ash, adjoining Charlie's cottage at Boldside, on the northern margin of the Tweed, about a mile above Abbotsford. This banquet took place earlier in the day or later, according to circumstances; but it often lasted till the harvest moon shone on the lovely scene and its revellers. These formed groups that would have done no discredit to Watteau—and a still better hand has painted the background in the Introduction to The Monastery: "On the opposite bank of the Tweed might be seen the remains of ancient enclosures, surrounded by sycamores and ash-trees of considerable size. These had once formed the crofts or

arable ground of a village, now reduced to a single hut, the abode of a fisherman, who also manages a ferry. The cottages, even the church which once existed there, have sunk into vestiges hardly to be traced without visiting the spot, the inhabitants having gradually withdrawn to the more prosperous town of Galashiels, which has risen into consideration within two miles of their neighborhood. Superstitious eld, however, has tenanted the deserted grove with aërial beings, to supply the want of the mortal tenants who have deserted it. The ruined and abandoned churchyard of Boldside has been long believed to be haunted by the Fairies, and the deep broad current of the Tweed, wheeling in moonlight round the foot of the steep bank, with the number of trees originally planted for shelter round the fields of the cottagers, but now presenting the effect of scattered and detached groves, fill up the idea which one would form in imagination for a scene that Oberon and Queen Mab might love to revel in. There are evenings when the spectator might believe, with Father Chaucer, that the

> ——'Queen of Faëry,
> With harp, and pipe, and symphony,
> Were dwelling in the place.'"

Sometimes the evening closed with a "burning of the water;" and then the Sheriff, though now not so agile as when he practised that rough sport in the early times of Ashestiel, was sure to be one of the party in the boat,—held a torch, or perhaps took the helm,—and seemed to enjoy the whole thing as heartily as the youngest of his company,—

> "'T is blithe along the midnight tide,
> With stalwart arm the boat to guide—
> On high the dazzling blaze to rear,
> And heedful plunge the barbed spear;
> Rock, wood, and scaur, emerging bright,
> Fling on the stream their ruddy light,
> And from the bank our band appears
> Like Genii armed with fiery spears."

The other "superior occasion" came later in the season; the 28th of October, the birthday of Sir Walter's eldest son, was, I think, that usually selected for *the Abbotsford Hunt*. This was a coursing-field on a large scale, including,

with as many of the young gentry as pleased to attend, all Scott's personal favorites among the yeomen and farmers of the surrounding country. The Sheriff always took the field, but latterly devolved the command upon his good friend Mr. John Usher, the ex-laird of Toftfield; and he could not have had a more skilful or a better-humored lieutenant. The hunt took place either on the moors above the Cauldshiels Loch, or over some of the hills on the estate of Gala, and we had commonly, ere we returned, hares enough to supply the wife of every farmer that attended, with soup for a week following. The whole then dined at Abbotsford, the Sheriff in the chair, Adam Ferguson croupier, and Dominie Thomson, of course, chaplain. George, by the way, was himself an eager partaker in the preliminary sport; and now he would favor us with a grace, in Burns's phrase, "as long as my arm," beginning with thanks to the Almighty, who had given man dominion over the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field, and expatiating on this text with so luculent a commentary, that Scott, who had been fumbling with his spoon long before he reached his Amen, could not help exclaiming as he sat down, "Well done, Mr. George! I think we've had everything but the view holla!" The company, whose onset had been thus deferred, were seldom, I think, under thirty in number, and sometimes they exceeded forty. The feast was such as suited the occasion—a baron of beef, roasted, at the foot of the table, a salted round at the head, while tureens of hare-soup, hotchpotch, and cocky-leeky, extended down the centre, and such light articles as geese, turkeys, entire sucking-pigs, a singed sheep's head, and the unfailing haggis, were set forth by way of side dishes. Blackcock and moorfowl, bushels of snipe, *black puddings*, *white puddings*, and pyramids of pancakes, formed the second course. Ale was the favorite beverage during dinner, but there was plenty of port and sherry for those whose stomachs they suited. The quaighs of Glenlivet were filled brimful, and tossed off as if they held water. The wine decanters made a few rounds of the table, but the hints for hot punch and toddy soon became clamorous. Two or three bowls were introduced, and placed under the supervision of experienced manufacturers,—one of these being usually the Ettrick Shepherd,—and then the business of the evening commenced in good earnest. The faces shone and glowed like those at Camacho's wedding: the chairman told his richest stories of old rural life, Lowland or Highland; Ferguson and humbler heroes fought their peninsular battles o'er again; the stalwart Dandie Dinmonts lugged out their last winter's snowstorm, the

parish scandal, perhaps, or the dexterous bargain of the Northumberland *tryste*; and every man was knocked down for the song that he sung best, or took most pleasure in singing. Sheriff-Substitute Shortreed (a cheerful, hearty, little man, with a sparkling eye and a most infectious laugh) gave us Dick o' the Cow, or Now Liddesdale has ridden a Raid; his son Thomas (Sir Walter's assiduous disciple and assistant in Border Heraldry and Genealogy) shone without a rival in The Douglas Tragedy and The Twa Corbies; a weather-beaten, stiff-bearded veteran, *Captain* Ormistoun, as he was called (though I doubt if his rank was recognized at the Horse-Guards), had the primitive pastoral of Cowdenknowes in sweet perfection; Hogg produced The Women Folk, or The Kye comes Hame; and, in spite of many grinding notes, contrived to make everybody delighted, whether with the fun or the pathos of his ballad; the Melrose doctor sang in spirited style some of Moore's masterpieces; a couple of retired sailors joined in Bould Admiral Duncan upon the High Sea;—and the gallant croupier crowned the last bowl with Ale, good Ale, thou art my Darling! Imagine some smart Parisian *savant*—some dreamy pedant of Halle or Heidelberg—a brace of stray young Lords from Oxford or Cambridge, or perhaps their prim college tutors, planted here and there amidst these rustic wassailers—this being their first vision of the author of Marmion and Ivanhoe, and he appearing as heartily at home in the scene as if he had been a veritable *Dandie* himself—his face radiant, his laugh gay as childhood, his chorus always ready. And so it proceeded until some worthy, who had fifteen or twenty miles to ride home, began to insinuate that his wife and bairns would be getting sorely anxious about the fords, and the Dumples and Hoddins were at last heard neighing at the gate, and it was voted that the hour had come for *doch an dorrach*—the stirrup-cup—to wit, a bumper all round of the unmitigated *mountain dew*. How they all contrived to get home in safety, Heaven only knows—but I never heard of any serious accident except upon one occasion, when James Hogg made a bet at starting that he would leap over his wall-eyed pony as she stood, and broke his nose in this experiment of "o'ervaulting ambition." One comely goodwife, far off among the hills, amused Sir Walter by telling him, the next time he passed her homestead after one of these jolly doings, what her husband's first words were when he alighted at his own door: "Ailie, my woman, I'm ready for my bed, and oh lass (he gallantly added), I wish I could sleep for a towmont, for there's only ae thing in this warld worth living for, and that's the Abbotsford Hunt!"

It may well be supposed that the President of the Boldside Festival and the Abbotsford Hunt did not omit the good old custom of *the Kirn*. Every November, before quitting the country for Edinburgh, he gave a *harvest-home*, on the most approved model of former days, to all the peasantry on his estate, their friends and kindred, and as many poor neighbors besides as his barn could hold. Here old and young danced from sunset to sunrise,—John of Skye's bagpipe being relieved at intervals by the violin of some Wandering Willie;—and the laird and all his family were present during the early part of the evening—he and his wife to distribute the contents of the first tub of whiskey-punch, and his young people to take their due share in the endless reels and hornpipes of the earthen floor. As Mr. Morritt has said of him as he appeared at Laird Nippy's kirn of earlier days, "To witness the cordiality of his reception might have unbent a misanthrope." He had his private joke for every old wife or "gausie carle," his arch compliment for the ear of every bonny lass, and his hand and his blessing for the head of every little *Eppie Daidle* from Abbotstown or Broomielees.

"The notable paradox," he says in one of the most charming of his essays, "that the residence of a proprietor upon his estate is of as little consequence as the bodily presence of a stockholder upon Exchange, has, we believe, been renounced. At least, as in the case of the Duchess of Suffolk's relationship to her own child, the vulgar continue to be of opinion that there is some difference in favor of the next hamlet and village, and even of the vicinage in general, when the squire spends his rents at the manor-house, instead of cutting a figure in France or Italy. A celebrated politician used to say he would willingly bring in one bill to make poaching felony, another to encourage the breed of foxes, and a third to revive the decayed amusements of cock-fighting and bullbaiting—that he would make, in short, any sacrifice to the humors and prejudices of the country gentlemen, in their most extravagant form, provided only he could prevail upon them to 'dwell in their own houses, be the patrons of their own tenantry, and the fathers of their own children.'"

Chapter L

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Publication of the Abbot. — the Blair-Adam Club. — Kelso, Walton Hall, Etc. — Ballantyne's Novelists' Library. — Acquittal of Queen Caroline. — Service of the Duke of Buccleuch. — Scott Elected President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. — the Celtic Society. — Letters to Lord Montagu, Cornet Scott, Charles Scott, Allan Cunningham, Etc. — Kenilworth Published.

1820-1821

In the September of 1820, Longman, in conjunction with Constable, published The Abbot—the continuation, to a certain extent, of The Monastery, of which I barely mentioned the appearance under the preceding March. I had nothing of any consequence to add to the information which the subsequent Introduction affords us respecting the composition and fate of the former of these novels. It was considered as a failure—the first of the series on which any such sentence was pronounced;—nor have I much to allege in favor of the White Lady of Avenel, generally criticised as the primary blot—or of Sir Piercie Shafton, who was loudly, though not quite so generally, condemned. In either case, considered separately, he seems to have erred from dwelling (in the German taste) on materials that might have done very well for a rapid sketch. The phantom, with whom we have leisure to become familiar, is sure to fail—even the witch of Endor is contented with a momentary appearance and five syllables of the shade she evokes. And we may say the same of any grotesque absurdity in human manners. Scott might have considered with advantage how lightly and briefly Shakespeare introduces *his* Euphuism—though actually the prevalent humor of the hour when he was writing. But perhaps these errors might have attracted little notice had the novelist been successful in finding some reconciling medium capable of giving consistence and harmony to his naturally incongruous materials. "These," said one of his ablest critics, "are joined—but they refuse to blend. Nothing can be more poetical in conception, and sometimes in language, than the fiction of the White Maid

of Avenel; but when this ethereal personage, who rides on the cloud which 'for Araby is bound'—who is

> 'Something between heaven and hell,
> Something that neither stood nor fell,'

whose existence is linked by an awful and mysterious destiny to the fortunes of a decaying family; when such a being as this descends to clownish pranks, and promotes a frivolous jest about a tailor's bodkin, the course of our sympathies is rudely arrested, and we feel as if the author had put upon us the old-fashioned pleasantry of selling a bargain."

The beautiful natural scenery, and the sterling Scotch characters and manners introduced in The Monastery are, however, sufficient to redeem even these mistakes; and, indeed, I am inclined to believe that it will ultimately occupy a securer place than some romances enjoying hitherto a far higher reputation, in which he makes no use of Scottish materials.

Sir Walter himself thought well of The Abbot when he had finished it. When he sent me a complete copy I found on a slip of paper at the beginning of volume first, these two lines from Tom Crib's Memorial to Congress:—

> "Up he rose in a funk, lapped a toothful of brandy,
> And *to it* again!—any odds upon Sandy!"—

and whatever ground he had been supposed to lose in The Monastery, part at least of it was regained by this tale, and especially by its most graceful and pathetic portraiture of Mary Stuart. "The Castle of Lochleven," says the Chief-Commissioner Adam, "is seen at every turn from the northern side of Blair-Adam. This castle, renowned and attractive above all the others in my neighborhood, became an object of much increased attention, and a theme of constant conversation, after the author of Waverley had, by his inimitable power of delineating character—by his creative poetic fancy in representing scenes of varied interest—and by the splendor of his romantic descriptions, infused a more diversified and a deeper tone of feeling into the history of Queen Mary's captivity and escape."

I have introduced this quotation from a little book privately printed for the amiable Judge's own family and familiar friends, because Sir Walter owned to myself at the time, that the idea of The Abbot had arisen in his

mind during a visit to Blair-Adam. In the pages of the tale itself, indeed, the beautiful localities of that estate are distinctly mentioned, with an allusion to the virtues and manners that adorn its mansion, such as must have been intended to satisfy the possessor (if he could have had any doubts on the subject) as to the authorship of those novels.

The Right Honorable William Adam (who must pardon my mentioning him here as the only man I ever knew that rivalled Sir Walter Scott in uniform graciousness of *bonhomie* and gentleness of humor) was appointed, in 1815, to the Presidency of the Court for Jury Trial in Civil Cases, then instituted in Scotland, and he thenceforth spent a great part of his time at his paternal seat in Kinross-shire. Here, about midsummer, 1816, he received a visit from his near relation William Clerk, Adam Ferguson, his hereditary friend and especial favorite, and their lifelong intimate, Scott. They remained with him for two or three days, in the course of which they were all so much delighted with their host, and he with them, that it was resolved to reassemble the party, with a few additions, at the same season of every following year. This was the origin of the Blair-Adam Club, the regular members of which were in number nine; namely, the four already named—the Chief-Commissioner's son, Admiral Sir Charles Adam—his son-in-law, the late Mr. Anstruther Thomson of Charleton, in Fifeshire—Mr. Thomas Thomson, the Deputy-Register of Scotland—his brother, the Rev. John Thomson, minister of Duddingston, who, though a most diligent and affectionate parish priest, has found leisure to make himself one of the first masters of the British School of Landscape Painting—and the Right Hon. Sir Samuel Shepherd, who, after filling with high distinction the office of Attorney-General in England, became Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer in Scotland, shortly after the third anniversary of this brotherhood, into which he was immediately welcomed with unanimous cordiality. They usually contrived to meet on a Friday; spent the Saturday in a ride to some scene of historical interest within an easy distance; enjoyed a quiet Sunday at home—"duly attending divine worship at the Kirk of Cleish (not Cleishbotham)"—gave Monday morning to another antiquarian excursion, and returned to Edinburgh in time for the Courts of Tuesday. From 1816 to 1831 inclusive, Sir Walter was a constant attendant at these meetings. He visited in this way Castle Campbell, Magus Moor, Falkland, Dunfermline, St. Andrews, and many other scenes of ancient celebrity: to one of those trips we must ascribe his dramatic sketch of Macduff's Cross—

and to that of the dog-days of 1819, we owe the weightier obligation of The Abbot.

I expect an easy forgiveness for introducing from the *liber rarissimus* of Blair-Adam the page that belongs to that particular meeting—which, though less numerous than usual, is recorded as having been "most pleasing and delightful." "There were," writes the President, "only five of us; the Chief Baron, Sir Walter, Mr. Clerk, Charles Adam, and myself. The weather was sultry, almost beyond bearing. We did not stir beyond the bounds of the pleasure-ground, indeed not far from the vicinity of the house; wandering from one shady place to another, lolling upon the grass, or sitting upon prostrate trees not yet carried away by the purchaser. Our conversation was constant, though tranquil; and what might be expected from Mr. Clerk, who is a superior converser, and whose mind is stored with knowledge; and from Sir Walter Scott, who has let the public know what his powers are. Our talk was of all sorts (except of *beeves*). Besides a display of their historic knowledge, at once extensive and correct, they touched frequently on the pleasing reminiscences of their early days. Shepherd and I could not go back to those periods; but we could trace our own intimacy and constant friendship for more than forty years back, when in 1783 we began our professional pursuits on the Circuit. So that if Scott could describe, with inconceivable humor, their doings at Mr. Murray's of Simprim, when emerging from boyhood; when he, and Murray, and Clerk, and Adam Ferguson, acted plays in the schoolroom (Simprim making the dominie bear his part)—when Ferguson was prompter, orchestra, and audience—and as Scott said, representing the whole pit, kicked up an 'O. P.' row by anticipation; and many other such recollections—Shepherd and I could tell of our Circuit fooleries, as old Fielding (the son of the great novelist) called them—of the Circuit songs which Will Fielding made and sung,—and of the grave Sir William Grant (then a briefless barrister), ycleped by Fielding the Chevalier Grant, bearing his part in those fooleries, enjoying all our pranks with great zest, and who talked of them with delight to his dying day. When the conversation took a graver tone, and turned upon literary subjects, the Chief-Baron took a great share in it; for notwithstanding his infirmity of deafness, he is a most pleasing and agreeable converser, and readily picks up what is passing; and having a classical mind and classical information, gives a pleasing, gentlemanly, and well-informed tone to general conversation.—Before I bring these recollections of our social and

cheerful doings to a close, let me observe, that there was a characteristic feature attending them, which it would be injustice to the individuals who composed our parties not to mention. The whole set of us were addicted to take a full share of conversation, and to discuss every subject that occurred with sufficient keenness. The topics were multifarious, and the opinions of course various; but during the whole time of our intercourse, for so many years, four days at a time, and always together, except when we were asleep, there never was the least tendency, on any occasion, to any unruly debate, nor to anything that deviated from the pure delight of social intercourse."

The Chief-Commissioner adds the following particulars in his appendix: —

"Our return from Blair-Adam (after the first meeting of the Club) was very early on a Tuesday morning, that we might reach the Courts by nine o'clock. An occurrence took place near the Hawes' Inn, which left little doubt upon my mind that Sir Walter Scott was the author of Waverley, of Guy Mannering, and of The Antiquary, his only novels then published. The morning was prodigiously fine, and the sea as smooth as glass. Sir Walter and I were standing on the beach, enjoying the prospect; the other gentlemen were not come from the boat. The porpoises were rising in great numbers, when Sir Walter said to me, 'Look at them, how they are showing themselves; what fine fellows they are! I have the greatest respect for them: I would as soon kill a man as a phoca.' I could not conceive that the same idea could occur to two men respecting this animal, and set down that it could only be Sir Walter Scott who made the phoca have the better of the battle with the Antiquary's nephew, Captain M'Intyre.

"Soon after, another occurrence quite confirmed me as to the authorship of the novels. On that visit to Blair-Adam, in course of conversation, I mentioned an anecdote about Wilkie, the author of The Epigoniad, who was but a formal poet, but whose conversation was most amusing, and full of fancy. Having heard much of him in my family, where he had been very intimate, I went, when quite a lad, to St. Andrews, where he was a Professor, for the purpose of visiting him. I had scarcely let him know who I was, when he said, 'Mr. William, were you ever in this place before?' I said, no. 'Then, sir, you must go and look at Regulus' Tower,—no doubt you will have something of an eye of an architect about you;—walk up to it at

an angle, advance and recede until you get to see it at its proper distance, and come back and tell me whether you ever saw anything so beautiful in building: till I saw that tower and studied it, I thought the beauty of architecture had consisted in curly-wurlies, but now I find it consists in symmetry and proportion.' In the following winter Rob Roy was published, and there I read that the Cathedral of Glasgow was 'a respectable Gothic structure, without any *curly-wurlies*.'

"But what confirmed, and was certainly meant to disclose to me the author (and that in a very elegant manner), was the mention of the Kiery Craigs—a picturesque piece of scenery in the grounds of Blair-Adam—as being in the vicinity of Kelty Bridge, the *howf* of Auchtermuchty, the Kinross carrier.—It was only an intimate friend of the family, in the habit of coming to Blair-Adam, who could know anything of the Kiery Craigs or its name; and both the scenery and the name had attractions for Sir Walter.

"At our first meeting after the publication of The Abbot, when the party was assembled on the top of the rock, the Chief-Baron Shepherd, looking Sir Walter full in the face, and stamping his staff on the ground, said, 'Now, Sir Walter, I think we be upon the top of the Kiery *Craggs*.' Sir Walter preserved profound silence; but there was a conscious looking down, and a considerable elongation of his upper lip."

Since I have obtained permission to quote from this private volume, I may as well mention that I was partly moved to ask that favor, by the author's own confession that his "Blair-Adam, from 1733 to 1834," originated in a suggestion of Scott's. "It was," says the Judge, "on a fine Sunday, lying on the grassy summit of Bennarty, above its craggy brow, that Sir Walter said, looking first at the flat expanse of Kinross-shire (on the south side of the Ochils), and then at the space which Blair-Adam fills between the hill of Drumglow (the highest of the Cleish hills) and the valley of Lochore, 'What an extraordinary thing it is, that here to the north so little appears to have been done, when there are so many proprietors to work upon it; and to the south, here is a district of country entirely made by the efforts of one family, in three generations, and one of them amongst us in the full enjoyment of what has been done by his two predecessors and himself. Blair-Adam, as I have always heard, had a wild, uncomely, and unhospitable appearance, before its improvements were begun. It would be most curious to record in

writing its original state, and trace its gradual progress to its present condition.'" Upon this suggestion, enforced by the approbation of the other members present, the President of the Blair-Adam Club commenced arranging the materials for what constitutes a most instructive as well as entertaining history of the agricultural and arboricultural progress of his domains, in the course of a hundred years, under his grandfather, his father (the celebrated architect), and himself. And Sir Walter had only suggested to his friend of Kinross-shire what he was resolved to put into practice with regard to his own improvements on Tweedside; for he begun at precisely the same period to keep a regular Journal of all his rural transactions, under the title of Sylva Abbotsfordiensis.

For reasons, as we have seen, connected with the affairs of the Ballantynes, Messrs. Longman published the first edition of The Monastery; and similar circumstances induced Sir Walter to associate this house with that of Constable in the succeeding novel. Constable disliked its title, and would fain have had The Nunnery instead: but Scott stuck to his Abbot. The bookseller grumbled a little, but was soothed by the author's reception of his request that Queen Elizabeth might be brought into the field in his next romance, as a companion to the Mary Stuart of The Abbot. Scott would not indeed indulge him with the choice of the particular period of Elizabeth's reign, indicated in the proposed title of The Armada; but expressed his willingness to take up his own old favorite, the legend of Meikle's ballad. He wished to call the novel, like the ballad, Cumnor-Hall, but in further deference to Constable's wishes, substituted Kenilworth. John Ballantyne objected to this title, and told Constable the result would be "something worthy of the kennel;" but Constable had all reason to be satisfied with the child of his christening. His partner, Mr. Cadell, says: "His vanity boiled over so much at this time, on having his suggestion gone into, that when in his high moods, he used to stalk up and down his room, and exclaim, 'By G—, I am all but the author of the Waverley Novels!'" Constable's bibliographical knowledge, however, it is but fair to say, was really of most essential service to Scott upon many of these occasions; and his letter (now before me) proposing the subject of The Armada, furnished the Novelist with such a catalogue of materials for the illustration of the period as may, probably enough, have called forth some very energetic expression of thankfulness.

Scott's kindness secured for John Ballantyne the usual interest in the profits of Kenilworth, the last of his great works in which this friend was to have any concern. I have already mentioned the obvious drooping of his health and strength; and a document, to be introduced presently, will show that John himself had occasional glimpses, at least, of his danger, before the close of 1819. Nevertheless, his spirits continued, at the time of which I am now treating, to be in general as high as ever;—nay, it was now, after his maladies had taken a very serious shape, and it was hardly possible to look on him without anticipating a speedy termination of his career, that the gay hopeful spirit of the shattered and trembling invalid led him to plunge into a new stream of costly indulgence. It was an amiable point in his character that he had always retained a tender fondness for his native place. He had now taken up the ambition of rivalling his illustrious friend, in some sort, by providing himself with a summer retirement amidst the scenery of his boyhood; and it need not be doubted, at the same time, that in erecting a villa at Kelso, he anticipated and calculated on substantial advantages from its vicinity to Abbotsford.

One fine day of this autumn I accompanied Sir Walter to inspect the progress of this edifice, which was to have the title of Walton Hall. John had purchased two or three old houses of two stories in height, with notched gables and thatched roofs, near the end of the long original street of Kelso, and not far from the gateway of the Duke of Roxburghe's magnificent park, with their small gardens and paddocks running down to the margin of the Tweed. He had already fitted up convenient bachelor's lodgings in one of the primitive tenements, and converted the others into a goodly range of stabling, and was now watching the completion of his new *corps de logis* behind, which included a handsome entrance-hall, or saloon, destined to have old Piscator's bust, on a stand, in the centre, and to be embellished all round with emblems of his sport. Behind this were spacious rooms overlooking the little *pleasance*, which was to be laid out somewhat in the Italian style, with ornamental steps, a fountain and *jet d'eau*, and a broad terrace hanging over the river, and commanding an extensive view of perhaps the most beautiful landscape in Scotland. In these new dominions John received us with pride and hilarity; and we then walked with him over this pretty town, lounged away an hour among the ruins of the Abbey, and closed our perambulation with *the Garden*, where Scott had spent some of the happiest of his early summers, and where he pointed out with sorrowful

eyes the site of the Platanus under which he first read Percy's Reliques. Returning to John's villa, we dined gayly, *al fresco*, by the side of his fountain; and after not a few bumpers to the prosperity of Walton Hall, he mounted Old Mortality, and escorted us for several miles on our ride homewards. It was this day that, overflowing with kindly zeal, Scott revived one of the long-forgotten projects of their early connection in business, and offered his services as editor of a Novelists' Library, to be printed and published for the sole benefit of his host. The offer was eagerly embraced, and when, two or three mornings afterwards John returned Sir Walter's visit, he had put into his hands the MS. of that admirable life of Fielding, which was followed at brief intervals, as the arrangements of the projected work required, by others of Smollett, Richardson, Defoe, Sterne, Johnson, Goldsmith, Le Sage, Horace Walpole, Cumberland, Mrs. Radcliffe, Charles Johnstone, Clara Reeve, Charlotte Smith, and Robert Bage. The publication of the first volume of Ballantyne's Novelists' Library did not take place, however, until February, 1821; and the series was closed soon after the proprietor's death in the ensuing summer. In spite of the charming prefaces, in which Scott combines all the graces of his easy narrative with a perpetual stream of deep and gentle wisdom in commenting on the tempers and fortunes of his best predecessors in novel literature, and also with expositions of his own critical views, which prove how profoundly he had investigated the principles and practice of those masters before he struck out a new path for himself—in spite of these delightful and valuable essays, the publication was not prosperous. Constable, after Ballantyne's death, would willingly have resumed the scheme. But Scott had by that time convinced himself that it was in vain to expect much success for a collection so bulky and miscellaneous, and which must of necessity include a large proportion of matter, condemned by the purity, whether real or affected, of modern taste. He could hardly have failed to perceive, on reflection, that his own novels, already constituting an extensive library of fiction, in which no purist could pretend to discover danger for the morals of youth, had in fact superseded the works of less strait-laced days in the only permanently and solidly profitable market for books of this order. He at all events declined Constable's proposition for renewing and extending this attempt. What he did, was done gratuitously for John Ballantyne's sake; and I have dwelt on it thus long, because, as the

reader will perceive by and by, it was so done during (with one exception) the very busiest period of Scott's literary life.

Shortly before Scott wrote the following letters, he had placed his second son (at this time in his fifteenth year) under the care of the Reverend John Williams, who had been my intimate friend and companion at Oxford, with a view of preparing him for that University. Mr. Williams was then Vicar of Lampeter, in Cardiganshire, and the high satisfaction with which his care of Charles Scott inspired Sir Walter, induced several other Scotch gentlemen of distinction by and by to send their sons also to his Welsh parsonage; the result of which northern connections was important to the fortunes of one of the most accurate and extensive scholars and most skilful teachers of the present time.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., 18TH HUSSARS,
CORK.

Edinburgh, 14th November, 1820.

My dear Walter,—I send you a cheque on Coutts for your quarter's allowance. I hope you manage your cash like a person of discretion—above all, avoid the card-tables of ancient dowagers. Always remember that my fortune, however much my efforts may increase it, and although I am improving it for your benefit, not for any that can accrue in my own time,—yet never can be more than a decent independence, and therefore will make a poor figure unless managed with good sense, moderation, and prudence—which are habits easily acquired in youth, while habitual extravagance is a fault very difficult to be afterwards corrected.

We came to town yesterday, and bade adieu to Abbotsford for the season. Fife, to mamma's great surprise and scandal, chose to stay at Abbotsford with Mai, and plainly denied to follow the carriage—so our canine establishment in Castle Street is reduced to little Ury. We spent two days at Arniston, on the road,—and on coming here, found Sophia as nicely and orderly settled in her house as if she had been a married woman these five years. I believe she is very happy—perhaps unusually so, for her wishes are moderate, and all seem anxious to please her. She is preparing

in due time for the arrival of a little stranger, who will make you an uncle, and me (God help me!) a grandpapa.

The Round Towers you mention are very curious, and seem to have been built, as the Irish hackney-coachman said of the Martello one at the Black Rock, "to puzzle posterity." There are two of them in Scotland—both excellent pieces of architecture; one at Brechin, built quite close to the old church, so as to appear united with it, but in fact it is quite detached from the church, and sways from it in a high wind, when it vibrates like a lighthouse. The other is at Abernethy in Perthshire—said to have been the capital city of the Picts. I am glad to see you observe objects of interest and curiosity, because otherwise a man may travel over the universe without acquiring any more knowledge than his horse does.

We had our hunt, and our jollification after it, on last Wednesday. It went off in great style, although I felt a little sorry at having neither Charles nor you in the field. By the way, Charles seems most admirably settled. I had a most sensible letter on the subject from Mr. Williams, who appears to have taken great pains, and to have formed a very just conception both of his merits and foibles. When I have an opportunity, I will hand you his letter; for it will entertain you, it is so correct a picture of Monsieur Charles.

Dominie Thomson has gone to a Mrs. Dennistoun, of Colgrain, to drill her youngsters. I am afraid he will find a change; but I hope to have a nook open to him by and by—as a sort of retreat or harbor on his lee. Adieu, my dear—always believe me your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

TO MR. CHARLES SCOTT.

Care of the Rev. John Williams, Lampeter.

Edinburgh, 14th November, 1820.

My dear Boy Charles,—Your letters made us all very happy, and I trust you are now comfortably settled and plying your task hard. Mr. Williams will probably ground you more perfectly in the

grammar of the classical languages than has hitherto been done, and this you will at first find but dry work. But there are many indispensable reasons why you must bestow the utmost attention upon it. A perfect knowledge of the classical languages has been fixed upon, and not without good reason, as the mark of a well-educated young man; and though people may have scrambled into distinction without it, it is always with the greatest difficulty, just like climbing over a wall, instead of giving your ticket at the door. Perhaps you may think another proof of a youth's talents might have been adopted; but what good will arise from your thinking so, if the general practice of society has fixed on this particular branch of knowledge as the criterion? Wheat or barley were as good grain, I suppose, as *sesamum*; but it was only to *sesamum* that the talisman gave way, and the rock opened; and it is equally certain that, if you are not a well-founded grammatical scholar in Greek and Latin, you will in vain present other qualifications to distinction. Besides, the study of grammar, from its very asperities, is calculated to teach youth that patient labor which is necessary to the useful exertion of the understanding upon every other branch of knowledge; and your great deficiency is want of steadiness and of resolute application to the dry as well as the interesting parts of your learning. But exerting yourself, as I have no doubt you will do, under the direction of so learned a man and so excellent a teacher as Mr. Williams, and being without the temptations to idleness which occurred at home, I have every reason to believe that to your natural quickness you will presently add such a *habit* of application and steadiness, as will make you a respected member of society, perhaps a distinguished one. It is very probable that the whole success of your future life may depend on the manner in which you employ *the next two years*; and I am therefore most anxious you should fully avail yourself of the opportunities now afforded you.

You must not be too much disconcerted with the apparent dryness of your immediate studies. Language is the great mark by which man is distinguished from the beasts, and a strict acquaintance with the manner in which it is composed becomes,

as you follow it a little way, one of the most curious and interesting exercises of the intellect.

We had our grand hunt on Wednesday last, a fine day, and plenty of sport. We hunted all over Huntly wood, and so on to Halidon and Prieston—saw twelve hares, and killed six, having very hard runs, and tiring three packs of grews completely. In absence of Walter and you, Stenhouse the horse-couper led the field, and rode as if he had been a piece of his horse, sweltering like a wild-drake all through Marriage-Moss, at a motion betwixt swimming and riding. One unlucky accident befell;—Queen Mab, who was bestrode by Captain Adam, lifted up her heels against Mr. Craig of Galashiels, whose leg she greeted with a thump like a pistol-shot, while by the same movement she very nearly sent the noble Captain over her ears. Mr. Craig was helped from horse, but would not permit his boot to be drawn off, protesting he would faint if he saw the bone of his leg sticking through the stocking. Some thought he was reluctant to exhibit his legs in their primitive and unclothed simplicity, in respect they have an unhappy resemblance to a pair of tongs. As for the Captain, he declared that if the accident had happened *in action*, the surgeon and drum-boys would have had off, not his *boot* only, but his *leg to boot*, before he could have uttered a remonstrance. At length Gala and I prevailed to have the boot drawn, and to my great joy I found the damage was not serious, though the pain must have been severe.

On Saturday we left Abbotsford, and dined and spent Sunday at Arniston, where we had many inquiries after you from Robert Dundas, who was so kind to you last year.

I must conclude for the present, requesting your earnest pursuit of such branches of study as Mr. Williams recommends. In a short time, as you begin to comprehend the subjects you are learning, you will find the path turn smoother, and that which at present seems wrapped up in an inextricable labyrinth of thorns and briers, will at once become easy and attractive.—Always, dear Charlie, your affectionate father,

W. S.

On the same day Scott wrote as follows to the manly and amiable author of Sir Marmaduke Maxwell, who had shortly before sent the MS. of that romantic drama to Abbotsford for his inspection:—

TO MR. ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Care of F. Chantrey, Esq., R. A., London.

Edinburgh, 14th November, 1820.

My dear Allan,—I have been meditating a long letter to you for many weeks past; but company, and rural business, and rural sports, are very unfavorable to writing letters. I have now a double reason for writing, for I have to thank you for sending me in safety a beautiful specimen of our English Michael's talents in the cast of my venerable friend Mr. Watt: it is a most striking resemblance, with all that living character which we are apt to think life itself alone can exhibit. I hope Mr. Chantrey does not permit his distinguished skill either to remain unexercised, or to be lavished exclusively on subjects of little interest. I would like to see him engaged on some subject of importance completely adapted to the purpose of his chisel, and demanding its highest powers. Pray remember me to him most kindly.

I have perused twice your curious and interesting manuscript. Many parts of the poetry are eminently beautiful, though I fear the great length of the piece, and some obscurity of the plot, would render it unfit for dramatic representation. There is also a fine tone of supernatural impulse spread over the whole action, which I think a common audience would not be likely to adopt or comprehend—though I own that to me it has a very powerful effect. Speaking of dramatic composition in general, I think it is almost essential (though the rule be most difficult in practice) that the plot, or business of the piece, should advance with every line that is spoken. The fact is, the drama is addressed chiefly to the eyes, and as much as can be, by any possibility, represented on the stage, should neither be told nor described. Of the miscellaneous part of a large audience, many do not understand, nay, many cannot hear, either narrative or description, but are

solely intent upon the action exhibited. It is, I conceive, for this reason that very bad plays, written by performers themselves, often contrive to get through, and not without applause; while others, immeasurably superior in point of poetical merit, fail, merely because the author is not sufficiently possessed of the trick of the scene, or enough aware of the importance of a maxim pronounced by no less a performer than Punch himself—(at least he was the last authority from whom I heard it),—*Push on, keep moving!* Now, in your very ingenious dramatic effort, the interest not only stands still, but sometimes retrogrades. It contains, notwithstanding, many passages of eminent beauty,—many specimens of most interesting dialogue; and, on the whole, if it is not fitted for the modern stage, I am not sure that its very imperfections do not render it more fit for the closet, for we certainly do not always read with the greatest pleasure those plays which act best.

If, however, you should at any time wish to become a candidate for dramatic laurels, I would advise you, in the first place, to consult some professional person of judgment and taste. I should regard friend Terry as an excellent Mentor, and I believe he would concur with me in recommending that at least one third of the drama be retrenched, that the plot should be rendered simpler, and the motives more obvious, and I think the powerful language and many of the situations might then have their full effect upon the audience. I am uncertain if I have made myself sufficiently understood; but I would say, for example, that it is ill explained by what means Comyn and his gang, who land as shipwrecked men, become at once possessed of the old lord's domains, merely by killing and taking possession. I am aware of what you mean—namely, that being attached to the then rulers, he is supported in his ill-acquired power by their authority. But this is imperfectly brought out, and escaped me at the first reading. The superstitious motives, also, which induced the shepherds to delay their vengeance, are not likely to be intelligible to the generality of the hearers. It would seem more probable that the young Baron should have led his faithful vassals to avenge the death of his parents; and it has escaped me what prevents him

from taking this direct and natural course. Besides it is, I believe, a rule (and it seems a good one) that one single interest, to which every other is subordinate, should occupy the whole play,—each separate object having just the effect of a mill-dam, sluicing off a certain portion of the sympathy, which should move on with increasing force and rapidity to the catastrophe. Now, in your work, there are several divided points of interest; there is the murder of the old Baron—the escape of his wife—that of his son —the loss of his bride—the villainous artifices of Comyn to possess himself of her person—and, finally, the fall of Comyn, and acceleration of the vengeance due to his crimes. I am sure your own excellent sense, which I admire as much as I do your genius, will give me credit for my frankness in these matters; I only know, that I do not know many persons on whose performances I would venture to offer so much criticism.

I will return the manuscript under Mr. Freeling's Post-Office cover, and I hope it will reach you safe.—Adieu, my leal and esteemed friend—yours truly,

Walter Scott.

Shortly afterwards, Mr. Cunningham, thanking his critic, said he had not yet received back his MS.; but that he hoped the delay had been occasioned by Sir Walter's communication of it to some friend of theatrical experience. He also mentioned his having undertaken a collection of The Songs of Scotland, with notes. The answer was in these terms:—

TO MR. ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

My dear Allan,—It was as you supposed—I detained your manuscript to read it over with Terry. The plot appears to Terry, as to me, ill-combined, which is a great defect in a drama, though less perceptible in the closet than on the stage. Still, if the mind can be kept upon one unbroken course of interest, the effect even in perusal is more gratifying. I have always considered this as the great secret in dramatic poetry, and conceive it one of the most difficult exercises of the invention possible, to conduct a story through five acts, developing it gradually in every scene, so as to

keep up the attention, yet never till the very conclusion permitting the nature of the catastrophe to become visible,—and all the while to accompany this by the necessary delineation of character and beauty of language. I am glad, however, that you mean to preserve in some permanent form your very curious drama, which, if not altogether fitted for the stage, cannot be read without very much and very deep interest.

I am glad you are about Scottish song. No man—not Robert Burns himself—has contributed more beautiful effusions to enrich it. Here and there I would pluck a flower from your Posy to give what remains an effect of greater simplicity; but luxuriance can only be the fault of genius, and many of your songs are, I think, unmatched. I would instance, It's Hame and it's Hame, which my daughter Mrs. Lockhart sings with such uncommon effect. You cannot do anything either in the way of original composition, or collection, or criticism, that will not be highly acceptable to all who are worth pleasing in the Scottish public—and I pray you to proceed with it.

Remember me kindly to Chantrey. I am happy my effigy is to go with that of Wordsworth, for (differing from him in very many points of taste) I do not know a man more to be venerated for uprightness of heart and loftiness of genius. Why he will sometimes choose to crawl upon all fours, when God has given him so noble a countenance to lift to heaven, I am as little able to account for, as for his quarrelling (as you tell me) with the wrinkles which time and meditation have stamped his brow withal.

I am obliged to conclude hastily, having long letters to write —God wot upon very different subjects. I pray my kind respects to Mrs. Chantrey.—Believe me, dear Allan, very truly yours, etc.,

Walter Scott.

The following letter touches on the dropping of the Bill which had been introduced by Government for the purpose of degrading the consort of George the Fourth; the riotous rejoicings of the Edinburgh mob on that occasion; and Scott's acquiescence in the request of the guardians of the young Duke of Buccleuch, that he should act as chancellor of the jury about

to *serve* his grace *heir* (as the law phrase goes) to the Scottish estates of his family.

TO THE LORD MONTAGU.

Edinburgh, 30th November, 1820.

My dear Lord,—I had your letter some time since, and have now to congratulate you on your two months' spell of labor-in-vain duty being at length at an end. The old sign of the Labor-in-vain Tavern was a fellow attempting to scrub a black-a-moor white; but the present difficulty seems to lie in showing that one *is* black. Truly, I congratulate the country on the issue; for, since the days of Queen Dollalolla and the *Rumti-iddity* chorus in Tom Thumb, never was there so jolly a representative of royalty. A good ballad might be made, by way of parody, on Gay's Jonathan Wild,—

> "Her Majesty's trial has set us at ease,
> And every wife round me may kiss if she please."

We had the Marquis of Bute and Francis Jeffrey, very brilliant in George Street, and I think one grocer besides. I was hard threatened by letter, but I caused my servant to say in the quarter where I thought the threatening came from, that I should suffer my windows to be broken like a Christian, but if anything else was attempted, I should become as great a heathen as the Dey of Algiers. We were passed over, but many houses were terribly *Cossaqué*, as was the phrase in Paris in 1814 and 1815. The next night, being, like true Scotsmen, wise behind the hand, the bailies had a sufficient force sufficiently arranged, and put down every attempt to riot. If the same precautions had been taken before, the town would have been saved some disgrace, and the loss of at least £1000 worth of property.—Hay Donaldson is getting stout again, and up to the throat in business; there is no getting a word out of him that does not smell of parchment and special service. He asked me, as it is to be a mere *law* service, to act as chancellor on the Duke's inquest, which honorable office I will of course undertake with great willingness, and discharge—I mean the *hospitable* part of it—to the best of my power. I think you are

right to avoid a more extended service, as £1000 certainly would not clear the expense, as you would have to dine at least four counties, and as sweetly sing, with Duke Wharton on Chevy Chase,

> "Pity it were
> So much good wine to spill,
> As these bold freeholders would drink,
> Before they had their fill."

I hope we shall all live to see our young baron take his own chair, and feast the land in his own way. Ever your Lordship's most truly faithful

Walter Scott.

P. S.—In the illumination row, young Romilly was knocked down and robbed by the mob, just while he was in the act of declaiming on the impropriety of having constables and volunteers to interfere with the harmless mirth of the people.

TO MR. CHARLES SCOTT.

Care of the Rev. John Williams, Lampeter.

Edinburgh, 19th December, 1820.

My dear Charles,—We begin to be afraid that, in improving your head, you have lost the use of your fingers, or got so deep into the Greek and Latin grammar, that you have forgotten how to express yourself in your own language. To ease our anxious minds in these important doubts, we beg you will write as soon as possible, and give us a full account of your proceedings, as I do not approve of long intervals of silence, or think that you need to stand very rigorously upon the exchange of letters, especially as mine are so much the longest.

I rely upon it that you are now working hard in the classical mine, getting out the rubbish as fast as you can, and preparing yourself to collect the ore. I cannot too much impress upon your mind that *labor* is the condition which God has imposed on us in

every station of life—there is nothing worth having, that can be had without it, from the bread which the peasant wins with the sweat of his brow, to the sports by which the rich man must get rid of his ennui. The only difference betwixt them is, that the poor man labors to get a dinner to his appetite, the rich man to get an appetite to his dinner. As for knowledge, it can no more be planted in the human mind without labor, than a field of wheat can be produced without the previous use of the plough. There is indeed this great difference, that chance or circumstances may so cause it that another shall reap what the farmer sows; but no man can be deprived, whether by accident or misfortune, of the fruits of his own studies; and the liberal and extended acquisitions of knowledge which he makes are all for his own use. Labor, my dear boy, therefore, and improve the time. In youth our steps are light, and our minds are ductile, and knowledge is easily laid up; but if we neglect our spring, our summers will be useless and contemptible, our harvest will be chaff, and the winter of our old age unrespected and desolate.

It is now Christmas-tide, and it comes sadly round to me as reminding me of your excellent grandmother, who was taken from us last year at this time. Do you, my dear Charles, pay attention to the wishes of your parents while they are with you, that you may have no self-reproach when you think of them at a future period.

You hear the Welsh spoken much about you, and if you can pick it up without interfering with more important labors, it will be worth while. I suppose you can easily get a grammar and dictionary. It is, you know, the language spoken by the Britons before the invasion of the Anglo-Saxons, who brought in the principal ingredients of our present language, called from thence English. It was afterwards, however, much mingled with Norman French, the language of William the Conqueror and his followers; so if you can pick up a little of the Cambro-British speech, it will qualify you hereafter to be a good philologist, should your genius turn towards languages. Pray, have you yet learned who Howel Dha was?—Glendower you are well acquainted with by reading Shakespeare. The wild mysterious barbaric grandeur with which

he has invested that chieftain has often struck me as very fine. I wish we had some more of him.

We are all well here, and I hope to get to Abbotsford for a few days—they cannot be many—in the ensuing vacation, when I trust to see the planting has got well forward. All are well here, and Mr. Cadell is come back, and gives a pleasant account of your journey. Let me hear from you very soon, and tell me if you expect any *skating*, and whether there is any ice in Wales. I presume there will be a merry Christmas, and beg my best wishes on the subject to Mr. Williams, his sister, and family. The Lockharts dine with us, and the Scotts of Harden, James Scott with his pipes, and I hope Captain Adam. We will remember your health in a glass of claret just about *six* o'clock at night; so that you will know exactly (allowing for variation of time) what we are doing at the same moment.

But I think I have written quite enough to a young Welshman, who has forgot all his Scots kith, kin, and allies. Mamma and Anne send many loves. Walter came like a shadow, and so departed—after about ten days' stay. The effect was quite dramatic, for the door was flung open as we were about to go down to dinner, and Turner announced *Captain Scott*. We could not conceive who was meant, when in walked Walter as large as life. He is positively a new edition of the Irish giant.—I beg my kind respects to Mr. Williams. At his leisure I should be happy to have a line from him.—I am, my dear little boy, always your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

The next letter contains a brief allusion to an affair, which in the life of any other man of letters would have deserved to be considered as of some consequence. The late Sir James Hall of Dunglass resigned, in November, 1820, the Presidency of the Royal Society of Edinburgh; and the Fellows, though they had on all former occasions selected a man of science to fill that post, paid Sir Walter the compliment of unanimously requesting him to be Sir James's successor in it. He felt and expressed a natural hesitation about accepting this honor—which at first sight seemed like invading the proper department of another order of scholars. But when it was urged upon

him that the Society is really a double one,—embracing a section for literature as well as one of science,—and that it was only due to the former to let it occasionally supply the chief of the whole body,—Scott acquiesced in the flattering proposal; and his gentle skill was found effective, so long as he held the Chair, in maintaining and strengthening the tone of good feeling and good manners which can alone render the meetings of such a Society either agreeable or useful. The new President himself soon began to take a lively interest in many of their discussions—those at least which pointed to any discovery of practical use;—and he by and by added some eminent men of science, with whom his acquaintance had hitherto been slight, to the list of his most valued friends: I may mention in particular Doctor, now Sir David, Brewster.

Sir Walter also alludes to an institution of a far different description,—that called "The Celtic Society of Edinburgh;" a club established mainly for the patronage of ancient Highland manners and customs, especially the use of "the Garb of Old Gaul"—though part of their funds have always been applied to the really important object of extending education in the wilder districts of the north. At their annual meetings Scott was, as may be supposed, a regular attendant. He appeared, as in duty bound, in the costume of the Fraternity, and was usually followed by "John of Skye," in a still more complete, or rather incomplete, style of equipment.

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, DITTON PARK.

Edinburgh, 17th January, 1821.

> My dear Lord,—We had a tight day of it on Monday last, both dry and wet. The dry part was as dry as may be, consisting in rehearsing the whole lands of the Buccleuch estate for five mortal hours, although Donaldson had kindly selected a clerk whose tongue went over baronies, lordships, and regalities, at as high a rate of top speed as ever Eclipse displayed in clearing the course at Newmarket. The evening went off very well—considering that while looking forward with the natural feelings of hope and expectation on behalf of our young friend, most of us who were present could not help casting looks of sad remembrance on the days we had seen. However, we did very well, and I kept the chair till eleven, when we had coffee, and departed, "no very fou, but

gaily yet." Besides the law gentlemen, and immediate agents of the family, I picked up on my own account Tom Ogilvie, Sir Harry Hay Macdougal, Harden and his son, Gala, and Captain John Ferguson, whom I asked as from myself, stating that the party was to be quite private. I suppose there was no harm in this, and it helped us well on. I believe your nephew and my young chief enters life with as favorable auspices as could well attend him, for to few youths can attach so many good wishes, and *none* can look back to more estimable examples both in his father and grandfather. I think he will succeed to the warm and social affections of his relatives, which, if they sometimes occasion pain to those who possess them, contain also the purest sources of happiness as well as of virtue.

Our late Pitt meeting amounted to about 800, a most tremendous multitude. I had charge of a separate room, containing a detachment of about 250, and gained a headache of two days, by roaring to them for five or six hours almost incessantly. The Foxites had also a very numerous meeting,—500 at least, but sad scamps. We had a most formidable band of young men, almost all born gentlemen and zealous proselytes. We shall now begin to look anxiously to London for news. I suppose they will go by the ears in the House of Commons: but I trust Ministers will have a great majority. If not, they should go out, and let the others make the best of it with their acquitted Queen, who will be a ticklish card in their hand, for she is by nature *intrigante* more ways than one. The loss of Canning is a serious disadvantage; many of our friends have good talents and good taste; but I think he alone has that higher order of parts which we call genius. I wish he had had more prudence to guide it. He has been a most unlucky politician. Adieu. Best love to all at Ditton, and great respect withal. My best compliments attend my young chief, now seated, to use an Oriental phrase, upon the *Musnud*. I am almost knocked up with public meetings, for the triple Hecate was a joke to my plurality of offices this week. On Friday I had my Pittite stewardship;—on Monday my chancellorship;—yesterday my presidentship of the Royal Society; for I had a meeting of that learned body at my house last night, where mulled

> wine and punch were manufactured and consumed according to the latest philosophical discoveries. Besides all this, I have before my eyes the terrors of a certain Highland Association, who dine bonneted and *kilted* in the old fashion (all save myself, of course), and armed to the teeth. This is rather severe service; but men who wear broadswords, dirks, and pistols, are not to be neglected in these days; and the Gael are very loyal lads, so it is as well to keep up an influence with them. Once more, my dear Lord, farewell, and believe me always most truly yours,
>
> Walter Scott.

In the course of the riotous week commemorated in the preceding letter, appeared Kenilworth, in three volumes post 8vo, like Ivanhoe, which form was adhered to with all the subsequent novels of the series. Kenilworth was one of the most successful of them all at the time of publication; and it continues, and, I doubt not, will ever continue to be placed in the very highest rank of prose fiction. The rich variety of character, and scenery, and incident in this novel, has never indeed been surpassed; nor, with the one exception of The Bride of Lammermoor, has Scott bequeathed us a deeper and more affecting tragedy than that of Amy Robsart.

Chapter LI

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1821

Before the end of January, 1821, Scott went to London at the request of the other Clerks of Session, that he might watch over the progress of an Act of Parliament, designed to relieve them from a considerable part of their drudgery, in attesting recorded deeds by signature;—and his stay was prolonged until near the beginning of the Summer term of his Court. His letters while in London are mostly to his own family, and on strictly domestic topics; but I shall extract a few of them, chiefly (for reasons which I have already sufficiently intimated) those addressed to his son the Cornet. I need not trespass on the reader's attention by any attempt to explain in detail the matters to which these letters refer. It will be seen that Sir Walter had heard some rumors of irregularity in the interior of the 18th Hussars; and that the consequent interference of the then Commander of the Forces in Ireland, the late Sir David Baird, had been received in anything but a spirit of humility. The reports that reached Scott proved to have been most absurdly exaggerated; but nevertheless his observations on them seem well worth quoting. It so happened that the 18th was one of several regiments about to be reduced at this time; and as soon as that event took place, Cornet Scott was sent to travel in Germany, with a view to his improvement in the science of his profession. He afterwards spent a brief period, for the same purpose, in the Royal Military College of Sandhurst; and erelong he obtained a commission as lieutenant in the 15th or King's Hussars, in which distinguished corps his father lived to see him Major.

It will also be seen, that during this visit to London Sir Walter was released from considerable anxiety on account of his daughter Sophia, whom he had left in a weak state of health at Edinburgh, by the intelligence of her safe accouchement of a boy,—John Hugh Lockhart, the "Hugh

Littlejohn" of the Tales of a Grandfather. The approaching marriage of Captain, now Sir Adam Ferguson, to which some jocular allusions occur, may be classed with these objects of family interest; and that event was the source of unmixed satisfaction to Scott, as it did not interrupt his enjoyment of his old friend's society in the country; for the Captain, though he then pitched a tent for himself, did so at a very short distance from Huntly Burn. I believe the ensuing extracts will need no further commentary.

TO MRS. LOCKHART, GREAT KING STREET, EDINBURGH.

Ditton Park, February 18, 1821.

My dearest Sophia,—I received as much pleasure, and was relieved from as much anxiety, as ever I felt in my life, by Lockhart's kind note, which acquainted me with the happy period that has been put to your suffering, and, as I hope and trust, to the complaints which occasioned it. You are now, my dearest girl, beginning a new course of pleasures, anxieties, and duties, and the best I can wish for you is, that your little boy may prove the same dutiful and affectionate child which you have always been to me, and that God may give him a sound and healthy mind, with a good constitution of body—the greatest blessings which this earth can bestow. Pray be extremely careful of yourself for some time. Young women are apt to injure their health by thinking themselves well too soon. I beg you to be cautious in this respect.

The news of the young stranger's arrival was most joyfully received here, and his health and yours toasted in a bumper. Lady Anne is quite well, and Isabella also; and Lady Charlotte, who has rejoined them, is a most beautiful creature indeed. This place is all light and splendor, compared to London, where I was forced to use candles till ten o'clock at least. I have a gay time of it. To-morrow I return to town, and dine with old Sotheby; on Tuesday with the Duke of Wellington; Wednesday with Croker, and so on. Love to L., the Captain, and the Violet, and give your bantling a kiss extraordinary for Grandpapa. I hope Mungo approves of the child, for that is a serious point. There are no dogs in the hotel where I lodge, but a tolerably conversible cat, who eats a mess of

cream with me in the morning. The little chief and his brother have come over from Eton to see me, so I must break off.—I am, my dear love, most affectionately yours,

Walter Scott.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., PORTOBELLO BARRACKS, DUBLIN.

Waterloo Hotel, Jermyn Street,
February 19, 1821.

My dear Walter,—I have just received your letter. I send you a draft for £50, which you must make go as far as you can.

There is what I have no doubt is a very idle report here, of your paying rather marked attention to one young lady in particular. I beg you would do nothing that can justify such a rumor, as it would excite my *highest displeasure* should you either entangle yourself or any other person. I am, and have always been, quite frank with you, and beg you will be equally so with me. One should, in justice to the young women they live with, be very cautious not to give the least countenance to such rumors. They are not easily avoided, but are always highly prejudicial to the parties concerned; and what begins in folly ends in serious misery—*avis au lecteur.*

Believe me, dear Cornet, your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—I wish you could pick me up the Irish lilt of a tune to "Patrick Fleming." The song begins,—

> "Patrick Fleming was a gallant soldier,
> He carried his musket over his shoulder.
> When I cock my pistol, when I draw my raper,
> I make them stand in awe of me, for I am a taker.
> Falala," etc.

From another verse in the same song, it seems the hero was in such a predicament as your own:—

"If you be Peter Fleming, as I suppose you be, sir,
We are three pedlars walking on so free, sir.
We are three pedlars a-walking on to Dublin,
With nothing in our pockets to pay for our lodging.
Falala," etc.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., 18TH HUSSARS,
CAPPOQUIN.

London, 17th March, 1821.

My dear Commandant of Cappoquin,—Wishing you joy of your new government, these are to inform you that I am still in London. The late aspersion on your regiment induced me to protract my stay here, with a view to see the Duke of York on your behalf, which I did yesterday. His Royal Highness expressed himself most obligingly disposed, and promised to consider what could best be done to forward your military education. I told him frankly, that in giving you to the King's service I had done all that was in my power to show our attachment to his Majesty and the country which had been so kind to me, and that it was my utmost ambition that you should render yourself capable of serving them both well. He said he would give the affair his particular consideration, and see whether he could put you on the establishment at Sandhurst, without any violent infringement on the rules; and hinted that he would make an exception to the rule of seniority of standing and priority of application in your favor when an opportunity occurs.

From H. R. H.'s very kind expressions, I have little doubt you will have more than justice done you in the patronage necessary to facilitate your course through life; but it must be by your own exertions, my dearest boy, that you must render yourself qualified to avail yourself of the opportunities which you may have offered to you. Work, therefore, as hard as you can, and do not be discontented for want of assistance of masters, etc., because the knowledge which we acquire by our own unaided efforts, is much more tenaciously retained by the memory, while the exertion necessary to gain it strengthens the understanding. At the same

time, I would inquire whether there may not be some Catholic priest, or Protestant clergyman, or scholar of any description, who, for love or money, would give you a little assistance occasionally. Such persons are to be found almost everywhere; not professed teachers, but capable of smoothing the road to a willing student. Let me earnestly recommend in your reading to keep fast to particular hours, and suffer no one thing to encroach on the other.

Charles's last letter was uncommonly steady, and prepared me for one from Mr. Williams, in which he expresses satisfaction with his attention, and with his progress in learning, in a much stronger degree than formerly. This is truly comfortable, and may relieve me from the necessity of sending the poor boy to India.

All in Edinburgh are quite well, and no fears exist, saving those of little Catherine for the baby, lest the fairies take it away before the christening. I will send some books to you from hence, if I can find means to transmit them. I should like you to read with care the campaigns of Buonaparte, which have been written in French with much science.

I hope, indeed I am sure, I need not remind you to be very attentive to your duty. You have but a small charge, but it is a charge, and rashness or carelessness may lead to discredit in the commandant of Cappoquin, as well as in a field-marshal. In the exercise of your duty, be tender of the lower classes; and as you are strong, be merciful. In this you will do your master good service, for show me the manners of the man, and I will judge those of the master.

In your present situation, it may be interesting to you to know that the bill for Catholic Emancipation will pass the Commons without doubt, and very probably the Peers also, unless the Spiritual Lords make a great rally. Nobody here cares much about it, and if it does not pass this year, it will the next, without doubt.

Among other improvements, I wish you would amend your hand. It is a deplorable scratch, and far the worst of the family. Charles writes a firm good hand in comparison.

You may address your next to Abbotsford, where I long to be, being heartily tired of fine company and fine living, from dukes

and duchesses, down to turbot and plovers' eggs. It is very well for a while, but to be kept at it makes one feel like a poodle dog compelled to stand forever on his hind legs.—Most affectionately yours,

Walter Scott.

During this visit to London, Sir Walter appears to have been consulted by several persons in authority as to the project of a Society of Literature, for which the King's patronage had been solicited, and which was established soon afterwards—though on a scale less extensive than had been proposed at the outset. He expressed his views on this subject in writing at considerable length to his friend the Hon. John Villiers (afterwards Earl of Clarendon); but of that letter, described to me as a most admirable one, I have as yet failed to recover a copy. I have little doubt that both the letter in question, and the following, addressed, soon after his arrival at Abbotsford, to the then Secretary of State for the Home Department, were placed in the hands of the King; but it seems probable, that whatever his Majesty may have thought of Scott's representations, he considered himself as already, in some measure, pledged to countenance the projected academy.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, ETC., ETC., ETC., WHITEHALL.

Abbotsford, April 20, 1821.

My dear Lord,—Owing to my retreat to this place, I was only honored with your Lordship's letter yesterday. Whatever use can be made of my letter to stop the very ill-contrived project to which it relates, will answer the purpose for which it was written. I do not well remember the terms in which my remonstrance to Mr. Villiers was couched, for it was positively written betwixt sleeping and waking; but your Lordship will best judge how far the contents may be proper for his Majesty's eye; and if the sentiments appear a little in dishabille, there is the true apology that they were never intended to go to Court. From more than twenty years' intercourse with the literary world, during which I have been more or less acquainted with every distinguished writer of my day, and, at the same time, an accurate student of the habits

and tastes of the reading public, I am enabled to say, with a feeling next to certainty, that the plan can only end in something very unpleasant. At all events, his Majesty should get out of it; it is nonsense to say or suppose that any steps have been taken which, in such a matter, can or ought to be considered as irrevocable. The fact is, that nobody knows as yet how far the matter has gone beyond the *projet* of some well-meaning but misjudging persons, and the whole thing is asleep and forgotten so far as the public is concerned. The Spanish proverb says, "God help me from my friends, and I will keep myself from my enemies;" and there is much sense in it; for the zeal of misjudging adherents often contrives, as in the present case, to turn to matter of reproach the noblest feelings on the part of a sovereign.

Let men of letters fight their own way with the public, and let his Majesty, according as his own excellent taste and liberality dictate, honor with his patronage, expressed in the manner fitted to their studies and habits, those who are able to distinguish themselves, and alleviate by his bounty the distresses of such as, with acknowledged merit, may yet have been unfortunate in procuring independence. The immediate and direct favor of the Sovereign is worth the patronage of ten thousand societies. But your Lordship knows how to set all this in a better light than I can, and I would not wish the cause of letters in better hands.

I am now in a scene changed as completely as possible from those in which I had the great pleasure of meeting your Lordship lately, riding through the moors on a pony, instead of traversing the streets in a carriage, and drinking whiskey-toddy with mine honest neighbors, instead of Champagne and Burgundy. I have gained, however, in point of exact political information; for I find we know upon Tweedside with much greater accuracy what is done and intended in the Cabinet, than ever I could learn when living with the Ministers five days in the week. Mine honest Teviotdale friends, whom I left in a high Queen-fever, are now beginning to be somewhat ashamed of themselves, and to make as great advances towards retracting their opinion as they are ever known to do, which amounts to this: "God judge me, Sir W——, the King's no been so dooms far wrong after a' in yon Queen's job

like;" which, being interpreted, signifies, "We will fight for the King to the death." I do not know how it was in other places; but I never saw so sudden and violent a delusion possess the minds of men in my life, even those of sensible, steady, well-intentioned fellows, that would fight knee-deep against the Radicals. It is well over, thank God.

My best compliments attend the ladies. I ever am, my dear Lord, your truly obliged and faithful humble servant,

Walter Scott.

I have thought it right to insert the preceding letter, because it indicates with sufficient distinctness what Scott's opinions always were as to a subject on which, from his experience and position, he must have reflected very seriously. In how far the results of the establishment of the Royal Society of Literature have tended to confirm or to weaken the weight of his authority on these matters, I do not presume to have formed any judgment. He received, about the same time, a volume of poetry by Allan Cunningham, which included the drama of Sir Marmaduke Maxwell; and I am happy to quote his letter of acknowledgment to that high-spirited and independent author in the same page with the foregoing monition to the dispensers of patronage.

TO MR. ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, ECCLESTONE STREET, PIMLICO.

Abbotsford, 27th April.

Dear Allan,—Accept my kind thanks for your little modest volume, received two days since. I was acquainted with most of the pieces, and yet I perused them all with renewed pleasure, and especially my old friend Sir Marmaduke with his new face, and by the assistance of an April sun, which is at length, after many a rough blast, beginning to smile on us. The drama has, in my conception, more poetical conception and poetical expression in it, than most of our modern compositions. Perhaps, indeed, it occasionally sins even in the richness of poetical expression; for the language of passion, though bold and figurative, is brief and concise at the same time. But what would, in acting, be a more

serious objection, is the complicated nature of the plot, which is very obscure. I hope you will make another dramatic attempt; and, in that case, I would strongly recommend that you should previously make a model or skeleton of your incidents, dividing them regularly into scenes and acts, so as to insure the dependence of one circumstance upon another, and the simplicity and union of your whole story. The common class of readers, and more especially of spectators, are thick-skulled enough, and can hardly comprehend what they see and hear, unless they are hemmed in, and guided to the sense at every turn.

The unities of time and place have always appeared to me fopperies, as far as they require close observance of the French rules. Still, the nearer you can come to them, it is always, no doubt, the better, because your action will be more probable. But the unity of action—I mean that continuity which unites every scene with the other, and makes the catastrophe the natural and probable result of all that has gone before—seems to me a critical rule which cannot safely be dispensed with. Without such a regular deduction of incidents, men's attention becomes distracted, and the most beautiful language, if at all listened to, creates no interest, and is out of place. I would give, as an example, the suddenly entertained and as suddenly abandoned jealousy of Sir Marmaduke (p. 85), as a useless excrescence in the action of the drama.

I am very much unaccustomed to offer criticism, and when I do so, it is because I believe in my soul that I am endeavoring to pluck away the weeds which hide flowers well worthy of cultivation. In your case, the richness of your language, and fertility of your imagination, are the snares against which I would warn you. If the one had been poor, and the other costive, I would never have made remarks which could never do good, while they only gave pain. Did you ever read Savage's beautiful poem of The Wanderer? If not, do so, and you will see the fault which, I think, attaches to Lord Maxwell—a want of distinct precision and intelligibility about the story, which counteracts, especially with ordinary readers, the effect of beautiful and forcible diction, poetical imagery, and animated description.

All this freedom you will excuse, I know, on the part of one who has the truest respect for the manly independence of character which rests for its support on honest industry, instead of indulging the foolish fastidiousness formerly supposed to be essential to the poetical temperament, and which has induced some men of real talents to become coxcombs—some to become sots—some to plunge themselves into want—others into the equal miseries of dependence, merely because, forsooth, they were men of genius, and wise above the ordinary, and, I say, the manly duties of human life.

"I'd rather be a kitten, and cry, Mew!"

than write the best poetry in the world on condition of laying aside common sense in the ordinary transactions and business of the world; and therefore, dear Allan, I wish much the better to the Muse whom you meet by the fireside in your hours of leisure when you have played your part manfully through a day of labor. I should like to see her making those hours also a little profitable. Perhaps something of the dramatic romance, if you could hit on a good subject, and combine the scenes well, might answer. A beautiful thing with appropriate music, scenes, etc., might be woven out of the Mermaid of Galloway.

When there is any chance of Mr. Chantrey coming this way, I hope you will let me know; and if you come with him, so much the better. I like him as much for his manners as for his genius.

"He is a man without a clagg;
His heart is frank without a flaw."

This is a horrible long letter for so vile a correspondent as I am. Once more, my best thanks for the little volume, and believe me yours truly,

Walter Scott.

I now return to Sir Walter's correspondence with the Cornet at Cappoquin.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., 18TH HUSSARS.

Abbotsford, April 21, 1821.

My dear Walter,—...A democrat in any situation is but a silly sort of fellow, but a democratical soldier is worse than an ordinary traitor by ten thousand degrees, as he forgets his military honor, and is faithless to the master whose bread he eats. Three distinguished heroes of this class have arisen in my time—Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Colonel Despard, and Captain Thistlewood—and, with the contempt and abhorrence of all men, they died the death of infamy and guilt. If a man of honor is unhappy enough to entertain opinions inconsistent with the service in which he finds himself, it is his duty at once to resign his commission; in acting otherwise, he disgraces himself forever.... The reports are very strange, also, with respect to the private conduct of certain officers.... Gentlemen maintain their characters even in following their most licentious pleasures, otherwise they resemble the very scavengers in the streets.... I had written you a long letter on other subjects, but these circumstances have altered my plans, as well as given me great uneasiness on account of the effects which the society you have been keeping may have had on your principles, both political and moral. Be very frank with me on this subject. I have a title to expect perfect sincerity, having always treated you with openness on my part.

Pray write immediately, and at length.—I remain your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Abbotsford, April 28, 1821.

Dear Walter,—... The great point in the mean while is to acquire such preliminary information as may render you qualified to profit by Sandhurst when you get thither. Amongst my acquaintance, the men of greatest information have been those who seemed but indifferently situated for the acquisition of it, but who exerted themselves in proportion to the infrequency of their opportunities.

The noble Captain Ferguson was married on Monday last. I was present at the bridal, and I assure you the like hath not been seen since the days of Lesmahago. Like his prototype, the Captain advanced in a jaunty military step, with a kind of leer on his face that seemed to quiz the whole affair. You should write to your brother sportsman and soldier, and wish the veteran joy of his entrance into the band of Benedicts. Odd enough that I should christen a grandchild and attend the wedding of a contemporary within two days of each other. I have sent John of Skye with Tom, and all the rabblement which they can collect, to play the pipes, shout, and fire guns below the Captain's windows this morning; and I am just going over to hover about on my pony, and witness their reception. The happy pair returned to Huntly Burn on Saturday; but yesterday being Sunday, we permitted them to enjoy their pillows in quiet. This morning they must not expect to get off so well. Pray write soon, and give me the history of your still-huntings, etc.—Ever yours affectionately,

W. Scott.

TO CHARLES SCOTT, ESQ.

Care of the Rev. Mr. Williams, Lampeter.

Abbotsford, 9th May, 1821.

My dear Charles,—I am glad to find, by your letter just received, that you are reading Tacitus with some relish. His style is rather quaint and enigmatical, which makes it difficult to the student; but then his pages are filled with such admirable apothegms and maxims of political wisdom, as infer the deepest knowledge of human nature; and it is particularly necessary that any one who may have views as a public speaker should be master of his works, as there is neither ancient nor modern who affords such a selection of admirable quotations. You should exercise yourself frequently in trying to make translations of the passages which most strike you, trying to invest the sense of Tacitus in as good English as you can. This will answer the double purpose of making yourself familiar with the Latin author, and giving you

the command of your own language, which no person will ever have who does not study English composition in early life.... I conclude somewhat abruptly, having trees to cut, and saucy Tom watching me like a Calmuck with the axe in his hand.

Yours affectionately,

W. Scott.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., 18TH HUSSARS, CAPPOQUIN.

Abbotsford, 10th May, 1821.

Dear Walter,—I wrote yesterday, but I am induced immediately to answer your letter, because I think you expect from it an effect upon my mind different from what it produces. A man may be violent and outrageous in his liquor, but wine seldom makes a gentleman a blackguard, or instigates a loyal man to utter sedition. Wine unveils the passions and throws away restraint, but it does not create habits or opinions which did not previously exist in the mind. Besides, what sort of defence is this of intemperance? I suppose if a private commits riot, or is disobedient in his cups, his officers do not admit whiskey to be an excuse. I have seen enough of that sort of society where habitual indulgence drowned at last every distinction between what is worthy and unworthy,—and I have seen young men with the fairest prospects, turn out degraded miserable outcasts before their life was half spent, merely from soaking and sotting, and the bad habits these naturally lead to. You tell me *** and *** frequent good society, and are well received in it; and I am very glad to hear this is the case. But such stories as these will soon occasion their seclusion from the *best* company. There may remain, indeed, a large enough circle, where ladies, who are either desirous to fill their rooms or to marry their daughters, will continue to receive any young man in a showy uniform, however irregular in private life; but if these cannot be called *bad* company, they are certainly anything but *very good*, and the facility of access makes the *entrée* of little consequence.

I mentioned in my last that you were to continue in the 18th until the regiment went to India, and that I trusted you would get the step within the twelve months that the corps yet remains in Europe, which will make your exchange easier. But it is of far more importance that you learn to command yourself, than that you should be raised higher in commanding others. It gives me pain to write to you in terms of censure, but *my duty* must be done, else I cannot expect you to do *yours*. All here are well, and send love.—I am your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

TO THE SAME.

Edinburgh, 15th May, 1821.

Dear Walter,—I have your letter of May 6th, to which it is unnecessary to reply very particularly. I would only insinuate to you that the *lawyers* and *gossips* of Edinburgh, whom your military politeness handsomely classes together in writing to a lawyer, know and care as little about the 18th as they do about the 19th, 20th, or 21st, or any other regimental number which does not happen for the time to be at Piershill, or in the Castle. Do not fall into the error and pedantry of young military men, who, living much together, are apt to think themselves and their actions the subject of much talk and rumor among the public at large.—I will transcribe Fielding's account of such a person, whom he met with on his voyage to Lisbon, which will give two or three hours' excellent amusement when you choose to peruse it:—

"In his conversation it is true there was something military enough, as it consisted chiefly of oaths, and of the great actions and wise sayings of Jack, Will, and Tom of *ours*, a phrase eternally in his mouth, and he seemed to conclude that it conveyed to all the officers such a degree of public notoriety and importance that it entitled him, like the head of a profession, or a first minister, to be the subject of conversation amongst those who had not the least personal acquaintance with him."

Avoid this silly narrowness of mind, my dear boy, which only makes men be looked on in the world with ridicule and contempt. Lawyer and gossip as I may be, I suppose you will allow I have seen something of life in most of its varieties; as much at least as if I had been, like you, eighteen months in a cavalry regiment, or, like Beau Jackson in Roderick Random, had cruised for half a year in the chops of the Channel. Now, I have never remarked any one, be he soldier, or divine, or lawyer, that was exclusively attached to the narrow habits of his own profession, but what such person became a great twaddle in good society, besides, what is of much more importance, becoming narrow-minded, and ignorant of all general information.

That this letter may not be unacceptable in all its parts, I enclose your allowance without stopping anything for the hackney. Take notice, however, my dear Walter, that this is to last you till midsummer.—We came from Abbotsford yesterday, and left all well, excepting that Mr. Laidlaw lost his youngest child, an infant, very unexpectedly. We found Sophia, Lockhart, and their child in good health, and all send love.

I remain your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

TO WALTER SCOTT, ESQ., 18TH HUSSARS.

Edinburgh, 26th May, 1821.

My Dear Walter,—I see you are of the mind of the irritable prophet Jonah, who persisted in maintaining "he did well to be angry," even when disputing with Omnipotence. I am aware that Sir David is considered as a severe and ill-tempered man; and I remember a story that, when report came to Europe that Tippoo's prisoners (of whom Baird was one) were chained together two and two, his mother said, "God pity the poor lad that's chained to *our Davie*." But though it may be very true that he may have acted towards you with caprice and severity, yet you are always to remember,—1st, That in becoming a soldier you have subjected yourself to the caprice and severity of superior officers, and have

no comfort except in contemplating the prospect of commanding others in your turn. In the mean while, you have in most cases no remedy so useful as patience and submission. But, *2dly*, As you seem disposed to admit that you yourselves have been partly to blame, I submit to you, that in turning the magnifying end of the telescope on Sir D.'s faults, and the diminishing one on your own, you take the least useful mode of considering the matter. By studying *his* errors, you can acquire no knowledge that will be useful to you till you become Commander-in-Chief in Ireland,—whereas, by reflecting on *your own*, Cornet Scott and his companions may reap some immediate moral advantage. Your fine of a dozen of claret, upon any one who shall introduce females into your mess in future, reminds me of the rule of a country club, that whoever "behaved ungenteel" should be fined in a pot of porter. Seriously, I think there was bad taste in the style of the forfeiture.

I am well pleased with your map, which is very businesslike. There was a great battle fought between the English and native Irish near the Blackwater, in which the former were defeated, and Bagenal the Knight-Marshal killed. Is there any remembrance of this upon the spot? There is a clergyman in Lismore, Mr. John Graham—originally, that is by descent, a Borderer. He lately sent me a manuscript which I intend to publish, and I wrote to him enclosing a cheque on Coutts. I wish you could ascertain if he received my letter safe. You can call upon him with my compliments. You need only say I was desirous to know if he had received a letter from me lately. The manuscript was written by a certain Mr. Gwynne, a Welsh loyalist in the great Civil War, and afterwards an officer in the guards of Charles II. This will be an object for a ride to you.

I presided last night at the dinner of the Celtic Society, "all plaided and plumed in their tartan array," and such jumping, skipping, and screaming you never saw. Chief-Baron Shepherd dined with us, and was very much pleased with the extreme enthusiasm of the Gael when liberated from the thraldom of breeches. You were voted a member by acclamation, which will cost me a tartan dress for your long limbs when you come here. If

the King takes Scotland in coming or going to Ireland (as has been talked of), I expect to get you leave to come over.—I remain your affectionate father,

Walter Scott.

P. S.—I beg you will not take it into your wise noddle that I will act either hastily or unadvisedly in your matters. I have been more successful in life than most people, and know well how much success depends, first upon desert, and then on knowledge of the *carte de pays*.

The following letter begins with an allusion to a visit which Captain Ferguson, his bride, and his youngest sister, Miss Margaret Ferguson, had been paying at Ditton Park:—

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, ETC., ETC.

Edinburgh, 21st May, 1821.

My dear Lord,—I was much diverted with the account of Adam and Eve's visit to Ditton, which, with its surrounding moat, might make no bad emblem of Eden, but for the absence of snakes and fiends. He is a very singular fellow; for, with all his humor and knowledge of the world, he by nature is a remarkably shy and modest man, and more afraid of the possibility of intrusion than would occur to any one who only sees him in the full stream of society. His sister Margaret is extremely like him in the turn of thought and of humor, and he has two others who are as great curiosities in their way. The eldest is a complete old maid, with all the gravity and shyness of the character, but not a grain of its bad humor or spleen; on the contrary, she is one of the kindest and most motherly creatures in the world. The second, Mary, was in her day a very pretty girl; but her person became deformed, and she has the sharpness of features with which that circumstance is sometimes attended. She rises very early in the morning, and roams over all my wild land in the neighborhood, wearing the most complicated pile of handkerchiefs of different colors on her head, and a stick double her own height in her hand, attended by

two dogs, whose powers of yelping are truly terrific. With such garb and accompaniments, she has very nearly established the character in the neighborhood of being *something no canny*—and the urchins of Melrose and Darnick are frightened from gathering hazel-nuts and cutting wands in my cleugh, by the fear of meeting *the daft lady*. With all this quizzicality, I do not believe there ever existed a family with so much mutual affection and such an overflow of benevolence to all around them, from men and women down to hedge-sparrows and lame ass-colts, more than one of which they have taken under their direct and special protection.

I am sorry there should be occasion for caution in the case of little Duke Walter, but it is most lucky that the necessity is early and closely attended to. How many actual valetudinarians have outlived all their robust contemporaries, and attained the utmost verge of human life, without ever having enjoyed what is usually called high health. This is taking the very worst view of the case, and supposing the constitution habitually delicate. But how often has the strongest and best confirmed health succeeded to a delicate childhood—and such, I trust, will be the Duke's case. I cannot help thinking that this temporary recess from Eton may be made subservient to Walter's improvement in general literature, and particularly in historical knowledge. The habit of reading useful, and at the same time entertaining books of history, is often acquired during the retirement which delicate health in convalescence imposes on us. I remember we touched on this point at Ditton; and I think again, that though classical learning be the *Shibboleth* by which we judge, generally speaking, of the proficiency of the youthful scholar, yet, when this has been too exclusively and pedantically impressed on his mind as the one thing needful, he very often finds he has entirely a new course of study to commence, just at the time when life is opening all its busy or gay scenes before him, and when study of any kind becomes irksome.

For this species of instruction I do not so much approve of tasks and set hours for serious reading, as of the plan of endeavoring to give a taste for history to the youths themselves,

and suffering them to gratify it in their own way, and at their own time. For this reason I would not be very scrupulous what books they began with, or whether they began at the middle or end. The knowledge which we acquire of free will and by spontaneous exertion, is like food eaten with appetite—it digests well, and benefits the system ten times more than the double cramming of an alderman. If a boy's attention can be drawn in conversation to any interesting point of history, and the book is pointed out to him where he will find the particulars conveyed in a lively manner, he reads the passage with so much pleasure that he very naturally recurs to the book at the first unoccupied moment, to try if he cannot pick more amusement out of it; and when once a lad gets the spirit of information, he goes on himself with little trouble but that of selecting for him the best and most agreeable books. I think Walter has naturally some turn for history and historical anecdote, and would be disposed to read as much as could be wished in that most useful line of knowledge;—for in the eminent situation he is destined to by his birth, acquaintance with the history and institutions of his country, and her relative position with respect to others, is a *sine qua non* to his discharging its duties with propriety. All this is extremely like prosing, so I will harp on that string no longer.

Kind compliments to all at Ditton; you say nothing of your own rheumatism. I am here for the session, unless the wind should blow me south to see the coronation, and I think 800 miles rather a long journey to see a show.

I am always, my dear Lord,

Yours very affectionately,

Walter Scott.

Chapter LII

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1821

On the 4th of June, Scott, being then on one of his short Sessional visits to Abbotsford, received the painful intelligence that his friend John Ballantyne's maladies had begun to assume an aspect of serious and even immediate danger. The elder brother made the communication in these terms:—

TO SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART., OF
ABBOTSFORD, MELROSE.

Edinburgh, Sunday, 3d June, 1821.

Dear Sir,—I have this morning had a most heart-breaking letter from poor John, from which the following is an extract. You will judge how it has affected me, who, with all his peculiarities of temper, love him very much. He says,—

"A spitting of blood has commenced, and you may guess the situation into which I am plunged. We are all accustomed to consider death as certainly inevitable; but his obvious approach is assuredly the most detestable and abhorrent feeling to which human nature can be subject."

This is truly doleful. There is something in it more absolutely bitter to my heart than what I have otherwise suffered. I look back to my mother's peaceful rest, and to my infant's blessedness—if life be not the extinguishable worthless spark which I cannot

think it—but here, cut off in the very middle of life, with good means and strong powers of enjoying it, and nothing but reluctance and repining at the close—I say the truth when I say that I would joyfully part with my right arm to avert the approaching result. Pardon this, dear sir; my heart and soul are heavy within me.

.....

With the deepest respect and gratitude,

J. B.

At the date of this letter, the invalid was in Roxburghshire; but he came to Edinburgh a day or two afterwards, and died there on the 16th of the same month. I accompanied Sir Walter when one of their last interviews took place, and John's deathbed was a thing not to be forgotten. We sat by him for perhaps an hour, and I think half that space was occupied with his predictions of a speedy end, and details of his last will, which he had just been executing, and which lay on his coverlid; the other half being given, five minutes or so at a time, to questions and remarks, which intimated that the hope of life was still flickering before him—nay, that his interest in all its concerns remained eager. The proof sheets of a volume of his Novelists' Library lay also by his pillow; and he passed from them to his will, and then back to them, as by jerks and starts the unwonted veil of gloom closed upon his imagination, or was withdrawn again. He had, as he said, left his great friend and patron £2000 towards the completion of the new library at Abbotsford,—and the spirit of the auctioneer virtuoso flashed up as he began to describe what would, he thought, be the best style and arrangement of the bookshelves. He was interrupted by an agony of asthma, which left him with hardly any signs of life; and ultimately he did expire in a fit of the same kind. Scott was visibly and profoundly shaken by this scene and its sequel. As we stood together a few days afterwards, while they were smoothing the turf over John's remains in the Canongate Churchyard, the heavens, which had been dark and slaty, cleared up suddenly, and the midsummer sun shone forth in his strength. Scott, ever awake to the "skiey influences," cast his eye along the overhanging line of the Calton Hill, with its gleaming walls and towers, and then turning to the grave again, "I feel," he whispered in my ear, "I feel as if there would be less sunshine for me from this day forth."

As we walked homewards, Scott told me, among other favorable traits of his friend, one little story which I must not omit. He remarked one day to a poor student of divinity attending his auction, that he looked as if he were in bad health. The young man assented with a sigh. "Come," said Ballantyne, "I think I ken the secret of a sort of draft that would relieve you —particularly," he added, handing him a cheque for £5 or £10 —"particularly, my dear, if taken upon an empty stomach."

John died in his elder brother's house in St. John Street; a circumstance which it gives me pleasure to record, as it confirms the impression of their affectionate feelings towards each other at this time, which the reader must have derived from James's letter to Scott last quoted. Their confidence and cordiality had undergone considerable interruption in the latter part of John's life; but the close was in all respects fraternal.

A year and a half before John's exit,—namely, on the last day of 1819, —he happened to lay his hand on an old pocketbook, which roused his reflections, and he filled two or three of its pages with a brief summary of the most active part of his life, which I think it due to his character, as well as Sir Walter Scott's, to transcribe in this place.

"31st Dec., 1819. In moving a bed from the fireplace to-day upstairs, I found an old memorandum-book, which enables me to trace the following recollections of *this day*, the last of the year.

"1801. A shopkeeper in Kelso; at this period my difficulties had not begun in business; was well, happy, and 27 years old; new then in a connection which afterwards gave me great pain, but can never be forgotten.

"1802. 28 old: In Kelso as before—could scarcely be happier—hunted, shot, kept ****'s company, and neglected business, the fruits whereof I soon found.

"1803. 29: Still fortunate, and happy from same cause. James in Edinburgh thriving as a printer. When I was ennuied at home, visited him. Business neglected every way.

"1804. 30: Material change; getting into difficulties; all wrong, and changes in every way approaching.

"1805. 31: All consummated; health miserable all summer and **** designated in an erased mem., *the scoundrel*. I yet recollect the cause—can I ever forget it? My furniture, goods, etc., sold at Kelso, previous to my going to Edinburgh to become my brother's clerk; whither I *did* go, for which God be praised eternally, on Friday, 3d January, 1806, on £200 a year. My effects at Kelso, with labor, paid my debts, and left me penniless.

"From this period till 1808. 34: I continued in this situation—then the scheme of a bookselling concern in Hanover Street was adopted, which I was to manage; it was £300 a year, and one fourth of the profits besides.

"1809. 35: Already the business in Hanover Street getting into difficulty, from our ignorance of its nature, and most extravagant and foolish advances from its funds to the printing concern. I ought to have resisted this, but I was thoughtless, although not young, or rather reckless, and lived on as long as I could make ends meet.

"1810. 36: Bills increasing—the destructive system of accommodations adopted.

"1811. 37: Bills increased to a most fearful degree. Sir Wm. Forbes and Co. shut their account. No bank would discount with us, and everything leading to irretrievable failure.

"1812. 38: The first partner stepped in, at a crisis so tremendous, that it shakes my soul to think of it. By the most consummate wisdom, and resolution, and unheard-of exertions, he put things in a train that finally (so early as 1817) paid even himself (who ultimately became the sole creditor of the house) *in full*, with a balance of a thousand pounds.

"1813. 39: In business as a literary auctioneer in Prince's Street; from which period to the present I have got gradually forward, both in that line and as third of a partner of the works of the Author of Waverley, so that I am now, at 45, worth about (I owe £2000) £5000, with, however, alas, many changes —my strong constitution much broken; my father and mother dead, and James estranged—the chief enjoyment and glory of my life being the possession of the friendship and confidence of the greatest of men."

In communicating John's death to the Cornet, Sir Walter says: "I have had a very great loss in poor John Ballantyne, who is gone, after a long illness. He

persisted to the very last in endeavoring to take exercise, in which he was often imprudent, and was up and dressed the very morning before his death. In his will the grateful creature has left me a legacy of £2000, life-rented, however, by his wife; and the rest of his little fortune goes betwixt his two brothers. I shall miss him very much, both in business, and as an easy and lively companion, who was eternally active and obliging in whatever I had to do."

I am sorry to take leave of John Ballantyne with the remark, that his last will was a document of the same class with too many of his *states* and *calendars*. So far from having £2000 to bequeath to Sir Walter, he died as he had lived, ignorant of the situation of his affairs, and deep in debt.

The two following letters, written at Blair-Adam, where the Club were, as usual, assembled for the dog-days, have been selected from among several which Scott at this time addressed to his friends in the South, with the view of promoting Mr. Mackay's success in his *début* on the London boards as Bailie Jarvie.

TO MISS JOANNA BAILLIE, HAMPSTEAD.

> The immediate motive of my writing to you, my dearest friend, is to make Mrs. Agnes and you aware that a Scots performer, called Mackay, is going up to London to play Bailie Nicol Jarvie for a single night at Covent Garden, and to beg you of all dear loves to go and see him; for, taking him in that single character, I am not sure I ever saw anything in my life possessing so much truth and comic effect at the same time: he is completely the personage of the drama, the purse-proud consequential magistrate, humane and irritable in the same moment, and the true Scotsman in every turn of thought and action; his variety of feelings towards Rob Roy, whom he likes, and fears, and despises, and admires, and pities all at once, is exceedingly well expressed. In short, I never saw a part better sustained, certainly; I pray you to collect a party of Scotch friends to see it. I have written to Sotheby to the same purpose, but I doubt whether the exhibition will prove as satisfactory to those who do not know the original from which the resemblance is taken. I observe the English demand (as is natural) broad caricature in the depicting of national peculiarities: they did so as to the Irish till Jack Johnstone taught them better, and at first I

should fear Mackay's reality will seem less ludicrous than Liston's humorous extravagances. So let it not be said that a dramatic genius of Scotland wanted the countenance and protection of Joanna Baillie: the Doctor and Mrs. Baillie will be much diverted if they go also, but somebody said to me that they were out of town. The man, I am told, is perfectly respectable in his life and habits, and consequently deserves encouragement every way. There is a great difference betwixt his *bailie* and all his other performances: one would think the part made for him, and him for the part—and yet I may do the poor fellow injustice, and what we here consider as a falling off may arise from our identifying Mackay so completely with the worthy Glasgow magistrate, that recollections of Nicol Jarvie intrude upon us at every corner, and mar the personification of any other part which he may represent for the time.

I am here for a couple of days with our Chief-Commissioner, late Willie Adam, and we had yesterday a delightful stroll to Castle-Campbell, the Rumbling Brig, Cauldron Linns, etc. The scenes are most romantic, and I know not by what fatality it has been, that living within a step of them, I never visited any of them before. We had Sir Samuel Shepherd with us, a most delightful person, but with too much English fidgetiness about him for crags and precipices,—perpetually afraid that rocks would give way under his weight which had over-brow'd the torrent for ages, and that good well-rooted trees, moored so as to resist ten thousand tempests, would fall because he grasped one of their branches; he must certainly be a firm believer in the simile of the lover of your native land, who complains,—

> "I leant my back unto an aik,
> I thought it was a trusty tree,
> But first it bow'd and then it brake," etc., etc., etc.

Certes these Southrons lack much the habits of the wood and wilderness,—for here is a man of taste and genius, a fine scholar and a most interesting companion, haunted with fears that would be entertained by no shopkeeper from the Luckenbooths or the Saut Market. A sort of *Cockneyism* of one kind or another

pervades their men of professional habits, whereas every Scotchman, with very few exceptions, holds country exercises of all kinds to be part of his nature, and is ready to become a traveller, or even a soldier on the slightest possible notice. The habits of the moorfowl shooting, salmon-fishing, and so forth, may keep this much up among the gentry, a name which our pride and pedigree extend so much wider than in England; and it is worth notice that these amusements, being cheap and tolerably easy come at by all the petty dunniewassals, have a more general influence on the national character than fox-hunting, which is confined to those who can mount and keep a horse worth at least 100 guineas. But still this hardly explains the general and wide difference betwixt the countries in this particular. Happen how it will, the advantage is much in favor of Scotland: it is true that it contributes to prevent our producing such very accomplished lawyers, divines, or artisans as when the whole mind is bent with undivided attention upon attaining one branch of knowledge,—but it gives a strong and muscular character to the people in general, and saves men from all sorts of causeless fears and flutterings of the heart, which give quite as much misery as if there were real cause for entertaining apprehension. This is not furiously to the purpose of my letter, which, after recommending Monsieur Mackay, was to tell you that we are all well and happy. Sophia is getting stout and pretty, and is one of the wisest and most important little mammas that can be seen anywhere. Her bower is *bigged in gude green wood*, and we went last Saturday in a body to enjoy it, and to consult about furniture; and we have got the road stopt which led up the hill, so it is now quite solitary and approached through a grove of trees, actual well-grown trees, not Lilliputian forests like those of Abbotsford. The season is dreadfully backward. Our ashes and oaks are not yet in leaf, and will not be, I think, in anything like full foliage this year, such is the rigor of the east winds.—Always, my dear and much respected friend, most affectionately yours,

W. Scott.

Blair-Adam, 11 June, 1821,
In full sight of Lochleven.

P. S.—Pray read, or have read to you by Mrs. Agnes, The Annals of the Parish. Mr. Galt wrote the worst tragedies ever seen, and has now written a most excellent novel, if it can be called so.

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, ETC., ETC., LONDON.

Blair-Adam, June 11, 1821.

My dear Lord,—There is a man going up from Edinburgh to play one night at Covent Garden, whom, as having the very unusual power of presenting on the stage a complete Scotsman, I am very desirous you should see. He plays Bailie Nicol Jarvie in Rob Roy, but with a degree of national truth and understanding, which makes the part equal to anything I have ever seen on the stage, and I have seen all the best comedians for these forty years. I wish much, if you continue in town till he comes up, that you would get into some private box and take a look of him. Sincerely, it is a real treat—the English will not enjoy it, for it is not broad enough, or sufficiently caricatured for their apprehensions, but to a Scotsman it is inimitable, and you have the Glasgow Bailie before you, with all his bustling conceit and importance, his real benevolence, and his irritable habits. He will want in London a fellow who, in the character of the Highland turnkey, held the backhand to him admirably well. I know how difficult it is for folks of condition to get to the theatre, but this is worth an exertion,—and, besides, the poor man (who I understand is very respectable in private life) will be, to use an admirable simile (by which one of your father's farmers persuaded the Duke to go to hear his son, a probationer in divinity, preach his first sermon in the town of Ayr), *like a cow in a fremd loaning*, and glad of Scots countenance.

I am glad the Duke's cold is better—his stomach will not be put to those trials which ours underwent in our youth, when deep drinking was the fashion. I hope he will always be aware, however, that his is not a strong one.

> Campbell's Lives of the Admirals is an admirable book, and I would advise your Lordship e'en to redeem your pledge to the Duke on some rainy day. You do not run the risk from the perusal which my poor mother apprehended. She always alleged it sent her eldest son to the navy, and did not see with indifference any of her younger olive branches engaged with Campbell except myself, who stood in no danger of the cockpit or quarterdeck. I would not swear for Lord John though. Your Lordship's tutor was just such a well-meaning person as mine, who used to take from me old Lindsay of Pitscottie, and set me down to get by heart Rollin's infernal list of the Shepherd Kings, whose hard names could have done no good to any one on earth, unless he had wished to raise the devil, and lacked language to conjure with.—Always, my dear Lord, most truly yours,
>
> Walter Scott.

The coronation of George IV., preparations for which were (as has been seen) in active progress by March, 1820, had been deferred, in consequence of the unhappy affair of the Queen's Trial. The 19th of July, 1821, was now announced for this solemnity, and Sir Walter resolved to be among the spectators. It occurred to him that if the Ettrick Shepherd were to accompany him, and produce some memorial of the scene likely to catch the popular ear in Scotland, good service might thus be done to the cause of loyalty. But this was not his only consideration. Hogg had married a handsome and most estimable young woman, a good deal above his own original rank in life, the year before; and expecting with her a dowry of £1000, he had forthwith revived the grand ambition of an earlier day, and become a candidate for an extensive farm on the Buccleuch estate, at a short distance from Altrive Lake. Various friends, supposing his worldly circumstances to be much improved, had supported his application, and Lord Montagu had received it in a manner for which the Shepherd's letters to Scott express much gratitude. Misfortune pursued the Shepherd—the unforeseen bankruptcy of his wife's father interrupted the stocking of the sheep-walk; and the arable part of the new possession was sadly mismanaged by himself. Scott hoped that a visit to London, and a coronation poem, or pamphlet, might end in some pension or post that would relieve these difficulties, and he wrote to Hogg, urging him to come

to Edinburgh, and embark with him for the great city. Not doubting that this proposal would be eagerly accepted, he, when writing to Lord Sidmouth, to ask a place for himself in the Hall and Abbey of Westminster, mentioned that Hogg was to be his companion, and begged suitable accommodation for him also. Lord Sidmouth, being overwhelmed with business connected with the approaching pageant, answered by the pen of the Under-Secretary of State, Mr. Hobhouse, that Sir Walter's wishes, both as to himself and the Shepherd, should be gratified, *provided* they would both dine with him the day after the coronation, in Richmond Park, "where," says the letter before me, "his Lordship will invite the Duke of York and a few other Jacobites to meet you." All this being made known to the tenant of Mount-Benger, he wrote to Scott, as he says, "with the tear in his eye," to signify, that if he went to London he must miss attending the great annual Border fair, held on St. Boswell's Green, in Roxburghshire, on the 18th of every July; and that his absence from that meeting so soon after entering upon business as a store-farmer, would be considered by his new compeers as highly imprudent and discreditable. "In short," James concludes, "the thing is impossible. But as there is no man in his Majesty's dominions admires his great talents for government, and the energy and dignity of his administration, so much as I do, I will write something at home, and endeavor to give it you before you start." The Shepherd probably expected that these pretty compliments would reach the royal ear; but however that may have been, his own Muse turned a deaf ear to him—at least I never heard of anything that he wrote on this occasion.

Scott embarked without him, on board a new steamship called The City of Edinburgh, which, as he suggested to the master, ought rather to have been christened The New Reekie. This vessel was that described and lauded in the following letter:—

TO THE LORD MONTAGU, ETC., ETC.

Edinburgh, July 1, 1821.

> My dear Lord,—I write just now to thank you for your letter. I have been on board the steamship, and am so delighted with it, that I think I shall put myself aboard for the coronation. It runs at nine knots an hour (*me ipso teste*) against wind and tide, with a deck as long as a frigate's to walk upon, and to sleep on also, if

you like, as I have always preferred a cloak and a mattress to these crowded cabins. This reconciles the speed and certainty of the mail-coach with the ease and convenience of being on shipboard. So I really think I will run up to see the grandee show, and run down again. I scorn to mention economy, though the expense is not one fifth, and that is something in hard times, especially to me, who, to choose, would always rather travel in a public conveyance, than with my domestic's good company in a po-chay.

But now comes the news of news. I have been instigating the great Caledonian Boar, James Hogg, to undertake a similar trip—with the view of turning an honest penny, to help out his stocking, by writing some sort of Shepherd's Letters, or the like, to put the honest Scots bodies up to this whole affair. I am trying with Lord Sidmouth to get him a place among the newspaper gentry to see the ceremony. It is seriously worth while to get such a popular view of the whole as he will probably hit off.

I have another view for this poor fellow. You have heard of the Royal Literary Society, and how they propose to distribute solid pudding, *alias* pensions, to men of genius. It is, I think, a very problematical matter, whether it will do the good which is intended; but if they do mean to select worthy objects of encouragement, I really know nobody that has a better or an equal claim to poor Hogg. Our friend Villiers takes a great charge of this matter, and good-naturedly forgave my stating to him a number of objections to the first concoction, which was to have been something resembling the French Academy. It has now been much modified. Perhaps there may be some means fallen upon, with your Lordship's assistance, of placing Hogg under Mr. Villiers's view. I would have done so myself, but only I have battled the point against the whole establishment so keenly, that it would be too bad to bring forward a protégé of my own to take advantage of it. They intended at one time to give pensions of about £100 a year to thirty persons. I know not where they could find half a dozen with such pretensions as the Shepherd's.

There will be risk of his being lost in London, or kidnapped by some of those ladies who open literary *menageries* for the

reception of *lions*. I should like to see him at a rout of blue-stockings. I intend to recommend him to the protection of John Murray the bookseller; and I hope he will come equipped with plaid, kent, and colley.

I wish to heaven Lord Melville would either keep the Admiralty, or in Hogg's phrase,—

> "O I would eagerly press him
> The keys of the *east* to require,"—

for truly the Board of Control is the Corn Chest for Scotland, where we poor gentry must send our younger sons, as we send our black cattle to the south.—Ever most truly yours,

Walter Scott.

From London, on the day after the coronation, Sir Walter addressed a letter descriptive of the ceremonial to his friend James Ballantyne, who published it in his newspaper. It has been since reprinted—but not in any collection of Scott's own writings; and I therefore insert it here. It will probably possess considerable interest for the student of English history and manners in future times; for the coronation of George the Fourth's successor was conducted on a vastly inferior scale of splendor and expense—and the precedent of curtailment in any such matters is now seldom neglected.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EDINBURGH WEEKLY JOURNAL.

London, July 20, 1821.

Sir,—I refer you to the daily papers for the details of the great National Solemnity which we witnessed yesterday, and will hold my promise absolved by sending a few general remarks upon what I saw with surprise amounting to astonishment, and which I shall never forget. It is, indeed, impossible to conceive a ceremony more august and imposing in all its parts, and more calculated to make the deepest impression both on the eye and on the feelings. The most minute attention must have been bestowed to arrange all the subordinate parts in harmony with the rest; so

that, amongst so much antiquated ceremonial, imposing singular dresses, duties, and characters, upon persons accustomed to move in the ordinary routine of society, nothing occurred either awkward or ludicrous which could mar the general effect of the solemnity. Considering that it is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous, I own I consider it as surprising that the whole ceremonial of the day should have passed away without the slightest circumstance which could derange the general tone of solemn feeling which was suited to the occasion.

You must have heard a full account of the only disagreeable event of the day. I mean the attempt of the misguided lady, who has lately furnished so many topics of discussion, to intrude herself upon a ceremonial, where, not being in her proper place, to be present in any other must have been voluntary degradation. That matter is a fire of straw which has now burnt to the very embers, and those who try to blow it into life again will only blacken their hands and noses, like mischievous children dabbling among the ashes of a bonfire. It seems singular, that being determined to be present at all hazards, this unfortunate personage should not have procured a Peer's ticket, which, I presume, would have insured her admittance. I willingly pass to pleasanter matters.

The effect of the scene in the Abbey was beyond measure magnificent. Imagine long galleries stretched among the aisles of that venerable and august pile—those which rise above the altar pealing back their echoes to a full and magnificent choir of music —those which occupied the sides filled even to crowding with all that Britain has of beautiful and distinguished, and the cross-gallery most appropriately occupied by the Westminster schoolboys, in their white surplices, many of whom might on that day receive impressions never to be lost during the rest of their lives. Imagine this, I say, and then add the spectacle upon the floor,—the altar surrounded by the Fathers of the Church, the King encircled by the Nobility of the land and the Counsellors of his throne, and by warriors wearing the honored marks of distinction bought by many a glorious danger;—add to this the rich spectacle of the aisles crowded with waving plumage, and

coronets, and caps of honor, and the sun, which brightened and saddened as if on purpose, now beaming in full lustre on the rich and varied assemblage, and now darting a solitary ray, which catched, as it passed, the glittering folds of a banner, or the edge of a group of battle-axes or partizans, and then rested full on some fair form, "the cynosure of neighboring eyes," whose circlet of diamonds glistened under its influence. Imagine all this, and then tell me if I have made my journey of four hundred miles to little purpose. I do not love your *cui bono* men, and therefore I will not be pleased if you ask me in the damping tone of sullen philosophy, what good all this has done the spectators. If we restrict life to its real animal wants and necessities, we shall indeed be satisfied with "food, clothes, and fire;" but Divine Providence, who widened our sources of enjoyment beyond those of the animal creation, never meant that we should bound our wishes within such narrow limits; and I shrewdly suspect that those *non est tanti* gentlefolks only depreciate the natural and unaffected pleasure which men like me receive from sights of splendor and sounds of harmony, either because they would seem wiser than their simple neighbors at the expense of being less happy, or because the mere pleasure of the sight and sound is connected with associations of a deeper kind, to which they are unwilling to yield themselves.

Leaving these gentlemen to enjoy their own wisdom, I still more pity those, if there be any, who (being unable to detect a peg on which to hang a laugh) sneer coldly at this solemn festival, and are rather disposed to dwell on the expense which attends it, than on the generous feelings which it ought to awaken. The expense, so far as it is national, has gone directly and instantly to the encouragement of the British manufacturer and mechanic; and so far as it is personal to the persons of rank attendant upon the Coronation, it operates as a tax upon wealth and consideration for the benefit of poverty and industry; a tax willingly paid by the one class, and not the less acceptable to the other because it adds a happy holiday to the monotony of a life of labor.

But there were better things to reward my pilgrimage than the mere pleasures of the eye and ear; for it was impossible, without

the deepest veneration, to behold the voluntary and solemn interchange of vows betwixt the King and his assembled People, whilst he, on the one hand, called God Almighty to witness his resolution to maintain their laws and privileges, whilst they called, at the same moment, on the Divine Being, to bear witness that they accepted him for their liege Sovereign, and pledged to him their love and their duty. I cannot describe to you the effect produced by the solemn, yet strange mixture of the words of Scripture, with the shouts and acclamations of the assembled multitude, as they answered to the voice of the Prelate, who demanded of them whether they acknowledged as their Monarch the Prince who claimed the sovereignty in their presence. It was peculiarly delightful to see the King receive from the royal brethren, but in particular from the Duke of York, the fraternal kiss in which they acknowledged their sovereign. There was an honest tenderness, an affectionate and sincere reverence in the embrace interchanged betwixt the Duke of York and his Majesty, that approached almost to a caress, and impressed all present with the electrical conviction, that the nearest to the throne in blood was the nearest also in affection. I never heard plaudits given more from the heart than those that were thundered upon the royal brethren when they were thus pressed to each other's bosoms,—it was an emotion of natural kindness, which, bursting out amidst ceremonial grandeur, found an answer in every British bosom. The King seemed much affected at this and one or two other parts of the ceremonial, even so much so as to excite some alarm among those who saw him as nearly as I did. He completely recovered himself, however, and bore (generally speaking) the fatigue of the day very well. I learn from one near his person, that he roused himself with great energy, even when most oppressed with heat and fatigue, when any of the more interesting parts of the ceremony were to be performed, or when anything occurred which excited his personal and immediate attention. When presiding at the banquet, amid the long line of his Nobles, he looked "every inch a King;" and nothing could exceed the grace with which he accepted and returned the various acts of homage rendered to him in the course of that long day.

It was also a very gratifying spectacle to those who think like me, to behold the Duke of Devonshire and most of the distinguished Whig nobility assembled round the throne on this occasion; giving an open testimony that the differences of political opinions are only skin-deep wounds, which assume at times an angry appearance, but have no real effect on the wholesome constitution of the country.

If you ask me to distinguish who bore him best, and appeared most to sustain the character we annex to the assistants in such a solemnity, I have no hesitation to name Lord Londonderry, who, in the magnificent robes of the Garter, with the cap and high plume of the order, walked alone, and by his fine face and majestic person formed an adequate representative of the order of Edward III., the costume of which was worn by his Lordship only. The Duke of Wellington, with all his laurels, moved and looked deserving the baton, which was never grasped by so worthy a hand. The Marquis of Anglesea showed the most exquisite grace in managing his horse, notwithstanding the want of his limb, which he left at Waterloo. I never saw so fine a bridle-hand in my life, and I am rather a judge of "noble horsemanship." Lord Howard's horse was worse bitted than those of the two former noblemen, but not so much so as to derange the ceremony of retiring back out of the Hall.

The Champion was performed (as of right) by young Dymocke, a fine-looking youth, but bearing, perhaps, a little too much the appearance of a maiden-knight to be the challenger of the world in a King's behalf. He threw down his gauntlet, however, with becoming manhood, and showed as much horsemanship as the crowd of knights and squires around him would permit to be exhibited. His armor was in good taste, but his shield was out of all propriety, being a round *rondache*, or Highland target, a defensive weapon which it would have been impossible to use on horseback, instead of being a three-corner'd, or *heater-shield*, which in time of the tilt was suspended round the neck. Pardon this antiquarian scruple, which, you may believe, occurred to few but myself. On the whole, this striking part of the exhibition somewhat disappointed me, for I would have had the

Champion less embarrassed by his assistants, and at liberty to put his horse on the *grand pas*. And yet the young Lord of Scrivelsbaye looked and behaved extremely well.

Returning to the subject of costume, I could not but admire what I had previously been disposed much to criticise,—I mean the fancy dress of the Privy-Councillors, which was of white and blue satin, with trunk-hose and mantles, after the fashion of Queen Elizabeth's time. Separately, so gay a garb had an odd effect on the persons of elderly or ill-made men; but when the whole was thrown into one general body, all these discrepancies disappeared, and you no more observed the particular manner or appearance of an individual, than you do that of a soldier in the battalion which marches past you. The whole was so completely harmonized in actual coloring, as well as in association, with the general mass of gay and gorgeous and antique dress which floated before the eye, that it was next to impossible to attend to the effect of individual figures. Yet a Scotsman will detect a Scotsman amongst the most crowded assemblage, and I must say that the Lord Justice-Clerk of Scotland showed to as great advantage in his robes of Privy-Councillor, as any by whom that splendid dress was worn on this great occasion. The common Court-dress used by the Privy-Councillors at the last coronation must have had a poor effect in comparison of the present, which formed a gradation in the scale of gorgeous ornament, from the unwieldy splendor of the heralds, who glowed like huge masses of cloth of gold and silver, to the more chastened robes and ermine of the Peers. I must not forget the effect produced by the Peers placing their coronets on their heads, which was really august.

The box assigned to the foreign Ambassadors presented a most brilliant effect, and was perfectly in a blaze with diamonds. When the sunshine lighted on Prince Esterhazy, in particular, he glimmered like a galaxy. I cannot learn positively if he had on that renowned coat which has visited all the courts of Europe save ours, and is said to be worth £100,000, or some such trifle, and which costs the Prince £100 or two every time he puts it on, as he is sure to lose pearls to that amount. This was a hussar dress, but

splendid in the last degree; perhaps too fine for good taste—at least it would have appeared so anywhere else. Beside the Prince sat a good-humored lass, who seemed all eyes and ears (his daughter-in-law, I believe), who wore as many diamonds as if they had been Bristol stones. An honest Persian was also a remarkable figure, from the dogged and imperturbable gravity with which he looked on the whole scene, without ever moving a limb or a muscle during the space of four hours. Like Sir Wilful Witwoud, I cannot find that your Persian is orthodox; for if he scorned everything else, there was a Mahometan paradise extended on his right hand along the seats which were occupied by the peeresses and their daughters, which the Prophet himself might have looked on with emotion. I have seldom seen so many elegant and beautiful girls as sat mingled among the noble matronage of the land; and the waving plumage of feathers, which made the universal head-dress, had the most appropriate effect in setting off their charms.

I must not omit that the foreigners, who are apt to consider us as a nation *en frac*, and without the usual ceremonials of dress and distinction, were utterly astonished and delighted to see the revival of feudal dresses and feudal grandeur when the occasion demanded it, and that in a degree of splendor which they averred they had never seen paralleled in Europe.

The duties of service at the Banquet, and of attendance in general, were performed by pages drest very elegantly in Henri Quatre coats of scarlet, with gold lace, blue sashes, white silk hose, and white rosettes. There were also marshal's-men for keeping order, who wore a similar dress, but of blue, and having white sashes. Both departments were filled up almost entirely by young gentlemen, many of them of the very first condition, who took these menial characters to gain admission to the show. When I saw many of my young acquaintance thus attending upon their fathers and kinsmen, the Peers, Knights, and so forth, I could not help thinking of Crabbe's lines, with a little alteration:—

> 'T was schooling pride to see the menial wait,
> Smile on his father, and receive his plate.

It must be owned, however, that they proved but indifferent valets, and were very apt, like the clown in the pantomime, to eat the cheer they should have handed to their masters, and to play other *tours de page*, which reminded me of the caution of our proverb "not to man yourself with your kin." The Peers, for example, had only a cold collation, while the Aldermen of London feasted on venison and turtle; and similar errors necessarily befell others in the confusion of the evening. But these slight mistakes, which indeed were not known till afterwards, had not the slightest effect on the general grandeur of the scene.

I did not see the procession between the Abbey and Hall. In the morning a few voices called *Queen! Queen!* as Lord Londonderry passed, and even when the Sovereign appeared. But these were only signals for the loud and reiterated acclamations in which these tones of discontent were completely drowned. In the return, no one dissonant voice intimated the least dissent from the shouts of gratulation which poured from every quarter; and certainly never Monarch received a more general welcome from his assembled subjects.

You will have from others full accounts of the variety of entertainments provided for John Bull in the Parks, the River, in the Theatres, and elsewhere. Nothing was to be seen or heard but sounds of pleasure and festivity; and whoever saw the scene at any one spot, was convinced that the whole population was assembled there, while others found a similar concourse of revellers in every different point. It is computed that about *five hundred thousand people* shared in the Festival in one way or another; and you may imagine the excellent disposition by which the people were animated, when I tell you, that, excepting a few windows broken by a small bodyguard of ragamuffins, who were in immediate attendance on the Great Lady in the morning, not the slightest political violence occurred to disturb the general harmony—and that the assembled populace seemed to be universally actuated by the spirit of the day—loyalty, namely, and good-humor. Nothing occurred to damp those happy dispositions; the weather was most propitious, and the arrangements so perfect,

> that no accident of any kind is reported as having taken place.—And so concluded the coronation of George IV., whom God long preserve. Those who witnessed it have seen a scene calculated to raise the country in their opinion, and to throw into the shade all scenes of similar magnificence, from the Field of the Cloth of Gold down to the present day. I remain, your obedient servant,
>
> An Eye-Witness.

At the close of this brilliant scene, Scott received a mark of homage to his genius which delighted him not less than Laird Nippy's reverence for the *Sheriff's Knoll*, and the Sheffield cutler's dear acquisition of his signature on a visiting ticket. Missing his carriage, he had to return home on foot from Westminster, after the banquet—that is to say, between two or three o'clock in the morning;—when he and a young gentleman his companion found themselves locked in the crowd, somewhere near Whitehall, and the bustle and tumult were such that his friend was afraid some accident might happen to the lame limb. A space for the dignitaries was kept clear at that point by the Scots Greys. Sir Walter addressed a sergeant of this celebrated regiment, begging to be allowed to pass by him into the open ground in the middle of the street. The man answered shortly, that his orders were strict—that the thing was impossible. While he was endeavoring to persuade the sergeant to relent, some new wave of turbulence approached from behind, and his young companion exclaimed in a loud voice, "Take care, Sir Walter Scott, take care!" The stalwart dragoon, on hearing the name, said, "What! Sir Walter Scott? He shall get through anyhow!" He then addressed the soldiers near him: "Make room, men, for Sir Walter Scott, our illustrious countryman!" The men answered, "Sir Walter Scott!—God bless him!"—and he was in a moment within the guarded line of safety.

I shall now take another extract from the *memoranda* with which I have been favored by my friend Allan Cunningham. After the particulars formerly quoted about Scott's sitting to Chantrey in the spring of 1820, he proceeds as follows:—

"I saw Sir Walter again, when he attended the coronation, in 1821. In the mean time his bust had been wrought in marble, and the sculptor desired to take the advantage of his visit to communicate such touches of expression or lineament as the new material rendered necessary. This was done with a

happiness of eye and hand almost magical: for five hours did the poet sit, or stand, or walk, while Chantrey's chisel was passed again and again over the marble, adding something at every touch.

"'Well, Allan,' he said, when he saw me at this last sitting, 'were you at the coronation? it was a splendid sight.'—'No, Sir Walter,' I answered, 'places were dear and ill to get: I am told it was a magnificent scene: but having seen the procession of King Crispin at Dumfries, I was satisfied.' I said this with a smile: Scott took it as I meant it, and laughed heartily. 'That's not a bit better than Hogg,' he said. 'He stood balancing the matter whether to go to the coronation or the fair of Saint Boswell—and the fair carried it.'

"During this conversation, Mr. Bolton the engineer came in. Something like a cold acknowledgment passed between the poet and him. On his passing into an inner room, Scott said, 'I am afraid Mr. Bolton has not forgot a little passage that once took place between us. We met in a public company, and in reply to the remark of some one, he said, "That's like the old saying,—in every quarter of the world you will find a Scot, a rat, and a Newcastle grindstone." This touched my Scotch spirit, and I said, "Mr. Bolton, you should have added—*and a Brummagem button*." There was a laugh at this, and Mr. Bolton replied, "We make something better in Birmingham than buttons—we make steam-engines, sir."

"'I like Bolton,' thus continued Sir Walter; 'he is a brave man,—and who can dislike the brave? He showed this on a remarkable occasion. He had engaged to coin for some foreign prince a large quantity of gold. This was found out by some desperadoes, who resolved to rob the premises, and as a preliminary step tried to bribe the porter. The porter was an honest fellow,—he told Bolton that he was offered a hundred pounds to be blind and deaf next night. "Take the money," was the answer, "and I shall protect the place." Midnight came—the gates opened as if by magic—the interior doors, secured with patent locks, opened as of their own accord—and three men with dark lanterns entered and went straight to the gold. Bolton had prepared some flax steeped in turpentine—he dropt fire upon it, a sudden light filled all the place, and with his assistants, he rushed forward on the robbers,—the leader saw in a moment he was betrayed, turned on the porter, and shooting him dead, burst through all obstruction, and with an ingot of gold in his hand, scaled the wall and escaped.'

"'That is quite a romance in robbing,' I said;—and I had nearly said more, for the cavern scene and death of Meg Merrilies rose in my mind;—perhaps the mind of Sir Walter was taking the direction of the Solway too, for he said, 'How long have you been from Nithsdale?'—'A dozen years.' 'Then you will remember it well. I was a visitor there in my youth; my brother was at Closeburn school, and there I found Creehope Linn, a scene ever present to my fancy. It is at once fearful and beautiful. The stream jumps down from the moorlands, saws its way into the freestone rock of a hundred feet deep, and, in escaping to the plain, performs a thousand vagaries. In one part it has actually shaped out a little chapel,—the peasants call it the Sutors' Chair. There are sculptures on the sides of the linn too, not such as Mr. Chantrey casts, but etchings scraped in with a knife perhaps, or a harrow-tooth.'—'Did you ever hear,' said Sir Walter, 'of Patrick Maxwell, who, taken prisoner by the King's troops, escaped from them on his way to Edinburgh, by flinging himself into that dreadful linn on Moffat water, called the Douglasses' Beef-tub?'—'Frequently,' I answered; 'the country abounds with anecdotes of those days: the popular feeling sympathizes with the poor Jacobites, and has recorded its sentiments in many a tale and many a verse.'—'The Ettrick Shepherd has collected not a few of those things,' said Scott, 'and I suppose many snatches of song may yet be found.'—*C.* 'I have gathered many such things myself, Sir Walter, and as I still propose to make a collection of all Scottish songs of poetic merit, I shall work up many of my stray verses and curious anecdotes in the notes.'—*S.* 'I am glad that you are about such a thing; any help which I can give you, you may command; ask me any questions, no matter how many, I shall answer them if I can. Don't be timid in your selection; our ancestors fought boldly, spoke boldly, and sang boldly too. I can help you to an old characteristic ditty not yet in print:—

"There dwalt a man into the wast,
And O gin he was cruel,
For on his bridal night at e'en
He gat up and grat for gruel.

"They brought to him a gude sheep's head,
A bason, and a towel;
Gar take thae whim-whams far frae me,
I winna want my gruel.'"

"*C.*—'I never heard that verse before: the hero seems related to the bridegroom of Nithsdale,—

> "The bridegroom grat as the sun gade down,
> The bridegroom grat as the sun gade down;
> To ony man I'll gie a hunder marks sae free,
> This night that will bed wi' a bride for me.'"

"*S.*—'A cowardly loon enough. I know of many crumbs and fragments of verse which will be useful to your work; the Border was once peopled with poets, for every one that could fight could make ballads, some of them of great power and pathos. Some such people as the minstrels were living less than a century ago.'—*C.* 'I knew a man, the last of a race of district tale-tellers, who used to boast of the golden days of his youth, and say, that the world, with all its knowledge, was grown sixpence a day worse for him.'—*S.* 'How was that? how did he make his living?—by telling tales, or singing ballads?'—*C.* 'By both: he had a devout tale for the old, and a merry song for the young; he was a sort of beggar.'—*S.* 'Out upon thee, Allan—dost thou call that begging? Why, man, we make our bread by story-telling, and honest bread it is.'"

I ought not to close this extract without observing that Sir F. Chantrey presented the original bust, of which Mr. Cunningham speaks, to Sir Walter himself; by whose remotest descendants it will undoubtedly be held in additional honor on that account. The poet had the further gratification of learning that three copies were executed in marble before the original quitted the studio: One for Windsor Castle—a second for Apsley House—and a third for the friendly sculptor's own private collection. The casts of this bust have since been multiplied beyond perhaps any example whatever.

Sir Walter returned to Scotland in company with his friend William Stewart Rose; and they took the way by Stratford-upon-Avon, where, on the wall of the room in which Shakespeare is supposed to have been born, the autograph of these pilgrims may still, I believe, be traced.

Chapter LIII

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Publication of Mr. Adolphus's Letters on the Authorship of Waverley

1821

During Scott's visit to London in July, 1821, there appeared a work which was read with eager curiosity and delight by the public—with much private diversion besides by his friends—and which he himself must have gone through with a very odd mixture of emotions. I allude to the volume entitled "Letters to Richard Heber, Esq., containing critical remarks on the series of novels beginning with Waverley, and an attempt to ascertain their author;" which was soon known to have been penned by Mr. John Leycester Adolphus, a distinguished alumnus of the University then represented in Parliament by Sir Walter's early friend Heber. Previously to the publication of these letters, the opinion that Scott was the author of Waverley had indeed become well settled in the English, to say nothing of the Scottish mind; a great variety of circumstances, external as well as internal, had by degrees coöperated to its general establishment: yet there were not wanting persons who still dissented, or at least affected to dissent from it. It was reserved for the enthusiastic industry, and admirable ingenuity of this juvenile academic, to set the question at rest by an accumulation of critical evidence which no sophistry could evade, and yet produced in a style of such high-bred delicacy, that it was impossible for the hitherto "veiled prophet" to take the slightest offence with the hand that had forever abolished his disguise. The only sceptical scruple that survived this exposition was extinguished in due time by Scott's avowal of the *sole and unassisted* authorship of his novels; and now Mr. Adolphus's Letters have shared the fate of other elaborate arguments, the thesis of which has ceased to be controverted. Hereafter, I am persuaded, his volume will be revived for its own sake;—but, in the mean time, regarding it merely as forming, by its original effect, an epoch in Scott's history, I think it my duty to mark my sense of its importance in that point of view, by transcribing the writer's own summary of its

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"Letter I.—Introduction — General reasons for believing the novels to have been written by the author of Marmion.

"Letter II.—Resemblance between the novelist and poet in their tastes, studies, and habits of life, as illustrated by their works — Both Scotchmen — Habitual residents in Edinburgh — Poets — Antiquaries — German and Spanish scholars — Equal in classical attainment — Deeply read in British history — Lawyers — Fond of field sports — Of dogs — Acquainted with most manly exercises — Lovers of military subjects — The novelist apparently not a soldier.

"Letter III.—The novelist is, like the poet, a man of good society — His stories never betray forgetfulness of honorable principles, or ignorance of good manners — Spirited pictures of gentlemanly character — Colonel Mannering — Judicious treatment of elevated historical personages — The novelist quotes and praises most contemporary poets, except the author of Marmion — Instances in which the poet has appeared to slight his own unacknowledged, but afterwards avowed productions.

"Letter IV.—Comparison of the works themselves — All distinguished by good morals and good sense — The latter particularly shown in the management of character — Prose style — Its general features — Plainness and facility — Grave banter — Manner of telling a short story — Negligence — Scotticisms — Great propriety and correctness occasionally, and sometimes unusual sweetness.

"Letter V.—Dialogue in the novels and poems — Neat colloquial turns in the former, such as cannot be expected in romantic poetry — Happy adaptation of dialogue to character, whether merely natural, or artificially modified, as by profession, local habits, etc. — Faults of dialogue, as connected with character of speakers — Quaintness of language and thought — Bookish air in conversation — Historical personages alluding to their own celebrated acts and sayings — Unsuccessful attempts at broad vulgarity — Beauties of composition peculiar to the dialogue — Terseness and spirit — These qualities well displayed in quarrels; but not in scenes of polished raillery — Eloquence.

"Letter VI.—The poetry of the author of Marmion generally characterized — His habits of composition and turn of mind as a poet, compared with those of the novelist — Their descriptions simply conceived and composed, without abstruse and far-fetched circumstances or refined comments — Great advantage derived by both from accidental combinations of images, and the association of objects in the mind with persons, events, etc. — Distinctness and liveliness of effect in narrative and description — Narrative usually picturesque or dramatic, or both — Distinctness, etc., of effect, produced in various ways — Striking pictures of individuals — Their persons, dress, etc. — Descriptions sometimes too obviously picturesque — Subjects for painters — Effects of light frequently noticed and finely described — Both writers excel in grand and complicated scenes — Among detached and occasional ornaments, the similes particularly noticed — Their frequency and beauty — Similes and metaphors sometimes quaint, and pursued too far.

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"Letter VIII.—Comparison of particular passages — Descriptions — Miscellaneous thoughts — Instances in which the two writers have resorted to the same sources of information, and borrowed the same incidents, etc.

— Same authors quoted by both — The poet, like the novelist, fond of mentioning his contemporaries, whether as private friends or as men publicly distinguished — Author of Marmion never notices the Author of Waverley (see Letter III.) — Both delight in frequently introducing an antiquated or fantastic dialect — Peculiarities of expression common to both writers — Conclusion."

I wish I had space for extracting copious specimens of the felicity with which Mr. Adolphus works out these various points of his problem. As it is, I must be contented with a narrow selection—and I shall take two or three of the passages which seem to me to connect themselves most naturally with the main purpose of my own compilation.

"A thorough knowledge and statesmanlike understanding of the domestic history and politics of Britain at various and distant periods; a familiar acquaintance with the manners and prevailing spirit of former generations, and with the characters and habits of their most distinguished men, are of themselves no cheap or common attainments; and it is rare indeed to find them united with a strong original genius, and great brilliancy of imagination. We know, however, that the towering poet of Flodden Field is also the diligent editor of Swift and Dryden, of Lord Somers's Tracts, and of Sir Ralph Sadler's State Papers; that in these and other parts of his literary career he has necessarily plunged deep into the study of British history, biography, and antiquities, and that the talent and activity which he brought to these researches have been warmly seconded by the zeal and liberality of those who possessed the amplest and rarest sources of information. 'The Muse found him,' as he himself said long ago, 'engaged in the pursuit of historical and traditional antiquities, and the excursions which he has made in her company have been of a nature which increases his attachment to his original study.' Are we then to suppose that another writer has combined the same powers of fancy with the same spirit of investigation, the same perseverance, and the same good fortune? and shall we not rather believe, that the labor employed in the illustration of Dryden has helped to fertilize the invention which produced Montrose and Old Mortality?...

"However it may militate against the supposition of his being a poet, I cannot suppress my opinion, that our novelist is a 'man of law.' He deals out the peculiar terms and phrases of that science (as practised in Scotland)

with a freedom and confidence beyond the reach of any uninitiated person. If ever, in the progress of his narrative, a legal topic presents itself (which very frequently happens), he neither declines the subject, nor timidly slurs it over, but enters as largely and formally into all its technicalities, as if the case were actually 'before the fifteen.' The manners, humors, and professional *bavardage* of lawyers, are sketched with all the ease and familiarity which result from habitual observation. In fact, the subject of law, which is a stumbling-block to others, is to the present writer a spot of repose; upon this theme he lounges and gossips, he is *discinctus et soleatus*, and, at times, almost forgets that when an author finds himself at home and perfectly at ease, he is in great danger of falling asleep.—If, then, my inferences are correct, the unknown writer who was just now proved to be an excellent poet, must also be pronounced a follower of the law: the combination is so unusual, at least on this side of the Tweed, that, as Juvenal says on a different occasion—

> ... 'bimembri
> Hoc monstrum puero, vel mirandis sub aratro
> Piscibus inventis, et fœtæ comparo mulsæ.'

Nature has indeed presented us with one such prodigy in the author of Marmion; and it is probable, that in the author of Waverley, we only see the same specimen under a different aspect; for, however sportive the goddess may be, she has too much wit and invention to wear out a frolic by many repetitions....

"A striking characteristic of both writers is their ardent love of rural sports, and all manly and robust exercises.—But the importance given to the canine race in these works ought to be noted as a characteristic feature by itself. I have seen some drawings by a Swiss artist, who was called the Raphael of cats; and either of the writers before us might, by a similar phrase, be called the Wilkie of dogs. Is it necessary to justify such a compliment by examples? Call Yarrow, or Lufra, or poor Fangs, Colonel Mannering's Plato, Henry Morton's Elphin, or Hobbie Elliot's Kilbuck, or Wolfe of Avenel Castle:—see Fitz-James's hounds returning from the pursuit of the lost stag—

'Back limped with slow and crippled pace
The sulky leaders of the chase'—

or swimming after the boat which carries their Master—

'With heads erect and whimpering cry
The hounds behind their passage ply.'

See Captain Clutterbuck's dog *quizzing* him when he missed a bird, or the scene of 'mutual explanation and remonstrance' between 'the venerable patriarchs old Pepper and Mustard,' and Henry Bertram's rough terrier Wasp. If these instances are not sufficient, turn to the English bloodhound assailing the young Buccleuch,—

'And hark! and hark! the deep-mouthed bark
Comes nigher still and nigher;
Bursts on the path a dark blood-hound,
His tawny muzzle tracked the ground,
And his red eye shot fire.
Soon as the wildered child saw he,
He flew at him right furiouslie....
I ween you would have seen with joy
The bearing of the gallant boy....
So fierce he struck, the dog, afraid,
At cautious distance hoarsely bayed,
But still in act to spring.'

Or Lord Ronald's deerhounds, in the haunted forest of Glenfinlas,—

'Within an hour return'd each hound;
In rush'd the rousers of the deer;
They howl'd in melancholy sound,
Then closely couch beside the seer....
Sudden the hounds erect their ears,
And sudden cease their moaning howl;
Close press'd to Moy, they mark their fears
By shivering limbs and stifled growl.
Untouch'd the harp began to ring,
As softly, slowly, oped the door,' etc.

Or look at Cedric the Saxon, in his antique hall, attended by his greyhounds and slowhounds, and the terriers which 'waited with impatience the arrival of the supper; but, with the sagacious knowledge of physiognomy peculiar to their race, forbore to intrude upon the moody silence of their master.' To complete the picture, 'One grisly old wolf-dog alone, with the liberty of an indulged favorite, had planted himself close by the chair of state, and occasionally ventured to solicit notice by putting his large hairy head upon his master's knee, or pushing his nose into his hand. Even he was repelled by the stern command, "Down, Balder, down! I am not in the humor for foolery."'

"Another animated sketch occurs in the way of simile:—'The interview between Ratcliffe and Sharpitlaw had an aspect different from all these. They sate for five minutes silent, on opposite sides of a small table, and looked fixedly at each other, with a sharp, knowing, and alert cast of countenance, not unmingled with an inclination to laugh, and resembled, more than anything else, two dogs, who, preparing for a game at romps, are seen to crouch down, and remain in that posture for a little time, watching each other's movements, and waiting which shall begin the game.'

"Let me point out a still more amusing study of canine life: 'While the Antiquary was in full declamation, Juno, who held him in awe, according to the remarkable instinct by which dogs instantly discover those who like or dislike them, had peeped several times into the room, and, encountering nothing very forbidding in his aspect, had at length presumed to introduce her full person, and finally, becoming bold by impunity, she actually ate up Mr. Oldbuck's toast, as, looking first at one, then at another of his audience, he repeated with self-complacence,—

> "'Weave the warp, and weave the woof.'—

You remember the passage in the Fatal Sisters, which, by the way, is not so fine as in the original—But, hey-day! my toast has vanished! I see which way—Ah, thou type of womankind, no wonder they take offence at thy generic appellation!"—(So saying, he shook his fist at Juno, who scoured out of the parlor.)'

"In short, throughout these works, wherever it is possible for a dog to contribute in any way to the effect of a scene, we find there the very dog

that was required, in his proper place and attitude. In Branksome Hall, when the feast was over,—

> 'The stag-hounds, weary with the chase,
> Lay stretched upon the rushy floor,
> And urged, in dreams, the forest race
> From Teviot-stone to Eskdale-moor.'

The gentle Margaret, when she steals secretly from the castle,

> 'Pats the shaggy blood-hound
> As he rouses him up from his lair.'

When Waverley visits the Baron of Bradwardine, in his concealment at Janet Gellatley's, Ban and Buscar play their parts in every point with perfect discretion; and in the joyous company that assembles at Little Veolan, on the Baron's enlargement, these honest animals are found 'stuffed to the throat with food, in the liberality of Macwheeble's joy,' and 'snoring on the floor.' In the perilous adventure of Henry Bertram, at Portanferry gaol, the action would lose half its interest, without the by-play of little Wasp. At the funeral ceremony of Duncraggan (in The Lady of the Lake), a principal mourner is

> ——'Stumah, who, the bier beside,
> His master's corpse with wonder eyed;
> Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
> Could send like lightning o'er the dew.'

Ellen Douglas smiled (or did not smile)

> ——'to see the stately drake,
> Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
> While her vexed spaniel from the beach,
> Bayed at the prize beyond his reach.'

"I will close this growing catalogue of examples with one of the most elegant descriptions that ever sprang from a poet's fancy:—

> 'Delightful praise! like summer rose,
> That brighter in the dew-drop glows,

The bashful maiden's cheek appeared,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;
The loved caresses of the maid
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;
And, at her whistle, on her hand,
The falcon took his favorite stand,
Closed his dark wing, relaxed his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.'
.....

"Their passion for martial subjects, and their success in treating them, form a conspicuous point of resemblance between the novelist and poet. No writer has appeared in our age (and few have ever existed) who could vie with the author of Marmion in describing battles and marches, and all the terrible grandeur of war, except the author of Waverley. Nor is there any man of original genius and powerful inventive talent as conversant with the military character, and as well schooled in tactics, as the author of Waverley, except the author of Marmion. Both seem to exult in camps, and to warm at the approach of a soldier. In every warlike scene that awes and agitates, or dazzles and inspires, the poet triumphs; but where any effect is to be produced by dwelling on the minutiæ of military habits and discipline, or exhibiting the blended hues of individual humor and professional peculiarity, as they present themselves in the mess-room or the guard-room, every advantage is on the side of the novelist. I might illustrate this position by tracing all the gradations of character marked out in the novels, from the Baron of Bradwardine to Tom Halliday: but the examples are too well known to require enumeration, and too generally admired to stand in need of panegyric. Both writers, then, must have bestowed a greater attention on military subjects, and have mixed more frequently in the society of soldiers, than is usual with persons not educated to the profession of arms.

"It may be asked, why we should take for granted that the writer of these novels is not himself a member of the military profession? The conjecture is a little improbable if we have been right in concluding that the minuteness and multiplicity of our author's legal details are the fruit of his own study and practice, although the same person may certainly, at different periods of

life, put on the helmet and the wig, the gorget and the band; attend courts and lie in trenches; head a charge and lead a cause. I cannot help suspecting, however (it is with the greatest diffidence I venture the remark), that in those warlike recitals which so strongly interest the great body of readers, an army critic would discover several particulars that savor more of the amateur than of the practised campaigner. It is not from any technical improprieties (if such exist) that I derive this observation, but, on the contrary, from a too great minuteness and over-curious diligence, at times perceptible in the military details; which, amidst a seeming fluency and familiarity, betray, I think, here and there, the lurking vestiges of labor and contrivance, like the marks of pickaxes in an artificial grotto. The accounts of operations in the field, if not more circumstantial than a professional author would have made them, are occasionally circumstantial on points which such an author would have thought it idle to dwell upon. A writer who derived his knowledge of war from experience would, no doubt, like the Author of Waverley, delight in shaping out imaginary manœuvres, or in filling up the traditional outline of those martial enterprises and conflicts, which have found a place in history; perhaps, too, he would dwell on these parts of his narrative a little longer than was strictly necessary; but in describing (for example) the advance of a party of soldiers, threatened by an ambuscade, he would scarcely think it worth while to relate at large that the captain 're-formed his line of march, commanded his soldiers to unsling their firelocks and fix their bayonets, and formed an advanced and rear-guard, each consisting of a non-commissioned officer and two privates, who received strict orders to keep an alert look-out:' or that when the enemy appeared, 'he ordered the rear-guard to join the centre, and both to close up to the advance, doubling his files, so as to occupy with his column the whole practicable part of the road,' etc. Again, in representing a defeated corps retiring and pressed by the enemy, he would probably never think of recording (as our novelist does in his incomparable narrative of the engagement at Drumclog) that the commanding officer gave such directions as these: 'Let Allan form the regiment, and do you two retreat up the hill in two bodies, each halting alternately as the other falls back. I'll keep the rogues in check with the rear-guard, making a stand and facing from time to time.' I do not offer these observations for the purpose of depreciating a series of military pictures, which have never been surpassed in richness, animation, and distinctness; I will own, too, that such details as I have

pointed out are the fittest that could be selected for the generality of novel-readers; I merely contend, that a writer practically acquainted with war would either have passed over these circumstances as too common to require particular mention, or if he had thought it necessary to enlarge upon these, would have dwelt with proportionate minuteness on incidents of a less ordinary kind, which the recollections of a soldier would have readily supplied, and his imagination would have rested on with complacency. He would, in short, have left as little undone for the military, as the present author has for the legal part of his narratives. But the most ingenious writer who attempts to discourse with technical familiarity on arts or pursuits with which he is not habitually conversant, will too surely fall into a superfluous particularity on common and trivial points, proportioned to his deficiency in those nicer details which imply practical knowledge....

"'The prince of darkness is a gentleman.'

"Another point of resemblance between the author of Waverley and him of Flodden Field is, that both are unquestionably men of good society. Of the anonymous writer I infer this from his works; of the poet it is unnecessary to deduce such a character from his writings, because they are not anonymous. I am the more inclined to dwell upon this merit in the novelist, on account of its rarity; for among the whole multitude of authors, well or ill educated, who devote themselves to poetry or to narrative or dramatic fiction, how few there are who give any proof in their works, of the refined taste, the instinctive sense of propriety, the clear spirit of honor, nay, of the familiar acquaintance with conventional forms of good-breeding, which are essential to the character of a gentleman! Even of the small number who, in a certain degree, possess these qualifications, how rarely do we find one who can so conduct his fable, and so order his dialogue throughout, that nothing shall be found either repugnant to honorable feelings, or inconsistent with polished manners! How constantly, even in the best works of fiction, are we disgusted with such offences against all generous principle, as the reading of letters by those for whom they were not intended; taking advantage of accidents to overhear private conversation; revealing what in honor should have remained secret; plotting against men as enemies, and at the same time making use of their services; dishonest practices on the passions or sensibilities of women by their admirers; falsehoods, not always indirect; and an endless variety of low artifices,

which appear to be thought quite legitimate if carried on through subordinate agents. And all these knaveries are assigned to characters which the reader is expected to honor with his sympathy, or at least to receive into favor before the story concludes.

"The sins against propriety in manners are as frequent and as glaring. I do not speak of the hoyden vivacity, harlot tenderness, and dancing-school affability, with which vulgar novel-writers always deck out their countesses and *principessas*, chevaliers, dukes, and marquises; but it would be easy to produce, from authors of a better class, abundant instances of bookish and laborious pleasantry, of pert and insipid gossip or mere slang, the wrecks, perhaps, of an obsolete fashionable dialect, set down as the brilliant conversation of a witty and elegant society; incredible outrages on the common decorum of life, represented as traits of eccentric humor; familiar raillery pushed to downright rudeness; affectation or ill-breeding over-colored so as to become insupportable insolence; extravagant rants on the most delicate topics indulged in before all the world; expressions freely interchanged between gentlemen, which, by the customs of that class, are neither used nor tolerated; and quarrels carried on most bombastically and abusively, even to mortal defiance, without a thought bestowed upon the numbers, sex, nerves, or discretion of the bystanders.

"You will perceive, that in recapitulating the offences of other writers, I have pronounced an indirect eulogium on the Author of Waverley. No man, I think, has a clearer view of what is just and honorable in principle and conduct, or possesses in a higher degree that elegant taste, and that chivalrous generosity of feeling, which, united with exact judgment, give an author the power of comprehending and expressing, not merely the right and fit, but the graceful and exalted in human action. As an illustration of these remarks, a somewhat homely one perhaps, let me call to your recollection the incident, so wild and extravagant in itself, of Sir Piercie Shafton's elopement with the miller's daughter. In the address and feeling with which the author has displayed the high-minded delicacy of Queen Elizabeth's courtier to the unguarded village nymph, in his brief reflections arising out of this part of the narrative, and indeed in his whole conception and management of the adventure, I do not know whether the moralist or the gentleman is most to be admired: it is impossible to praise too warmly

either the sound taste, or the virtuous sentiment which have imparted so much grace and interest to such a hazardous episode.

"It may, I think, be generally affirmed, on a review of all the six-and-thirty volumes, in which this author has related the adventures of some twenty or more heroes and heroines (without counting second-rate personages), that there is not an unhandsome action or degrading sentiment recorded of any person who is recommended to the full esteem of the reader. To be blameless on this head is one of the strongest proofs a writer can give of honorable principles implanted by education and refreshed by good society.

"The correctness in morals is scarcely more remarkable than the refinement and propriety in manners, by which these novels are distinguished. Where the character of a gentleman is introduced, we generally find it supported without affectation or constraint, and often with so much truth, animation, and dignity, that we forget ourselves into a longing to behold and converse with the accomplished creature of imagination. It is true that the volatile and elegant man of wit and pleasure, and the gracefully fantastic *petite-maîtresse*, are a species of character scarcely ever attempted, and even the few sketches we meet with in this style are not worthy of so great a master. But the aristocratic country gentleman, the ancient lady of quality, the gallant cavalier, the punctilious young soldier, and the jocund veteran, whose high mind is mellowed, not subdued by years, are drawn with matchless vigor, grace, and refinement. There is, in all these creations, a spirit of gentility, not merely of that negative kind which avoids giving offence, but of a strong, commanding, and pervading quality, blending unimpaired with the richest humor and wildest eccentricity, and communicating an interest and an air of originality to characters which, without it, would be wearisome and insipid, or would fade into commonplace. In Waverley, for example, if it were not for this powerful charm, the severe but warm-hearted Major Melville and the generous Colonel Talbot would become mere ordinary machines for carrying on the plot, and Sir Everard, the hero of an episode that might be coveted by Mackenzie, would encounter the frowns of every impatient reader, for unprofitably retarding the story at its outset.

"But without dwelling on minor instances, I will refer you at once to the character of Colonel Mannering, as one of the most striking representations

I am acquainted with, of a gentleman in feelings and in manners, in habits, taste, predilections; nay, if the expression may be ventured, a gentleman even in prejudices, passions, and caprices. Had it been less than all I have described; had any refinement, any nicety of touch, been wanting, the whole portrait must have been coarse, common, and repulsive, hardly distinguishable from the moody father and domineering chieftain of every hackneyed romance-writer. But it was no vulgar hand that drew the lineaments of Colonel Mannering: no ordinary mind could have conceived that exquisite combination of sternness and sensibility, injurious haughtiness and chivalrous courtesy; the promptitude, decision, and imperious spirit of a military disciplinarian; the romantic caprices of an untamable enthusiast; generosity impatient of limit or impediment; pride scourged but not subdued by remorse; and a cherished philosophical severity, maintaining ineffectual conflicts with native tenderness and constitutional irritability. Supposing that it had entered into the thoughts of an inferior writer to describe a temper of mind at once impetuous, kind, arrogant, affectionate, stern, sensitive, deliberate, fanciful; supposing even that he had had the skill to combine these different qualities harmoniously and naturally,—yet how could he have attained the Shakespearean felicity of those delicate and unambitious touches, by which this author shapes and chisels out individual character from general nature, and imparts a distinct personality to the creature of his invention? Such are (for example) the slight tinge of superstition, contracted by the romantic young Astrologer in his adventure at Ellangowan, not wholly effaced in maturer life, and extending itself by contagion to the mind of his daughter," etc., etc.

It would have gratified Mr. Adolphus could he have known when he penned these pages a circumstance which the reperusal of them brings to my memory. When Guy Mannering was first published, the Ettrick Shepherd said to Professor Wilson, "I have done wi' doubts now. Colonel Mannering is just Walter Scott, painted by himself." This was repeated to James Ballantyne, and he again mentioned it to Scott—who smiled in approbation of the Shepherd's shrewdness, and often afterwards, when the printer expressed an opinion in which he could not concur, would cut him short with, "James—James—you'll find that Colonel Mannering has laid down the law on this point."—I resume my extract:—

"All the productions I am acquainted with, both of the poet and of the prose writer, recommend themselves by a native piety and goodness, not generally predominant in modern works of imagination; and which, where they do appear, are too often disfigured by eccentricity, pretension, or bad taste. In the works before us there is a constant tendency to promote the desire of excellence in ourselves, and the love of it in our neighbors, by making us think honorably of our general nature. Whatever kindly or charitable affection, whatever principle of manly and honest ambition exists within us, is roused and stimulated by the perusal of these writings; our passions are won to the cause of justice, purity, and self-denial; and the old, indissoluble ties that bind us to country, kindred, and birthplace, appear to strengthen as we read, and brace themselves more firmly about the heart and imagination. Both writers, although peculiarly happy in their conception of all chivalrous and romantic excellencies, are still more distinguished by their deep and true feeling and expressive delineation of the graces and virtues proper to domestic life. The gallant, elevated, and punctilious character which a Frenchman contemplates in speaking of '*un honnête homme*,' is singularly combined, in these authors, with the genial, homely good qualities that win from a Caledonian the exclamation of 'honest man!' But the crown of their merits, as virtuous and moral writers, is the manly and exemplary spirit with which, upon all seasonable occasions, they pay honor and homage to religion, ascribing to it its just preëminence among the causes of human happiness, and dwelling on it as the only certain source of pure and elevated thoughts, and upright, benevolent, and magnanimous actions.

"This, then, is common to the books of both writers,—that they furnish a direct and distinguished contrast to the atrabilious gloom of some modern works of genius, and the wanton, but not artless levity of others. They yield a memorable, I trust an immortal, accession to the evidences of a truth not always fashionable in literature, that the mind of man may put forth all its bold luxuriance of original thought, strong feeling, and vivid imagination, without being loosed from any sacred and social bond, or pruned of any legitimate affection; and that the Muse is indeed a 'heavenly goddess,' and not a graceless, lawless runagate,

'ἄφρητωρ, ἀθέμιστος, ἀνέστιος.'

"Good sense, the sure foundation of excellence in all the arts, is another leading characteristic of these productions. Assuming the author of Waverley and the author of Marmion to be the same person, it would be difficult in our times to find a second equally free from affectation, prejudice, and every other distortion or depravity of judgment, whether arising from ignorance, weakness, or corruption of morals. It is astonishing that so voluminous and successful a writer should so seldom be betrayed into any of those 'fantastic tricks' which, in such a man, make 'the angels weep,' and (*è converso*) the critics laugh. He adopts no fashionable cant, colloquial, philosophical, or literary; he takes no delight in being unintelligible; he does not amuse himself by throwing out those fine sentimental and metaphysical threads which float upon the air, and tease and tickle the passengers, but present no palpable substance to their grasp; he aims at no beauties that 'scorn the eye of vulgar light;' he is no dealer in paradoxes; no affecter of new doctrines in taste or morals; he has no eccentric sympathies or antipathies; no maudlin philanthropy, or impertinent cynicism; no nondescript hobby-horse; and with all his matchless energy and originality of mind, he is content to admire popular books, and enjoy popular pleasures; to cherish those opinions which experience has sanctioned; to reverence those institutions which antiquity has hallowed; and to enjoy, admire, cherish, and reverence all these with the same plainness, simplicity, and sincerity as our ancestors did of old.

.....

"I cannot help dwelling for a moment on the great similarity of manner apparent in the female portraits of the two writers. The pictures of their heroines are executed with a peculiar fineness, delicacy, and minuteness of touch, and with a care at times almost amounting to timidity, so that they generally appear more highly finished, but less boldly and strikingly thrown out, than the figures with which they are surrounded. Their elegance and purity are always admirable, and are happily combined, in most instances, with unaffected ease and natural spirit. Strong practical sense is their most prevailing characteristic, unaccompanied by any repulsive air of selfishness, pedantry, or unfeminine harshness. Few writers have ever evinced, in so strong a degree as the authors of Marmion and Waverley, that manly regard, and dignified but enthusiastic devotion, which may be expressed by the term loyalty to the fair sex, the honorable attribute of chivalrous and

romantic ages. If they touch on the faults of womankind, their satire is playful, not contemptuous; and their acquaintance with female manners, graces, and foibles, is apparently drawn, not from libertine experience, but from the guileless familiarity of domestic life.

"Of all human ties and connections there is none so frequently brought in view, or adorned with so many touches of the most affecting eloquence by both these writers, as the pure and tender relation of father and daughter. Douglas and Ellen in The Lady of the Lake will immediately occur to you as a distinguished example. Their mutual affection and solicitude; their pride in each other's excellencies; the parent's regret of the obscurity to which fate has doomed his child; and the daughter's self-devotion to her father's welfare and safety, constitute the highest interest of the poem, and that which is most uniformly sustained; nor does this or any other romance of the same author contain a finer stroke of passion than the overboiling of Douglas's wrath, when, mixed as a stranger with the crowd at Stirling, he sees his daughter's favorite Lufra chastised by the royal huntsman.

"In Rokeby, the filial attachment and duteous anxieties of Matilda form the leading feature of her character, and the chief source of her distresses. The intercourse between King Arthur and his daughter Gyneth, in The Bridal of Triermain, is neither long, nor altogether amicable; but the monarch's feelings on first beholding that beautiful 'slip of wilderness,' and his manner of receiving her before the queen and court, are too forcibly and naturally described to be omitted in this enumeration.

"Of all the novels, there are at most but two or three in which a fond father and affectionate daughter may not be pointed out among the principal characters, and in which the main interest of many scenes does not arise out of that paternal and filial relation. What a beautiful display of natural feeling, under every turn of circumstances that can render the situations of child and parent agonizing or delightful, runs through the history of David Deans and his two daughters! How affecting is the tale of Leicester's unhappy Countess, after we have seen her forsaken father consuming away with moody sorrow in his joyless manor-house! How exquisite are the grouping and contrast of Isaac, the kind but sordid Jew, and his heroic Rebecca, of the buckram Baron of Bradwardine and the sensitive Rose, the reserved but ardent Mannering, and the flighty coquette Julia! In The

Antiquary, and Bride of Lammermoor, anxiety is raised to the most painful height by the spectacle of father and daughter exposed together to imminent and frightful peril. The heroines in Rob Roy and The Black Dwarf are duteous and devoted daughters, the one of an unfortunate, the other of an unworthy parent. In the whole story of Kenilworth there is nothing that more strongly indicates a master-hand than the paternal carefulness and apprehensions of the churl Foster; and among the most striking scenes in A Legend of Montrose is that in which Sir Duncan Campbell is attracted by an obscure yearning of the heart toward his unknown child, the supposed orphan of Darlinvarach."

I must not attempt to follow out Mr. Adolphus in his most ingenious tracings of petty coincidences in thought, and, above all, in expression, between the poet of Marmion and the novelist of Waverley. His apology for the minuteness of his detail in that part of his work is, however, too graceful to be omitted: "It cannot, I think, appear frivolous or irrelevant, in the inquiry we are pursuing, to dwell on these minute coincidences. Unimportant indeed they are if looked upon as subjects of direct criticism; but considered with reference to our present purpose, they resemble those light substances which, floating on the trackless sea, discover the true setting of some mighty current: they are the buoyant driftwood which betrays the hidden communication of two great poetic oceans."

I conclude with re-quoting a fragment from one of the quaint tracts of Sir Thomas Urquhart. The following is the epigraph of Mr. Adolphus's 5th Letter:—

> "O with how great liveliness did he represent the conditions of all manner of men! From the overweening monarch to the peevish swaine, through all intermediate degrees of the superficial courtier or proud warrior, dissembling churchman, doting old man, cozening lawyer, lying traveler, covetous merchant, rude seaman, pedantick scolar, the amorous shepheard, envious artisan, vain-glorious master, and tricky servant;——He had all the jeers, squibs, flouts, buls, quips, taunts, whims, jests, clinches, gybes, mokes, jerks, with all the several kinds of equivocations and other sophistical captions, that could properly be adapted to the person by whose

> representation he intended to inveagle the company into a fit of mirth!"

I have it not in my power to produce the letter in which Scott conveyed to Heber his opinion of this work. I know, however, that it ended with a request that he should present Mr. Adolphus with his thanks for the handsome terms in which his poetical efforts had been spoken of throughout, and request him, in the name of the *author of Marmion*, not to revisit Scotland without reserving a day for Abbotsford; and the *Eidolon* of the author of *Waverley* was made, a few months afterwards, to speak as follows in the Introduction to The Fortunes of Nigel: "These letters to the member for the University of Oxford show the wit, genius, and delicacy of the author, which I heartily wish to see engaged on a subject of more importance; and show, besides, that the preservation of my character of *incognito* has engaged early talent in the discussion of a curious question of evidence. But a cause, however ingeniously pleaded, is not therefore gained. You may remember the neatly wrought chain of circumstantial evidence, so artificially brought forward to prove Sir Philip Francis's title to the Letters of Junius, seemed at first irrefragable; yet the influence of the reasoning has passed away, and Junius, in the general opinion, is as much unknown as ever. But on this subject I will not be soothed or provoked into saying one word more. To say who I am not, would be one step towards saying who I am; and as I desire not, any more than a certain Justice of Peace mentioned by Shenstone, the noise or report such things make in the world, I shall continue to be silent on a subject which, in my opinion, is very undeserving the noise that has been made about it, and still more unworthy of the serious employment of such ingenuity as has been displayed by the young letter-writer."

Chapter LIV

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1821

When Sir Walter returned from London, he brought with him the detailed plans of Mr. Atkinson for the completion of his house at Abbotsford; which, however, did not extend to the gateway or the beautiful screen between the court and the garden—for these graceful parts of the general design were conceptions of his own, reduced to shape by the skill of the Messrs. Smith of Darnick. It would not, indeed, be easy for me to apportion rightly the constituent members of the whole edifice;—throughout there were numberless consultations with Mr. Blore, Mr. Terry, and Mr. Skene, as well as with Mr. Atkinson—and the actual builders placed considerable inventive talents, as well as admirable workmanship, at the service of their friendly employer. Every preparation was now made by them, and the foundations might have been set about without farther delay; but he was very reluctant to authorize the demolition of the rustic porch of the old cottage, with its luxuriant overgrowth of roses and jessamines; and, in short, could not make up his mind to sign the death-warrant of this favorite bower until winter had robbed it of its beauties. He then made an excursion from Edinburgh, on purpose to be present at its downfall—saved as many of the creepers as seemed likely to survive removal, and planted them with his own hands about a somewhat similar porch, erected expressly for their reception, at his daughter Sophia's little cottage of Chiefswood.

There my wife and I spent this summer and autumn of 1821—the first of several seasons, which will ever dwell on my memory as the happiest of my life. We were near enough Abbotsford to partake as often as we liked of its brilliant society; yet could do so without being exposed to the worry and exhaustion of spirit which the daily reception of newcomers entailed upon all the family except Sir Walter himself. But, in truth, even he was not always proof against the annoyances connected with such a style of open-house-keeping. Even his temper sunk sometimes under the solemn applauses of learned dulness, the vapid raptures of painted and periwigged dowagers, the horse-leech avidity with which underbred foreigners urged their questions, and the pompous simpers of condescending magnates. When sore beset at home in this way, he would every now and then discover that he had some very particular business to attend to on an outlying part of his estate, and craving the indulgence of his guests overnight, appear at the cabin in the glen before its inhabitants were astir in the morning. The clatter of Sibyl Grey's hoofs, the yelping of Mustard and Spice, and his own joyous shout of *reveillée* under our windows, were the signal that he had burst his toils, and meant for that day to "take his ease in his inn." On descending, he was to be found seated with all his dogs and ours about him, under a spreading ash that overshadowed half the bank between the cottage and the brook, pointing the edge of his woodman's axe for himself, and listening to Tom Purdie's lecture touching the plantation that most needed thinning. After breakfast, he would take possession of a dressing-room upstairs, and write a chapter of The Pirate; and then, having made up and despatched his packet for Mr. Ballantyne, away to join Purdie wherever the foresters were at work—and sometimes to labor among them as strenuously as John Swanston himself—until it was time either to rejoin his own party at Abbotsford, or the quiet circle of the cottage.—When his guests were few and friendly, he often made them come over and meet him at Chiefswood in a body towards evening; and surely he never appeared to more amiable advantage than when helping his young people with their little arrangements upon such occasions. He was ready with all sorts of devices to supply the wants of a narrow establishment; he used to delight particularly in sinking the wine in a well under the *brae* ere he went out, and hauling up the basket just before dinner was announced—this primitive process being, he said, what he had always practised when a young housekeeper; and in his opinion far superior in its results to any application

of ice; and, in the same spirit, whenever the weather was sufficiently genial, he voted for dining out of doors altogether, which at once got rid of the inconvenience of very small rooms, and made it natural and easy for the gentlemen to help the ladies, so that the paucity of servants went for nothing. Mr. Rose used to amuse himself with likening the scene and the party to the closing act of one of those little French dramas, where "Monsieur le Comte" and "Madame la Comtesse" appear feasting at a village bridal under the trees; but in truth, our "M. le Comte" was only trying to live over again for a few simple hours his own old life of Lasswade.

When circumstances permitted, he usually spent one evening at least in the week at our little cottage; and almost as frequently he did the like with the Fergusons, to whose table he could bring chance visitors, when he pleased, with equal freedom as to his daughter's. Indeed it seemed to be much a matter of chance, any fine day when there had been no alarming invasion of the Southron, whether the three families (which, in fact, made but one) should dine at Abbotsford, Huntly Burn, or at Chiefswood; and at none of them was the party considered quite complete, unless it included also Mr. Laidlaw. Death has laid a heavy hand upon that circle—as happy a circle I believe as ever met. Bright eyes now closed in dust, gay voices forever silenced, seem to haunt me as I write. With three exceptions, they are all gone. Even since the last of these volumes was finished, she whom I may now sadly record as, next to Sir Walter himself, the chief ornament and delight at all those simple meetings—she to whose love I owed my own place in them—Scott's eldest daughter, the one of all his children who in countenance, mind, and manners, most resembled himself, and who indeed was as like him in all things as a gentle innocent woman can ever be to a great man deeply tried and skilled in the struggles and perplexities of active life—she, too, is no more. And in the very hour that saw her laid in her grave, the only other female survivor, her dearest friend Margaret Ferguson, breathed her last also.—But enough—and more than I intended—I must resume the story of Abbotsford.

During several weeks of that delightful summer, Scott had under his roof Mr. William Erskine and two of his daughters; this being, I believe, their first visit to Tweedside since the death of Mrs. Erskine in September, 1819. He had probably made a point of having his friend with him at this particular time, because he was desirous of having the benefit of his advice

and corrections from day to day as he advanced in the composition of The Pirate—with the localities of which romance the Sheriff of Orkney and Zetland was of course thoroughly familiar. At all events, the constant and eager delight with which Erskine watched the progress of the tale has left a deep impression on my memory; and indeed I heard so many of its chapters first read from the MS. by him, that I can never open the book now without thinking I hear his voice. Sir Walter used to give him at breakfast the pages he had written that morning; and very commonly, while he was again at work in his study, Erskine would walk over to Chiefswood, that he might have the pleasure of reading them aloud to my wife and me under our favorite tree, before the packet had to be sealed up for the printer, or rather for the transcriber in Edinburgh. I cannot paint the delight and the pride with which he acquitted himself on such occasions. The little artifice of his manner was merely superficial, and was wholly forgotten as tender affection and admiration, fresh as the impulses of childhood, glistened in his eye, and trembled in his voice.

This reminds me that I have not yet attempted any sketch of the person and manners of Scott's most intimate friend. Their case was no contradiction to the old saying, that the most attached comrades are often very unlike each other in character and temperament. The mere physical contrast was as strong as could well be, and this is not unworthy of notice here; for Erskine was, I think, the only man in whose society Scott took great pleasure, during the more vigorous part of his life, that had neither constitution nor inclination for any of the rough bodily exercises in which he himself delighted. The Counsellor (as Scott always called him) was a little man of feeble make, who seemed unhappy when his pony got beyond a footpace, and had never, I should suppose, addicted himself to any out-of-doors sport whatever. He would, I fancy, have as soon thought of slaying his own mutton as of handling a fowling-piece: he used to shudder when he saw a party equipped for coursing, as if murder were in the wind; but the cool meditative angler was in his eyes the abomination of abominations. His small elegant features, hectic cheek, and soft hazel eyes, were the index of the quick sensitive gentle spirit within. He had the warm heart of a woman, her generous enthusiasm, and some of her weaknesses. A beautiful landscape, or a fine strain of music, would send the tears rolling down his cheek; and though capable, I have no doubt, of exhibiting, had his duty called him to do so, the highest spirit of a hero or a martyr, he had very little

command over his nerves amidst circumstances such as men of ordinary mould (to say nothing of iron fabrics like Scott's) regard with indifference. He would dismount to lead his horse down what his friend hardly perceived to be a descent at all; grew pale at a precipice; and, unlike the White Lady of Avenel, would go a long way round for a bridge.

Erskine had as yet been rather unfortunate in his professional career, and thought a sheriffship by no means the kind of advancement due to his merits, and which his connections might naturally have secured for him. These circumstances had at the time when I first observed him tinged his demeanor; he had come to intermingle a certain wayward snappishness now and then with his forensic exhibitions, and in private seemed inclined (though altogether incapable of abandoning the Tory party) to say bitter things of people in high places; but with these exceptions, never was benevolence towards all the human race more lively and overflowing than his evidently was, even when he considered himself as one who had reason to complain of his luck in the world. Now, however, these little asperities had disappeared; one great real grief had cast its shadow over him, and submissive to the chastisement of heaven, he had no longer any thoughts for the petty misusage of mankind. Scott's apprehension was, that his ambition was extinguished with his resentment; and he was now using every endeavor, in connection with their common friend the Lord Advocate Rae, to procure for Erskine that long-coveted seat on the bench, about which the subdued widower himself had ceased to occupy his mind. By and by these views were realized to Scott's high satisfaction, and for a brief season with the happiest effect on Erskine's own spirits;—but I shall not anticipate the sequel.

Meanwhile he shrunk from the collisions of general society in Edinburgh, and lived almost exclusively in his own little circle of intimates. His conversation, though somewhat precise and finical on the first impression, was rich in knowledge. His literary ambition, active and aspiring at the outset, had long before this time merged in his profound veneration for Scott; but he still read a great deal, and did so as much I believe with a view to assisting Scott by hints and suggestions, as for his own amusement. He had much of his friend's tact in extracting the picturesque from old, and, generally speaking, dull books; and in bringing out his stores he often showed a great deal of quaint humor and sly wit.

Scott, on his side, respected, trusted, and loved him, much as an affectionate husband does the wife who gave him her heart in youth, and thinks his thoughts rather than her own in the evening of life; he soothed, cheered, and sustained Erskine habitually. I do not believe a more entire and perfect confidence ever subsisted than theirs was and always had been in each other; and to one who had duly observed the creeping jealousies of human nature, it might perhaps seem doubtful on which side the balance of real nobility of heart and character, as displayed in their connection at the time of which I am speaking, ought to be cast.

Among the common friends of their young days, of whom they both delighted to speak—and always spoke with warm and equal affection—was the sister of their friend Cranstoun, the confidant of Scott's first unfortunate love, whom neither had now seen for a period of more than twenty years. This lady had undergone domestic afflictions more than sufficient to have crushed almost any spirit but her own. Her husband, the Count Purgstall, had died some years before this time, leaving her an only son, a youth of the most amiable disposition, and possessing abilities which, had he lived to develop them, must have secured for him a high station in the annals of genius. This hope of her eyes, the last heir of an illustrious lineage, followed his father to the tomb in the nineteenth year of his age. The desolate Countess was urged by her family in Scotland to return, after this bereavement, to her native country; but she had vowed to her son on his deathbed, that one day her dust should be mingled with his; and no argument could induce her to depart from the resolution of remaining in solitary Styria. By her desire, a valued friend of the house of Purgstall, who had been born and bred up on their estates, the celebrated Orientalist, Joseph von Hammer, compiled a little memoir of The Two Last Counts of Purgstall, which he put forth, in January, 1821, under the title of Denkmahl, or Monument; and of this work the Countess sent a copy to Sir Walter (with whom her correspondence had been during several years suspended), by the hands of her eldest brother, Mr. Henry Cranstoun, who had been visiting her in Styria, and who at this time occupied a villa within a few miles of Abbotsford. Scott's letter of acknowledgment never reached her; and indeed I doubt if it was ever despatched. He appears to have meditated a set of consolatory verses for its conclusion, and the Muse not answering his call at the moment, I suspect he had allowed the sheet, which I now transcribe, to fall aside and be lost sight of among his multifarious masses of MS.

TO THE COUNTESS PURGSTALL, ETC., ETC.

My dear and much-valued Friend,—You cannot imagine how much I was interested and affected by receiving your token of your kind recollection, after the interval of so many years. Your brother Henry breakfasted with me yesterday, and gave me the letter and the book, which served me as a matter of much melancholy reflection for many hours.

Hardly anything makes the mind recoil so much upon itself, as the being suddenly and strongly recalled to times long past, and that by the voice of one whom we have so much loved and respected. Do not think I have ever forgotten you, or the many happy days I passed in Frederick Street, in society which fate has separated so far, and for so many years.

The little volume was particularly acceptable to me, as it acquainted me with many circumstances, of which distance and imperfect communication had either left me entirely ignorant, or had transmitted only inaccurate information.

Alas, my dear friend, what can the utmost efforts of friendship offer you, beyond the sympathy which, however sincere, must sound like an empty compliment in the ear of affliction? God knows with what willingness I would undertake anything which might afford you the melancholy consolation of knowing how much your old and early friend interests himself in the sad event which has so deeply wounded your peace of mind. The verses, therefore, which conclude this letter, must not be weighed according to their intrinsic value, for the more inadequate they are to express the feelings they would fain convey, the more they show the author's anxious wish to do what may be grateful to you.

In truth, I have long given up poetry. I have had my day with the public; and being no great believer in poetical immortality, I was very well pleased to rise a winner, without continuing the game till I was beggared of any credit I had acquired. Besides, I felt the prudence of giving way before the more forcible and powerful genius of Byron. If I were either greedy, or jealous of poetical fame—and both are strangers to my nature—I might comfort myself with the thought, that I would hesitate to strip

myself to the contest so fearlessly as Byron does; or to command the wonder and terror of the public, by exhibiting, in my own person, the sublime attitude of the dying gladiator. But with the old frankness of twenty years since, I will fairly own, that this same delicacy of mine may arise more from conscious want of vigor and inferiority, than from a delicate dislike to the nature of the conflict. At any rate, there is a time for everything, and without swearing oaths to it, I think my time for poetry has gone by.

My health suffered horridly last year, I think from over-labor and excitation; and though it is now apparently restored to its usual tone, yet during the long and painful disorder (spasms in the stomach) and the frightful process of cure, by a prolonged use of calomel, I learned that my frame was made of flesh, and not of iron—a conviction which I will long keep in remembrance, and avoid any occupation so laborious and agitating as poetry must be, to be worth anything.

In this humor I often think of passing a few weeks on the Continent—a summer vacation if I can—and of course my attraction to Gratz would be very strong. I fear this is the only chance of our meeting in this world—we, who once saw each other daily! for I understand from George and Henry that there is little chance of your coming here. And when I look around me, and consider how many changes you would see in feature, form, and fashion, amongst all you knew and loved; and how much, no sudden squall, or violent tempest, but the slow and gradual progress of life's long voyage, has severed all the gallant fellowships whom you left spreading their sails to the morning breeze, I really am not sure that you would have much pleasure.

The gay and wild romance of life is over with all of us. The real, dull, and stern history of humanity has made a far greater progress over our heads; and age, dark and unlovely, has laid his crutch over the stoutest fellow's shoulders. One thing your old society may boast, that they have all run their course with honor, and almost all with distinction; and the brother suppers of Frederick Street have certainly made a very considerable figure in

the world, as was to be expected from her talents under whose auspices they were assembled.

One of the most pleasant sights which you would see in Scotland, as it now stands, would be your brother George in possession of the most beautiful and romantic place in Clydesdale—Corehouse. I have promised often to go out with him, and assist him with my deep experience as a planter and landscape gardener. I promise you my oaks will outlast my laurels; and I pique myself more upon my compositions for manure than on any other compositions whatsoever to which I was ever accessary. But so much does business of one sort or other engage us both, that we never have been able to fix a time which suited us both; and with the utmost wish to make out the party, perhaps we never may.

This is a melancholy letter, but it is chiefly so from the sad tone of yours—who have had such real disasters to lament—while mine is only the humorous sadness, which a retrospect on human life is sure to produce on the most prosperous. For my own course of life, I have only to be ashamed of its prosperity, and afraid of its termination; for I have little reason, arguing on the doctrine of chances, to hope that the same good fortune will attend me forever. I have had an affectionate and promising family, many friends, few unfriends, and, I think, no enemies—and more of fame and fortune than mere literature ever procured for a man before.

I dwell among my own people, and have many whose happiness is dependent on me, and which I study to the best of my power. I trust my temper, which you know is by nature good and easy, has not been spoiled by flattery or prosperity; and therefore I have escaped entirely that irritability of disposition which I think is planted, like the slave in the poet's chariot, to prevent his enjoying his triumph.

Should things, therefore, change with me—and in these times, or indeed in any times, such change is to be apprehended—I trust I shall be able to surrender these adventitious advantages, as I would my upper dress, as something extremely comfortable, but which I can make shift to do without....

As I may have no occasion hereafter to allude to the early friend with whose sorrows Scott thus sympathized amidst the meridian splendors of his own worldly career, I may take this opportunity of mentioning, that Captain Basil Hall's conjecture, of her having been the original of Diana Vernon, appeared to myself from the first chimerical; and that I have since heard those who knew her best in the days of her intercourse with Sir Walter, express the same opinion in the most decided manner. But to return.

While The Pirate was advancing under Mr. Erskine's eye, Scott had even more than the usual allowance of minor literary operations on hand. He edited a reprint of a curious old book, called Franck's Northern Memoir, and the Contemplative Angler; and he also prepared for the press a volume published soon after, under the title of "Chronological Notes on Scottish Affairs, 1680 to 1701, from the Diary of Lord Fountainhall." The professional writings of that celebrated old lawyer had been much in his hands from his early years, on account of the incidental light which they throw on the events of a most memorable period in Scottish history: and he seems to have contemplated some more considerable selection from his remains, but to have dropped these intentions, on being given to understand that they might interfere with those of Lord Fountainhall's accomplished representative, the present Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, Baronet. It is, however, to be regretted that Sir Thomas's promise of a Life of his eminent ancestor has not yet been redeemed.

In August appeared the volume of the Novelists' Library containing Scott's Life of Smollett; and it being now ascertained that John Ballantyne had died a debtor, the editor offered to proceed with this series of prefaces, on the footing that the whole profits of the work should go to his widow. Mr. Constable, whose health was now beginning to break, had gone southwards in quest of more genial air, and was at Hastings when he heard of this proposition. He immediately wrote to me, entreating me to represent to Sir Walter that the undertaking, having been coldly received at first, was unlikely to grow in favor if continued on the same plan—that in his opinion the bulk of the volumes, and the small type of their text, had been unwisely chosen, for a work of mere entertainment, and could only be suitable for one of reference; that Ballantyne's Novelists' Library, therefore, ought to be stopped at once, and another in a lighter shape, to range with the late collected edition of the first series of the Waverley Romances, announced with his own name as publisher, and Scott's as editor. He proposed at the

same time to commence the issue of a Select Library of English Poetry, with prefaces and a few notes by the same hand; and calculating that each of these collections should extend to twenty-five volumes, and that the publication of both might be concluded within two years—"the writing of the prefaces, etc., forming perhaps an occasional relief from more important labors"!—the bookseller offered to pay their editor in all the sum of £6000: a small portion of which sum, as he hinted, would undoubtedly be more than Mrs. John Ballantyne could ever hope to derive from the prosecution of her husband's last publishing adventure. Various causes combined to prevent the realization of these magnificent projects. Scott now, as at the beginning of his career of speculation, had views about what a collection of English Poetry should be, in which even Constable could not, on consideration, be made to concur; and I have already explained the coldness with which he regarded further attempts upon our Elder Novelists. The Ballantyne Library crept on to the tenth volume, and was then dropped abruptly; and the double negotiation with Constable was never renewed.

Lady Louisa Stuart had not, I fancy, read Scott's Lives of the Novelists until, some years after this time, they were collected into two little piratical duodecimos by a Parisian bookseller; and on her then expressing her admiration of them, together with her astonishment that the speculation of which they formed a part should have attracted little notice of any sort, he answered as follows: "I am delighted they afford any entertainment, for they are rather flimsily written, being done merely to oblige a friend: they were yoked to a great, ill-conditioned, lubberly, double-columned book, which they were as useful to tug along as a set of fleas would be to draw a mail-coach. It is very difficult to answer your Ladyship's curious question concerning change of taste; but whether in young or old, it takes place insensibly without the parties being aware of it. A grand-aunt of my own, Mrs. Keith of Ravelston,—who was a person of some condition, being a daughter of Sir John Swinton of Swinton,—lived with unabated vigor of intellect to a very advanced age. She was very fond of reading, and enjoyed it to the last of her long life. One day she asked me, when we happened to be alone together, whether I had ever seen Mrs. Behn's novels?—I confessed the charge.—Whether I could get her a sight of them?—I said, with some hesitation, I believed I could; but that I did not think she would like either the manners, or the language, which approached too near that of Charles II.'s time to be quite proper reading. 'Nevertheless,' said the good

old lady, 'I remember them being so much admired, and being so much interested in them myself, that I wish to look at them again.' To hear was to obey. So I sent Mrs. Aphra Behn, curiously sealed up, with 'private and confidential' on the packet, to my gay old grand-aunt. The next time I saw her afterwards, she gave me back Aphra, properly wrapped up, with nearly these words: 'Take back your bonny Mrs. Behn; and, if you will take my advice, put her in the fire, for I found it impossible to get through the very first novel. But is it not,' she said, 'a very odd thing that I, an old woman of eighty and upwards, sitting alone, feel myself ashamed to read a book which, sixty years ago, I have heard read aloud for the amusement of large circles, consisting of the first and most creditable society in London?' This, of course, was owing to the gradual improvement of the national taste and delicacy. The change that brings into and throws out of fashion particular styles of composition, is something of the same kind. It does not signify what the greater or less merit of the book is;—the reader, as Tony Lumpkin says, must be in a concatenation accordingly—the fashion, or the general taste, must have prepared him to be pleased, or put him on his guard against it. It is much like dress. If Clarissa should appear before a modern party in her lace ruffles and head-dress, or Lovelace in his wig, however genteelly powdered, I am afraid they would make no conquests; the fashion which makes conquests of us in other respects, is very powerful in literary composition, and adds to the effect of some works, while in others it forms their sole merit."

Among other miscellaneous work of this autumn, Scott amused some leisure hours with writing a series of Private Letters, supposed to have been discovered in the repositories of a Noble English Family, and giving a picture of manners in town and country during the early part of the reign of James I. These letters were printed as fast as he penned them, in a handsome quarto form, and he furnished the margin with a running commentary of notes, drawn up in the character of a disappointed chaplain, a keen Whig, or rather Radical, overflowing on all occasions with spleen against Monarchy and Aristocracy. When the printing had reached the 72d page, however, he was told candidly by Erskine, by James Ballantyne, and also by myself, that, however clever his imitation of the epistolary style of the period in question, he was throwing away in these letters the materials of as good a romance as he had ever penned; and a few days afterwards he said to me—patting Sibyl's neck till she danced under him,—"You were all

quite right: if the letters had passed for genuine they would have found favor only with a few musty antiquaries, and if the joke were detected, there was not story enough to carry it off. I shall burn the sheets, and give you Bonny King Jamie and all his tail in the old shape, as soon as I can get Captain Goffe within view of the gallows."

Such was the origin of The Fortunes of Nigel. As one set of the uncompleted Letters has been preserved, I shall here insert a specimen of them, in which the reader will easily recognize the germ of more than one scene of the novel.

JENKIN HARMAN TO THE LORD ——.

My Lord,—Towching this new mishappe of Sir Thomas, whereof your Lordshippe makes querie of me, I wolde hartilie that I could, truth and my bounden dutie alweys firste satisfied, make suche answer as were fullie pleasaunte to me to write, or unto your Lordshippe to reade. But what remedy? young men will have stirring bloodes; and the courtier-like gallants of the time will be gamesome and dangerous, as they have beene in dayes past. I think your Lordshippe is so wise as to caste one eye backe to your own more juvenile time, whilest you looke forward with the other upon this mischaunce, which, upon my lyfe, will be founde to be no otherwise harmful to Sir Thomas than as it shews him an hastie Hotspur of the day, suddenlie checking at whatsoever may seem to smirche his honour. As I am a trew man, and your Lordship's poore kinsman and bounden servant, I think ther lives not a gentleman more trew to his friende than Sir Thomas; and although ye be but brothers uterine, yet so dearly doth he holde your favour, that his father, were the gode knight alyve, should not have more swaye with him than shalle your Lordship; and, also, it is no kindly part to sow discord betwene brethrene; for, as the holy Psalmist saythe, "*Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres*," etc. And moreover, it needes not to tell your Lordshippe that Sir Thomas is suddene in his anger; and it was but on Wednesday last that he said to me, with moche distemperature,—Master Jenkin, I be tolde that ye meddle and make betwene me and my Lorde my brother; wherfore, take this for feyr warninge, that when I shall fynde you so dooyng, I will

incontinent put my dager to the hilte in you:—and this was spoken with all earnestness of visage and actioun, grasping of his poinard's handle, as one who wolde presentlie make his words good. Surely, my Lord, it is not fair carriage toward you pore kinsman if anie out of your house make such reports of me, and of that which I have written to you in sympleness of herte, and in obedience to your commandemente, which is my law on this matter. Truely, my Lord, I wolde this was well looked to, otherweys my rewarde for trew service might be to handsell with my herte's blode the steel of a Milan poignado. Natheless, I will procede with my mater, fal back fal edge, trustyng all utterly in the singleness of my integretie, and in your Lordshippe's discretioun.

My Lorde, the braule which hath befallen chaunced this waye, and not otherwise. It hap'd that one Raines, the master of the ordinarie where his honour Sir Thomas eteth well nie dailie (when he is not in attendance at courte, wherein he is perchance more slacke than were wise), shoulde assemble some of the beste who haunte his house, havyng diet ther for money. The purpose, as shewn forthe, was to tast a new piece of choice wyne, and ther Sir Thomas must nedes be, or the purpos holdes not, and the Alicant becometh Bastard. Wel, my Lord, dice ther wer and music, lustie helthes and dizzie braines,—some saye fair ladyes also, of which I know nought, save that suche cockatrices hatch wher such cockes of the game do haunt. Alweys ther was revel and wassail enow and to spare. Now it chaunced, that whilst one Dutton, of Graie's-Inn, an Essex man, held the dice, Sir Thomas fillethe a fulle carouse to the helth of the fair Ladie Elizabeth. Trulie, my Lord, I cannot blame his devotioun to so fair a saint, though I may wish the chapel for his adoration had been better chosen, and the companie more suitable; *sed respice finem*. The pledge being given, and alle men on foote, aye, and some on knee, to drink the same, young Philip Darcy, a near kinsman of my Lorde's, or so callyng himself, takes on him to check at the helthe, askyng Sir Thomas if he were willinge to drink the same in a Venetian glasse? the mening of whiche hard sentence your Lordshippe shal esilie construe. Whereupon Sir Thomas, your Lordshippe's

brother, somewhat shrewishly demanded whether that were his game or his earnest; to which demaunde the uther answers recklessly as he that wolde not be brow-beaten, that Sir Thomas might take it for game or ernest as him listed. Whereupon your Lordshippe's brother, throwing down withal the woodcocke's bill, with which, as the fashioun goes, he was picking his teeth, answered redily, he cared not that for his game or ernest, for that neither were worth a bean. A small matter this to make such a storie, for presentlie young Darcie up with the wine-pot in which they had assaid the freshe hogshede, and heveth it at Sir Thomas, which vessel missing of the mark it was aym'd at, encountreth the hede of Master Dutton, when the outside of the flaggon did that which peradventure the inside had accomplish'd somewhat later in the evening, and stretcheth him on the flore; and then the crie arose, and you might see twenty swords oute at once, and none rightly knowing wherfor. And the groomes and valets, who waited in the street and in the kitchen, and who, as seldom failes, had been as besy with the beer as their masters with the wine, presentlie fell at odds, and betoke themselves to their weapones; so ther was bouncing of bucklers, and bandying of blades, instede of clattering of quart pottles, and chiming of harpis and fiddles. At length comes the wache, and, as oft happens in the like affraies, alle men join ageynst them, and they are beten bak: An honest man, David Booth, constable of the night, and a chandler by trade, is sorely hurt. The crie rises of Prentices, prentices, Clubs, clubs, for word went that the court-gallants and the Graie's-Inn men had murther'd a citizen; all mene take the street, and the whole ward is uppe, none well knowing why. Menewhile our gallants had the lucke and sense to disperse their company, some getting them into the Temple, the gates wherof were presentlie shut to prevent pursuite I warrant, and some taking boat as they might; water thus saving whom wyne hath endaunger'd. The Alderman of the ward, worthy Master Danvelt, with Master Deputy, and others of repute, bestow'd themselves not a litel to compose the tumult, and so al past over for the evening.

My Lord, this is the hole of the mater, so far as my earnest and anxious serch had therein, as well for the sake of my blode-

relation to your honourable house, as frome affectioun to my kinsman Sir Thomas, and especiallie in humble obedience to your regarded commandes. As for other offence given by Sir Thomas, whereof idle bruites are current, as that he should have call'd Master Darcie a codshead or an woodcocke, I can lerne of no such termes, nor any nere to them, only that when he said he cared not for his game or ernest, he flung down the woodcock's bill, to which it may be there was sticking a part of the head, though my informant saithe otherwise; and he stode so close by Sir Thomas, that he herde the quart-pot whissel as it flew betwixt there too hedes. Of damage done among the better sort, there is not muche; some cuts and thrusts ther wer, that had their sequents in blood and woundes, but none dedlie. Of the rascal sort, one fellowe is kill'd, and sundrie hurt. Hob Hilton, your brother's grome, for life a maymed man, having a slash over the right hande, for faulte of a gauntlet.—Marry he has been a brave knave and a sturdie: and if it pleses your goode Lordshippe, I fynd he wolde gladlie be preferr'd when tym is fitting, to the office of bedle. He hath a burlie frame, and scare-babe visage; he shall do wel enoughe in such charge, though lackyng the use of four fingers. The hurtyng of the constabel is a worse matter; as also the anger that is between the courtiers and Graie's-Inn men; so that yf close hede be not given, I doubt me we shall here of more *Gesto Graiorum*. Thei will not be persuaded but that the quarrel betwixt Sir Thomas and young Darcie was simulate; and that Master Button's hurte wes wilful; whereas, on my lyfe, it will not be founde so.

The counseyl hath taen the matter up, and I here H. M. spoke many things gravely and solidly, and as one who taketh to hert such unhappie chaunces, both against brauling and drinking. Sir Thomas, with others, hath put in plegge to be forthcoming; and so strictly taken up was the unhappie mater of the Scots Lord, that if Booth shulde die, which God forefend, there might be a fereful reckoning: For one cityzen sayeth, I trust falslie, he saw Sir Thomas draw back his hand, having in it a drawn sword, just as the constabel felle. It seems but too constant, that thei were within but short space of ech other when his unhappy chaunce befel. My

> Lord, it is not for me to saie what course your Lordshippe should steer in this storm, onlie that the Lord Chansellour's gode worde wil, as resen is, do yeoman's service. Schulde it come to fine or imprisonment, as is to be fered, why should not your Lordshippe cast the weyght into the balance for that restraint which goode Sir Thomas must nedes bear himself, rather than for such penalty as must nedes pinche the purses of his frendes. Your Lordship always knoweth best; but surely the yonge knyght hath but litel reson to expect that you shulde further engage yourself in such bondes as might be necessary to bring this fine unto the Chequer. Nether have wise men helde it unfit that heated bloode be coold by sequestration for a space from temptation. There is dout, moreover, whether he may not hold himself bounden, according to the forme of faythe which such gallants and stirring spirits profess, to have further meeting with Master Philip Darcie, or this same Dutton, or with bothe, on this rare dependence of an woodcocke's hede, and a quart-pot; certeynly, methoughte, the last tym we met, and when he bare himself towards me, as I have premonish'd your Lordshippe, that he was fitter for quiet residence under safe keeping, than for a free walk amongst peceful men.
>
> And thus, my Lord, ye have the whole mater before you; trew ye shall find it,—my dutie demands it,—unpleasing, I cannot amende it: But I truste neither more evil *in esse* nor *in posse*, than I have set forth as above. From one who is ever your Lordshippe's most bounden to command, etc.—J. H.

I think it must have been about the middle of October that he dropped the scheme of this fictitious correspondence. I well remember the morning that he began The Fortunes of Nigel. The day being destined for Newark Hill, I went over to Abbotsford before breakfast, and found Mr. Terry (who had been staying there for some time) walking about with his friend's master-mason (John Smith), of whose proceedings he took a fatherly charge, as he might well do, since the plan of the building had been in a considerable measure the work of his own taste. While Terry and I were chatting, Scott came out, bare-headed, with a bunch of MS. in his hand, and said, "Well, lads, I've laid the keel of a new lugger this morning—here it is—be off to

the waterside, and let me hear how you like it." Terry took the papers, and walking up and down by the river, read to me the first chapter of Nigel. He expressed great delight with the animated opening, and especially with the contrast between its thorough stir of London life, and a chapter about Norna of the Fitful-head, in the third volume of The Pirate, which had been given to him in a similar manner the morning before. I could see that (according to the Sheriff's phrase) *he smelt roast meat*; here there was every prospect of a fine field for the art of *Terryfication*. The actor, when our host met us returning from the haugh, did not fail to express his opinion that the new novel would be of this quality. Sir Walter, as he took the MS. from his hand, eyed him with a gay smile, in which genuine benevolence mingled with mock exultation, and then throwing himself into an attitude of comical dignity, he rolled out, in the tones of John Kemble, one of the loftiest bursts of Ben Jonson's Mammon:—

> "Come on, sir. Now you set your foot on shore
> In *Novo orbe*—
> ——————Pertinax, my Surly,
> Again I say to thee aloud, Be rich,
> This day thou shalt have ingots."

This was another period of "refreshing the machine." Early in November, I find Sir Walter writing thus to Constable's partner, Mr. Cadell: "I want two books, Malcolm's London Redivivus, or some such name, and Derham's Artificial Clock-maker." [The reader of Nigel will understand these requests.] "All good luck to you, commercially and otherwise. I am grown a shabby letter-writer, for my eyes are not so young as they were, and I grudge everything that does not go to press." Such a feeling must often have been present with him; yet I can find no period when he grudged writing a letter that might by possibility be of use to any of his family or friends, and I must quote one of the many which about this very time reached his second son.

TO MR. CHARLES SCOTT.

Care of the Rev. Mr. Williams, Lampeter.

21st November, 1821.

My Dear Charles,—I had the pleasure of your letter two days since, being the first symptom of your being alive and well which I have had *directly* since you left Abbotsford. I beg you will be more frequent in your communications, which must always be desirable when you are at such a distance. I am very glad to hear you are attending closely to make up lost time. Sport is a good thing both for health and pastime; but you must never allow it to interfere with serious study. You have, my dear boy, your own fortune to make, with better assistance of every kind than I had when the world first opened on me; and I assure you that had I not given some attention to learning (I have often regretted that, from want of opportunity, indifferent health, and some indolence, I did not do all I might have done), my own situation, and the advantages which I may be able to procure for you, would have been very much bounded. Consider, therefore, study as the principal object. Many men have read and written their way to independence and fame; but no man ever gained it by exclusive attention to exercises or to pleasures of any sort. You do not say anything of your friend Mr. Surtees, who I hope is well. We all remember him with much affection, and should be sorry to think we were forgotten.

Our Abbotsford Hunt went off extremely well. We killed seven hares, I think, and our dogs behaved very well. A large party dined, and we sat down about twenty-five at table. Every gentleman present sung a song, *tant bien que mal*, excepting Walter, Lockhart, and I myself. I believe I should add the melancholy Jaques, Mr. Waugh, who, on this occasion, however, was not melancholy. In short, we had a very merry and sociable party.

There is, I think, no news here. The hedger, Captain Davidson, has had a bad accident, and injured his leg much by the fall of a large stone. I am very anxious about him as a faithful and honest servant. Every one else at Abbotsford, horses and dogs included, are in great preservation.

You ask me about reading history. You are quite right to read Clarendon—his style is a little long-winded; but, on the other hand, his characters may match those of the ancient historians,

and one thinks they would know the very men if you were to meet them in society. Few English writers have the same precision, either in describing the actors in great scenes, or the deeds which they performed. He was, you are aware, himself deeply engaged in the scenes which he depicts, and therefore colors them with the individual feeling, and sometimes, doubtless, with the partiality of a partisan. Yet I think he is, on the whole, a fair writer; for though he always endeavors to excuse King Charles, yet he points out his mistakes and errors, which certainly are neither few nor of slight consequence. Some of his history regards the country in which you are now a resident; and you will find that much of the fate of that Great Civil War turned on the successful resistance made by the city of Gloucester, and the relief of that place by the Earl of Essex, by means of the trained bands of London,—a sort of force resembling our local militia or volunteers. They are the subject of ridicule in all the plays and poems of the time; yet the sort of practice of arms which they had acquired, enabled them to withstand the charge of Prince Rupert and his gallant cavalry, who were then foiled for the first time. Read, my dear Charles, read, and read that which is useful. Man only differs from birds and beasts, because he has the means of availing himself of the knowledge acquired by his predecessors. The swallow builds the same nest which its father and mother built; and the sparrow does not improve by the experience of its parents. The son of the learned pig, if it had one, would be a mere brute, fit only to make bacon of. It is not so with the human race. Our ancestors lodged in caves and wigwams, where we construct palaces for the rich, and comfortable dwellings for the poor; and why is this—but because our eye is enabled to look back upon the past, to improve upon our ancestors' improvements, and to avoid their errors? This can only be done by studying history, and comparing it with passing events. God has given you a strong memory, and the power of understanding that which you give your mind to with attention—but all the advantage to be derived from these qualities must depend on your own determination to avail yourself of them, and improve them to the uttermost. That you should do so, will be the greatest satisfaction I can receive in my advanced life, and

when my thoughts must be entirely turned on the success of my children. Write to me more frequently, and mention your studies particularly, and I will on my side be a good correspondent.

I beg my compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Williams. I have left no room to sign myself your affectionate father,

W. S.

To return to business and Messrs. Constable.—Sir Walter concluded, before he went to town in November, another negotiation of importance with this house. They agreed to give for the remaining copyright of the four novels published between December, 1819, and January, 1821—to wit, Ivanhoe, The Monastery, The Abbot, and Kenilworth—the sum of five thousand guineas. The stipulation about not revealing the author's name, under a penalty of £2000, was repeated. By these four novels, the fruits of scarcely more than twelve months' labor, he had already cleared at least £10,000 before this bargain was completed. They, like their predecessors, were now issued in a collective shape, under the title of "Historical Romances, by the Author of Waverley."

I cannot pretend to guess what the actual state of Scott's pecuniary affairs was at the time when John Ballantyne's death relieved them from one great source of complication and difficulty. But I have said enough to satisfy every reader, that when he began the second, and far the larger division of his building at Abbotsford, he must have contemplated the utmost sum it could cost him as a mere trifle in relation to the resources at his command. He must have reckoned on clearing £30,000 at least in the course of a couple of years by the novels written within such a period. The publisher of his Tales, who best knew how they were produced, and what they brought of gross profit, and who must have had the strongest interest in keeping the author's name untarnished by any risk or reputation of failure, would willingly, as we have seen, have given him £6000 more within a space of two years for works of a less serious sort, likely to be despatched at leisure hours, without at all interfering with the main manufacture. But alas, even this was not all. Messrs. Constable had such faith in the prospective fertility of his imagination, that they were by this time quite ready to sign bargains and grant bills for novels and romances to be produced hereafter, but of which the subjects and the names were alike

unknown to them and to the man from whose pen they were to proceed. A forgotten satirist well says,—

> "The active principle within
> Works on some brains the effect of gin;"

but in his case, every external influence combined to stir the flame, and swell the intoxication of restless exuberant energy. His allies knew, indeed, what he did not, that the sale of his novels was rather less than it had been in the days of Ivanhoe; and hints had sometimes been dropped to him that it might be well to try the effect of a pause. But he always thought—and James Ballantyne had decidedly the same opinion—that his best things were those which he threw off the most easily and swiftly; and it was no wonder that his booksellers, seeing how immeasurably even his worst excelled in popularity, as in merit, any other person's best, should have shrunk from the experiment of a decisive damper. On the contrary, they might be excused for from time to time flattering themselves that if the books sold at a less rate, this might be counterpoised by still greater rapidity of production. They could not make up their minds to cast the peerless vessel adrift; and, in short, after every little whisper of prudential misgiving, echoed the unfailing burden of Ballantyne's song—to push on, hoisting more and more sail as the wind lulled.

He was as eager to do as they could be to suggest—and this I well knew at the time. I had, however, no notion, until all his correspondence lay before me, of the extent to which he had permitted himself thus early to build on the chances of life, health, and continued popularity. Before The Fortunes of Nigel issued from the press, Scott had exchanged instruments, and received his bookseller's bills, for no less than four "works of fiction"—not one of them otherwise described in the deeds of agreement—to be produced in unbroken succession, each of them to fill at least three volumes, but with proper saving clauses as to increase of copy-money, in case any of them should run to four. And within two years all this anticipation had been wiped off by Peveril of the Peak, Quentin Durward, St. Ronan's Well, and Redgauntlet; and the new castle was by that time complete, and overflowing with all its splendor; but by that time the end also was approaching!

The splendid romance of The Pirate was published in the beginning of December, 1821; and the wild freshness of its atmosphere, the beautiful

contrast of Minna and Brenda, and the exquisitely drawn character of Captain Cleveland, found the reception which they deserved. The work was analyzed with remarkable care in the Quarterly Review, by a critic second to few, either in the manly heartiness of his sympathy with the felicities of genius, or in the honest acuteness of his censure in cases of negligence and confusion. This was the second of a series of articles in that Journal, conceived and executed in a tone widely different from those given to Waverley, Guy Mannering, and The Antiquary. I fancy Mr. Gifford had become convinced that he had made a grievous mistake in this matter, before he acquiesced in Scott's proposal about "quartering the child" in January, 1816; and if he was fortunate in finding a contributor able and willing to treat the rest of Father Jedediah's progeny with excellent skill, and in a spirit more accordant with the just and general sentiments of the public, we must also recognize a pleasing and honorable trait of character in the frankness with which the recluse and often despotic editor now delegated the pen to Mr. Senior.

On the 13th December, Sir Walter received a copy of Cain, as yet unpublished, from Lord Byron's bookseller, who had been instructed to ask whether he had any objection to having the "Mystery" dedicated to him. He replied in these words:—

TO JOHN MURRAY, ESQ., ALBEMARLE STREET,
LONDON.

Edinburgh, 17th December, 1821.

My dear Sir,—I accept with feelings of great obligation the flattering proposal of Lord Byron to prefix my name to the very grand and tremendous drama of Cain. I may be partial to it, and you will allow I have cause; but I do not know that his Muse has ever taken so lofty a flight amid her former soarings. He has certainly matched Milton on his own ground. Some part of the language is bold, and may shock one class of readers, whose tone will be adopted by others out of affectation or envy. But then they must condemn the Paradise Lost, if they have a mind to be consistent. The fiendlike reasoning and bold blasphemy of the fiend and of his pupil lead exactly to the point which was to be

expected—the commission of the first murder, and the ruin and despair of the perpetrator.

I do not see how any one can accuse the author himself of Manichæism. The devil takes the language of that sect, doubtless; because, not being able to deny the existence of the Good Principle, he endeavors to exalt himself—the Evil Principle—to a seeming equality with the Good; but such arguments, in the mouth of such a being, can only be used to deceive and to betray. Lord Byron might have made this more evident, by placing in the mouth of Adam, or of some good and protecting spirit, the reasons which render the existence of moral evil consistent with the general benevolence of the Deity. The great key to the mystery is, perhaps, the imperfection of our own faculties, which see and feel strongly the partial evils which press upon us, but know too little of the general system of the universe, to be aware how the existence of these is to be reconciled with the benevolence of the great Creator.—Ever yours truly,

Walter Scott.

In some preceding narratives of Sir Walter Scott's Life, I find the principal feature for 1821 to be an affair of which I have as yet said nothing; and which, notwithstanding the examples I have before me, I must be excused for treating on a scale commensurate with his real share and interest therein. I allude to an unfortunate newspaper, by name The Beacon, which began to be published in Edinburgh in January, 1821, and was abruptly discontinued in the August of the same year. It originated in the alarm with which the Edinburgh Tories contemplated the progress of Radical doctrines during the agitation of the Queen's business in 1820—and the want of any adequate counteraction on the part of the Ministerial newspapers in the north. James Ballantyne had on that occasion swerved from his banner—and by so doing given not a little offence to Scott. He approved, therefore, of the project of a new Weekly Journal, to be conducted by some steadier hand; and when it was proposed to raise the requisite capital for the speculation by private subscription, expressed his willingness to contribute whatever sum should be named by other gentlemen of his standing. This was accepted of course; but every part of the advice with which the only man in the whole conclave that understood a jot about such things coupled his tender of alliance, was

departed from in practice. No experienced and responsible editor of the sort he pointed out as indispensable was secured; the violence of disaffected spleen was encountered by a vein of satire which seemed more fierce than frolicsome; the Law Officers of the Crown, whom he had most strenuously cautioned against any participation in the concern, were rash enough to commit themselves in it; the subscribers, like true Scotchmen, in place of paying down their money, and thinking no more of that part of the matter, chose to put their names to a bond of security on which the sum-total was to be advanced by bankers; and thus, by their own over-caution as to a few pounds, laid the foundation for a long train of humiliating distresses and disgraces; and finally, when the rude drollery of the young hot bloods to whom they had entrusted the editorship of their paper, produced its natural consequences, and the ferment of Whig indignation began to boil over upon the dignified patrons of what was denounced as a systematic scheme of calumny and defamation—these seniors shrunk from the dilemma as rashly as they had plunged into it, and instead of compelling the juvenile allies to adopt a more prudent course, and gradually give the journal a tone worthy of open approbation, they, at the first blush of personal difficulty, left their instruments in the lurch, and, without even consulting Scott, ordered the Beacon to be extinguished at an hour's notice.

A more pitiable mass of blunder and imbecility was never heaped together than the whole of this affair exhibited; and from a very early period Scott was so disgusted with it, that he never even saw the newspaper, of which Whigs and Radicals believed, or affected to believe, that the conduct and management were in some degree at least under his dictation. The results were lamentable: the Beacon was made the subject of Parliamentary discussion, from which the then heads of Scotch Toryism did not escape in any very consolatory plight; but above all, the Beacon bequeathed its rancor and rashness, though not its ability, to a Glasgow paper of similar form and pretensions, entitled The Sentinel. By that organ the personal quarrels of the Beacon were taken up and pursued with relentless industry; and finally, the Glasgow editors disagreeing, some moment of angry confusion betrayed a box of MSS., by which the late Sir Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck was revealed as the writer of certain truculent enough pasquinades. A leading Edinburgh Whig, who had been pilloried in one or more of these, challenged Boswell—and the Baronet fell in as miserable a quarrel as ever cost the blood of a high-spirited gentleman.

This tragedy occurred in the early part of 1822; and soon afterwards followed those debates on the whole business in the House of Commons, for which, if any reader feels curiosity about them, I refer him to the Parliamentary Histories of the time. A single extract from one of Scott's letters to a member of the then Government in London will be sufficient for my purpose; and abundantly confirm what I have said as to his personal part in the affairs of the Beacon:—

TO J. W. CROKER, ESQ., ADMIRALTY.

My Dear Croker,—... I had the fate of Cassandra in the Beacon matter from beginning to end. I endeavored in vain to impress on them the necessity of having an editor who was really up to the business, and could mix spirit with discretion—one of those "gentlemen of the press," who understand the exact lengths to which they can go in their vocation. Then I wished them, in place of that *Bond*, to have each thrown down his hundred pounds, and never inquired more about it—and lastly, I exclaimed against the Crown Counsel being at all concerned. In the two first remonstrances I was not listened to—in the last I thought myself successful, and it was not till long afterwards that I heard they had actually subscribed the Bond. Then the hasty renunciation of the thing, as if we had been doing something very atrocious, put me mad altogether. The younger brethren, too, allege that they are put into the front of the fight, and deserted on the first pinch; and on my word I cannot say the accusation is altogether false, though I have been doing my best to mediate betwixt the parties, and keep the peace if possible. The fact is, it is a blasted business, and will continue long to have bad consequences.—Yours in all love and kindness,

Walter Scott.

Appendix

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THE DURHAM GARLAND
IN THREE PARTS

[The following is the *Garland* referred to at pages 4 and 26, in connection with the novel of Guy Mannering. The ballad was taken down from the recitation of Mrs. Young of Castle-Douglas, who, as her family informed Mr. Train, had long been in the habit of repeating it over to them once in the year, in order that it might not escape from her memory.]

PART I

1

A worthy Lord of birth and state,
Who did in Durham live of late—
But I will not declare his name,
By reason of his birth and fame.

2

This Lord he did a-hunting go;
If you the truth of all would know,
He had indeed a noble train,
Of Lords and Knights and Gentlemen.

3

This noble Lord he left the train
Of Lords and Knights and Gentlemen;
And hearing not the horn to blow,
He could not tell which way to go.

4

But he did wander to and fro,
Being weary, likewise full of woe:
At last Dame Fortune was so kind
That he the Keeper's house did find.

5

He went and knocked at the door,
He thought it was so late an hour.
The Forester did let him in,
And kindly entertained him.

6

About the middle of the night,
When as the stars did shine most bright,
This Lord was in a sad surprise,
Being wakened by a fearful noise.

7

Then he did rise and call with speed,
To know the reason then indeed,
Of all that shrieking and those cries
Which did disturb his weary eyes.

8

"I'm sorry, Sir," the Keeper said,
"That you should be so much afraid;
But I do hope all will be well,
For my wife she is in travail."

9

The noble Lord was learned and wise,
To know the Planets in the skies.
He saw one evil Planet reign,
He called the Forester again.

10

He gave him then to understand,
He'd have the Midwife hold her hand;
But he was answered by the maid,
"My Mistress is delivered."

11

At one o'clock that very morn,
A lovely infant there was born;
It was indeed a charming boy,
Which brought the man and wife much joy.

12

The Lord was generous, kind, and free,
And proffered Godfather to be;
The Goodman thanked him heartily
For his goodwill and courtesy.

13

A parson was sent for with speed,
For to baptize the child indeed;
And after that, as I heard say,
In mirth and joy they spent the day.

14

This Lord did noble presents give,
Which all the servants did receive.
They prayed God to enrich his store,
For they never had so much before.

15

And likewise to the child he gave
A present noble, rich, and brave;
It was a charming cabinet,
That was with pearls and jewels set.

16

And within it was a chain of gold,
Would dazzle eyes for to behold;
A richer gift, as I may say,
Was not beheld this many a day.

17

He charged his father faithfully,
That he himself would keep the key,
Until the child could write and read—
And then to give him it indeed;—

18

"Pray do not open it at all
Whatever should on you befall;
For it may do my godson good,
If it be rightly understood."

19

This Lord did not declare his name,
Nor yet the place from whence he came,
But secretly he did depart,
And left them grieved to the heart.

PART II

1

The second part I now unfold,
As true a story as e'er was told,
Concerning of a lovely child,
Who was obedient, sweet, and mild.

2

This child did take his learning so,
If you the truth of all would know,
At eleven years of age indeed,
Both Greek and Latin he could read.

3

Then thinking of his cabinet,
That was with pearls and jewels set,
He asked his father for the key,
Which he gave him right speedily;

4

And when he did the same unlock,
He was with great amazement struck
When he the riches did behold,
And likewise saw the chain of gold.

5

But searching farther he did find
A paper which disturbed his mind,
That was within the cabinet,
In Greek and Latin it was writ.

6

My child, serve God that is on high,
And pray to him incessantly;
Obey your parents, love your king,
That nothing may your conscience sting.

7

At seven years hence your fate will be,
You must be hanged upon a tree;
Then pray to God both night and day,
To let that hour pass away.

8

When he these woeful lines did read,
He with a sigh did say indeed,
"If hanging be my destiny,
My parents shall not see me die;

9

"For I will wander to and fro,
I'll go where I no one do know;
But first I'll ask my parents' leave,
In hopes their blessing to receive."

10

Then locking up his cabinet,
He went from his own chamber straight
Unto his only parents dear,
Beseeching them with many a tear

11

That they would grant what he would have—
"But first your blessing I do crave,
And beg you'll let me go away,
'T will do me good another day."

12

* * * * *
* * * * *

"And if I live I will return,
When seven years are past and gone."

13

Both man and wife did then reply,
"I fear, my son, that we shall die;
If we should yield to let you go,
Our aged hearts would break with woe."

14

But he entreated eagerly,
While they were forced to comply,
And give consent to let him go,
But where, alas! they did not know.

15

In the third part you soon shall find,
That fortune was to him most kind,
And after many dangers past,
He came to Durham at the last.

PART III

1

He went by chance, as I heard say,
To that same house that very day
In which his Godfather did dwell;
But mind what luck to him befell—

2

This child did crave a service there,
On which came out his Godfather,
And seeing him a pretty youth,
He took him for his Page in truth.

3

Then in this place he pleased so well,
That 'bove the rest he bore the bell;
This child so well the Lord did please,
He raised him higher by degrees.

4

He made him Butler sure indeed,
And then his Steward with all speed,
Which made the other servants spite,
And envy him both day and night.

5

He was never false unto his trust,
But proved ever true and just;
And to the Lord did hourly pray
To guide him still both night and day.

6

In this place, plainly it appears,
He lived the space of seven years;
His parents then he thought upon,
And of his promise to return.

7

Then humbly of his Lord did crave,
That he his free consent might have
To go and see his parents dear,
He had not seen this many a year.

8

Then having leave, away he went,
Not dreaming of the false intent
That was contrived against him then
By wicked, false, deceitful men.

9

They had in his portmanteau put
This noble Lord's fine golden cup;
That when the Lord at dinner was,
The cup was missed as come to pass.

10

"Where can it be?" this Lord did say,
"We had it here but yesterday."
The Butler then replied with speed,
"If you will hear the truth indeed.

11

"Your darling Steward which is gone,
With feathered nest away is flown;
I'll warrant you he has that, and more
That doth belong unto your store."

12

"No," says this Lord, "that cannot be,
For I have tried his honesty;"
"Then," said the Cook, "my Lord, I die
Upon a tree full ten feet high."

13

Then hearing what these men did say,
He sent a messenger that day,
To take him with a hue and cry,
And bring him back immediately.

14

They searched his portmanteau with speed,
In which they found the cup indeed;
Then was he struck with sad surprise,
He could not well believe his eyes.

15

The assizes then were drawing nigh,
And he was tried and doomed to die;
And his injured innocence
Could nothing say in his defense.

16

But going to the Gallows tree,
On which he thought to hanged be
He clapped his hands upon his breast,
And thus in tears these words exprest:—

17

"Blind Fortune will be Fortune still,
I see, let man do what he will;
For though this day I needs must die,
I am not guilty—no, not I."

18

This noble Lord was in amaze,
He stood and did with wonder gaze;
Then he spoke out with words so mild,—
"What mean you by that saying, Child?"

19

"Will that your Lordship," then said he,
"Grant one day's full reprieve for me,
A dismal story I'll relate,
Concerning of my wretched fate."

20

"Speak up, my Child," this Lord did say,
"I say you shall not die this day—
And if I find you innocent,
I'll crown your days with sweet content."

21

He told him all his dangers past,
He had gone through from first to last,
He fetched the chain and cabinet,
Likewise the paper that was writ.

22

When that this noble Lord did see,
He ran to him most eagerly,
And in his arms did him embrace,
Repeating of those words in haste.—

23

"My Child, my Child, how blessed am I
Thou art innocent, and shalt not die;
For I'm indeed thy Godfather,
And thou wast born in fair Yorkshire.

24

"I have indeed one daughter dear,
Which is indeed my only heir;
And I will give her unto thee,
And crown you with felicity."

25

So then the Butler and the Cook
('Twas them that stole the golden cup)
Confessed their faults immediately,
And for it died deservedly.

26

This goodly youth, as I do hear,
Thus raised, sent for his parents dear,
Who did rejoice their Child to see—
And so I end my Tragedy.

Narrative of the Life of James Annesley

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(See Note)

"Lord and Lady Altham, of Dunmain, in the county of Wexford, had been for many years married and childless, when, in the year 1715, their warmest hopes and wishes were realized by the birth of an heir to their estates and title. On that joyful evening the hospitality of the house of Dunmain was claimed by a young gentleman travelling from Dublin, named 'Master Richard Fitzgerald,' who joined Lord Altham and his household in drinking the healths of the 'lady in the straw,' and the long expected heir, in the customary groaning drink. It does not appear that Master Fitzgerald was learned in astrology, or practised any branch of the 'Black art,' or that he used any spell with reference to the infant more potent than these hearty libations and sincere good wishes for his future prosperity. Next day, before leaving the hospitable mansion, the little hero of this tale was presented to the stranger, who 'kissed him, and gave the nurse half-a-guinea.'

"Of Fitzgerald we have only to add, that he entered the army and became a distinguished officer in the service of the queen of Hungary, and that twenty-eight years afterwards he returned to Ireland to assist in recovering for his former infantile friend the estates and titles of his ancestors, which had been for many years iniquitously withheld from him.

"Lord and Lady Altham lived unhappily together, and a separation took place soon after the birth of their son. Her Ladyship, shamefully neglected by her husband, resided in England during the remainder of her life, and from disease and poverty was reduced to a state of extreme imbecility both of body and mind.

"James Annesley, the infant son of this unhappy mother, was entrusted, by Lord Altham, to the charge of a woman of indifferent character, named Joan or Juggy Landy. Juggy was a dependent of the family, and lived in a cabin on the estate, about a quarter of a mile from the house of Dunmain. This hut is described as a 'despicable place, without any furniture except a pot, two or three trenchers, a couple of straw beds on the floor,' and 'with only a bush to draw in and out for a door.' Thus humbly and inauspiciously was the boy reared under the care of a nurse, who, however unfortunate or

guilty, appears to have lavished upon her young charge the most affectionate attention. From some unexplained cause, however, Juggy Landy incurred the displeasure of Lord Altham, who took the boy from her, and ordered his groom to 'horsewhip her,' and 'to set the dogs upon her,' when she persisted in hovering about the premises to obtain a sight of her former charge.

"Lord Altham now removed with his son to Dublin where he appears to have entered upon a career of the most dissipated and profligate conduct. We find him reduced to extreme pecuniary embarrassment, and his property became a prey to low and abandoned associates; one of whom, a Miss Kennedy, he ultimately endeavored to introduce to society as his wife. This worthless woman must have obtained great ascendancy over his Lordship, as she was enabled to drive James Annesley from his father's protection, and the poor boy became a houseless vagabond, wandering about the streets of Dublin, and procuring a scanty and precarious subsistence 'by running of errands and holding gentlemen's horses.'

"Meantime Lord Altham's pecuniary difficulties had so increased as to induce him to endeavor to borrow money on his reversionary interest in the estates of the Earl of Anglesey, to whom he was heir-at-law. In this scheme he was joined by his brother Captain Annesley, and they jointly succeeded in procuring several small sums of money. But as James Annesley would have proved an important legal impediment to these transactions, he was represented to some parties to be dead; and where his existence could not be denied, he was asserted to be the natural son of his Lordship and of Juggy Landy.

"Lord Altham died in the year 1727, 'so miserably poor that he was actually buried at the public expense.' His brother Captain Annesley attended the funeral as chief mourner, and assumed the title of Baron Altham, but when he claimed to have this title registered he was refused by the king-at-arms, 'on account of his nephew being reported still alive, and for want of the honorary fees.' Ultimately, however, by means which are stated to have been 'well known and obvious,' he succeeded in procuring his registration.

"But there was another and a more sincere mourner at the funeral of Lord Altham than the successful inheritor of his title: a poor boy of twelve years of age, half naked, bareheaded and barefooted, and wearing, as the most important part of his dress, an old yellow livery waistcoat, followed at

a humble distance, and wept over his father's grave. Young Annesley was speedily recognized by his uncle, who forcibly drove him from the place, but not before the boy had made himself known to several old servants of his father, who were attending the corpse of their late lord to the tomb.

"The usurper now commenced a series of attempts to obtain possession of his nephew's person, for the purpose of transporting him beyond seas, or otherwise ridding himself of so formidable a rival. For some time, however, these endeavors were frustrated, principally through the gallantry of a brave and kind-hearted butcher, named Purcel, who, having compassion upon the boy's destitute state, took him into his house and hospitably maintained him for a considerable time; and on one occasion, when he was assailed by a numerous party of his uncle's emissaries, Purcel placed the boy between his legs, and stoutly defending him with his cudgel, resisted their utmost efforts, and succeeded in rescuing his young charge.

"After having escaped from many attempts of the same kind, Annesley was at length kidnapped in the streets of Dublin, dragged by his uncle and a party of hired ruffians to a boat, and carried on board a vessel in the river, which immediately sailed with our hero for America, where, on his arrival, he was apprenticed as a plantation slave, and in this condition he remained for the succeeding thirteen years.

"During his absence his uncle, on the demise of the Earl of Anglesey, quietly succeeded to that title and immense wealth.

"While forcibly detained in the plantations, Annesley suffered many severe hardships and privations, particularly in his frequent unsuccessful attempts to escape. Among other incidents which befell him, he incurred the deadly hatred of one master, in consequence of a suspected intrigue with his wife—a charge from which he was afterwards honorably acquitted. The daughter of a second master became affectionately attached to him; but it does not appear that this regard was reciprocal. And finally, in effecting his escape, he fell into the hands of some hostile negroes, who stabbed him severely in various places; from the effects of which cruelty he did not recover for several months.

"At the end of thirteen years, Annesley, who had now attained the age of twenty-five, succeeded in reaching Jamaica in a merchant vessel, and he immediately volunteered himself as a private sailor on board a man-of-war. Here he was at once identified by several officers; and Admiral Vernon, who was then in command of the British West India fleet, wrote home an

account of the case to the Duke of Newcastle (the Premier), and, 'in the mean time, supplied him with clothes and money, and treated him with the respect and attention which his rank demanded.'

"The Earl of Anglesey no sooner heard of these transactions on board the fleet, than he used every effort to keep possession of his usurped title and property, and 'the most eminent lawyers within the English and Irish bars were retained to defend a cause, the prosecution of which was not as yet even threatened.'

"On Annesley's arrival in Dublin, 'several servants who had lived with his father came from the country to see him. They knew him at first sight, and some of them fell on their knees to thank heaven for his preservation,—embraced his legs, and shed tears of joy for his return.'

"Lord Anglesey became so much alarmed at the probable result of the now threatened trial, that he expressed his intention to make a compromise with the claimant, renounce the title, and retire into France; and with this view he commenced learning the French language. But this resolution was given up, in consequence of an occurrence which encouraged the flattering hope that his opponent would be speedily and most effectually disposed of.

"After his arrival in England, Annesley unfortunately occasioned the death of a man by the accidental discharge of a fowling-piece which he was in the act of carrying. Though there could not exist a doubt of his innocence from all intention of such a deed, the circumstance offered too good a chance to be lost sight of by his uncle, who employed an attorney named Gifford, and with his assistance used every effort at the coroner's inquest, and the subsequent trial, to bring about a verdict of murder. In this, however, he did not succeed, although 'he practised all the unfair means that could be invented to procure the removal of the prisoner to Newgate from the healthy gaol to which he had been at first committed;' and 'the Earl even appeared in person on the bench, endeavoring to intimidate and browbeat the witnesses, and to inveigle the prisoner into destructive confessions.' Annesley was honorably acquitted, after his uncle had expended nearly one thousand pounds on the prosecution.

"The trial between James Annesley, Esq., and Richard, Earl of Anglesey, before the Right Honorable the Lord Chief Justice and other Barons of the Exchequer, commenced on the 11th November, 1743, and was continued for thirteen days. The defendant's counsel examined an immense number of witnesses in an attempt to prove that Annesley was the illegitimate son of

the late Baron Altham. The Jury found for the plaintiff; but it did not prove sufficient to recover his title and estates: for his uncle 'had recourse to every device the law allowed, and his powerful interest procured a writ of error which set aside the verdict.' Before another trial could be brought about, Annesley died without male issue, and Lord Anglesey consequently remained in undisturbed possession.

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"It is presumed that the points of resemblance between the leading incidents in the life of this unfortunate young nobleman and the adventures of Henry Bertram in Guy Mannering, are so evident as to require neither comment nor enumeration to make them apparent to the most cursory reader of the Novel. The addition of a very few other circumstances will, it is believed, amount to a proof of the identity of the two stories.